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of

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"HOPE ON"  "HOPE EVER"

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Sir James Bateman put together the estate at Shobdon Court early in the 18th century. Since the family were slow to live at Shobdon, the steward, Benjamin Fallowes, maintained the estate and corresponded with them. He kept numerous letters from family members, especially from Richard Bateman, a confidant of Horace Walpole. The surviving collection offers rare insight into gardening of the mid-18th century.

Two Acid Grasslands in North-west Herefordshire, *by Stuart Hedley*……. 61
Vegetation studies can help us understand our natural heritage, make sense of the landscape, and inform conservation. At a time when, to inform conservation practice, it is more desirable than ever to understand semi-natural ecosystems, this paper is the first of a series planned to share a characterisation of Herefordshire's vegetation. The series begins with a description of the two fascinating grasslands that overlie the Silurian rocks of Bradnor Hill and Brampton Bryan Park.

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Through extensive documentary research, field investigations, and specialist expertise, this paper traces the history of the Hereford Mills in Lower Bullingham, a complex of fulling and corn watermills that became important in Hereford's medieval economy of cloth-making, corn-milling, and fishing, until the weir on which they depended was destroyed under Henry VIII. The weir and mills were rebuilt in Queen Mary's reign and operated until all the weirs on the Wye were removed in *c*.1700 by the Wye Navigation.

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Home Defence in Herefordshire in the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, Part 2: 1803-1815, *by John C. Eisel*…… 116
In the 2022 volume, part one discussed the rise of the volunteer movement in Herefordshire during the French Revolutionary Wars and how volunteer troops were largely disbanded after the Peace of Amiens. This paper describes the second phase of the movement from 1803, driven by the extreme likelihood of invasion, until the Battle of Waterloo in 1815 resolved the crisis caused by Napoleon's escape from Elba.

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Transactions Extra, 2023

As anticipated last year, research information that was too extensive to include within the printed version of the *Transactions* has become available online to supplement Rachel Anna Sycamore's paper, 'Church Chests in Herefordshire Revisited: New Perspectives on Their Dates and Construction'. This was done via *Transactions Extra*, the Club's channel for publication online only.

In the same way, and for the same reasons, supplementary reference material will be published to provide additional, detailed analysis of the vegetation described in Stuart Hedley's paper on grasslands at Brampton Bryant and Bradnor Hill (pp. 61-77 of this volume).

The Club is likely to develop its online facilities for reference data in the coming years. This will supplement an existing mix of tools and techniques that includes the outstanding library in the Woolhope Room—a crucial inheritance for the Club to protect and to move forward for the future—and the huge collection of digitised publications from the past. The Club seeks to help authors and researchers, with interests in Herefordshire and the surrounding areas, and people seeking detailed information about their locality.

We also anticipate that at least one paper and possibly more will be published online only during the calendar year 2025. In this respect, *Transactions Extra* offers additional capacity to publish good material. It's encouraging that such capacity is needed!

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Obituary: Joe Hillaby (1933-2024)



Joe Hillaby, who died in Malvern in May 2024, was a skilled historian of great depth and substance. He made an outstanding contribution to civic life and conservation in Hereford, was president of the Woolhope Club four times, and played a leading part in its activities and intellectual life from the 1960s onwards.

Joe was born in Leeds in 1933. On the outbreak of war, he was evacuated to the Welsh coast and subsequently the Yorkshire Dales. On graduating from the University of Leeds, he served his national service in the Russian Department of the War Office. In the 1950s, he taught history at Longton High School in Staffordshire.

In 1962, he came to Hereford as Principal Lecturer and Head of History at Hereford College of Education. The College had recently become co-educational and taught a history syllabus stretching from the ancient world to the 20th century. History students produced a dissertation on a local topic in their final year. Some of the best appeared in the *Transactions*.

He soon joined the Woolhope Club, was already Sectional Recorder for Industrial Archaeology by 1963, and became Hon. Assistant Librarian in 1965. With Frank Noble and Jim Tonkin, he formed a sub-committee to monitor the archaeological impact of the new Hereford Ring Road, with reference to the medieval city walls. The resulting excavations, directed by Stan Stanford, Frank Noble, and Ron Shoesmith, were reported in the *Transactions* for 1966.

In his early years with the Club, Joe was busy with the Club library, stressing its value and identifying measures to fill gaps, renew subscriptions, and arrange for binding. In the 1967 *Transactions,* he published a learned paper on 'The Parliamentary Borough of Weobley, 1628-1708', with impressive use of British Library collections. By 1968, Joe was on the Central Committee of the Club and was installed as President in the spring of 1969. He was giving extra-mural classes for Birmingham University (1967-70), participating in Club field meetings, and beginning his long-term engagement with the Bromyard History Society. In 1970, the society published *Bromyard: A Local History,* a series of essays edited by Joe and Edna Pearson, distilling the work of his extra-mural classes. From 1972, several books on parishes close to Bromyard also had their genesis in those classes.

His presidential address, a study of 'The Boroughs of the Bishop of Hereford in the 13th century', was a model of its kind: broadly based but supported by over 100 footnotes. He introduced Woolhope members to the wider world of scholarship, based on primary sources, local topography, and a well-equipped library. He raised the standards of local antiquarianism.

By the early 1970s, Joe was an Open University lecturer, on the committee of the Herefordshire CPRE, and very active in local life. He and many others were appalled when the Hereford City Surveyor proposed to clear the vegetation from Castle Cliffe and re-engineer the bank beside the Wye with an industrial product, aptly named 'grass-crete'. Thus, a concrete apron would destroy a picturesque landscape and interfere with an ancient graveyard. This was the spur to found the Hereford Civic Trust in 1972. Within a year, Joe was elected Chairman. The first newsletter, issued in June 1973, quoted national and local legislation to defend the

threatened site. The scheme was modified: trees re-planted on the slopes of the river thrive today.

For many years thereafter, Joe made a skilled and energetic contribution to the city's conservation. He opposed 'Central Area Redevelopment', which threatened to destroy the historic townscape north of High Town. From 1979, many reports about the development of the area appeared in the *Transactions*. In 1983, an essay on the Norman street pattern of Hereford was included in a Proof of Evidence, opposing redevelopment of the Maylord Street area. As so often, Joe showed how scholarship could be a potent weapon in preserving the shape of the past.

The discovery of a flourishing Jewish community, at the eastern end of Maylord Street during the 12th and 13th centuries, was particularly important. Two papers were published in the *Transactions* for 1984-5. Further studies on English Jewries followed, culminating in Joe's presidency of the Jewish History Society in 2006-8 and, perhaps, his most significant work, the Palgrave *Dictionary of Medieval Jewish History* (2013), written with Caroline, his wife.

Representing the Hereford Civic Trust, Joe persuaded the County Council to establish a Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC) for Hereford. The first of many reports on its proceedings appeared in *Transactions* of 1984, continuing until 2004, latterly presented by Jean O'Donnell. He helped prevent construction of seven shops next to the Cathedral close in Church Street and supported an effort—eventually unsuccessful—to erect the surviving four columns of the Old Market Hall in High Town. He continued as Chairman of the Civic Trust until 1992. The Trust's newsletter (no. 50 of 1992) paid warm tribute to him as a conservationist.

In 1982, *The Book of Ledbury* was published and later, as *Ledbury: a Medieval Borough,* ran to three editions. During the 1970s and 1980s, Joe published articles in the *Transactions* on many topics. Crucial, however, were his studies of the early medieval church, including a paper that used an extraordinary collection of obscure sources to clarify the sequence of the early bishops of Hereford, from Putta to Uulfheard. His papers and books of the following years showed his mastery of this difficult period. At the spring meeting (1987), the Club was treated to another blockbuster for the *Transactions* on 'Early Christian Leominster', later developed in *The Early Church in Herefordshire* (2001), edited by the Leominster Historical Study Group, and a substantial book, *Leominster: Minster, Priory and Borough, 660-1539* (2006), written by Joe and Caroline. He was president of the Club for the second time in 1986.

From 1979, Joe was a tutor at Bristol University. He retired in 1993 but remained active. He became Chairman of the Craswall Grandmontine Society (1991-2019), Herefordshire CPRE (1992-7), and Worcestershire Archaeological Society (1997-2000). He continued to deliver talks to the Woolhope Club, showed his interest in exploring the 'Herefordshire Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty' (with Ruth Richardson) and revisited an interest in stained glass, when he spoke about 'Viscount Scudamore and the stained glass in the east window of Dore Abbey, 1634'.

2001 was the 150th anniversary year of the Woolhope Club. Joe gave the keynote address at a celebratory dinner, paying tribute to Mr and Mrs Tonkin. He was President for the third time in 2003-4, and again in 2013-14. He gave a fine talk in 2009—with the present writer in the presidential chair—about St Katherine's Hospital in Ledbury (also the subject of a book), and in two later *Transactions* he wrote obituaries for Stan Stanford (2007) and Jim Tonkin (with Jean O'Donnell) in 2010. His important work on Craswall Priory was the subject of his final presidential address in 2014 and, for the *Transactions* of 2018, he and Caroline jointly wrote a paper of exceptional interest, entitled 'Aconbury Priory Church: a national monument'.

Joe was a man of many interests. His contributions to scholarship, to Jewish history, to conservation, to Hereford, and to the Woolhope Club were all outstanding. He will be missed.

David Whitehead

List of Officers 2023/24

President	Prof. R. JENKINS
Vice-presidents	Mr D. WHITEHEAD, Dr J. C. EISEL, Dr J. COOPER
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Botany	Mr S. HEDLEY
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HR2 8AN		HR9 7NL

*Mr I. K. Porter resigned as Hon, Treasurer and Hon, Membership Secretary as from the Spring Annual Meeting of 2024. Mr J. Comber was appointed Acting Treasurer from that time. His address is thus given here as the one appropriate when this volume of the *Transactions* is published. Similarly, Mr T. Cusworth was appointed as Acting Membership Secretary at the same spring meeting and is in office at the time of publication.

Preliminary enquiries about proposed articles intended for inclusion in future issues of the Woolhope Club *Transactions* should be made to the editor via the website. Please request a copy of the *Notes for Contributors to the Transactions* or see the website: www.woolhopeclub.org.uk. Other officers can also be contacted via the website.

List of sub-committees 2023/24

GEOFFREY WALTER SMITH FUND

Chairman	Dr J. C. EISEL
Members	Dr J. COOPER, Miss J. R. JONSON, Mr D. A. WHITEHEAD

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Chairman	Dr J. C. EISEL
Members	Mr D. A. WHITEHEAD, Mr T. MORGAN

Proceedings 2023

SPRING MEETINGS
All spring meetings took place in the Town Hall, Hereford.

First Spring Meeting
Saturday 7 January 2023; David Whitehead, President, in the Chair. Professor Keith Ray of Cardiff University (and the Archaeology Recorder of the Club) gave a talk entitled 'The Militarisation of Anglo-Saxon Hereford? Clues from archaeology, starting at Breinton'.

A large audience gathered to hear Prof. Ray's lecture and was most appreciative. He has now incorporated the content into a wide-ranging paper, scheduled for publication in the 2024 edition of these *Transactions*. For this reason, only a brief summary of his talk is provided here.

Prof. Ray brought together long-established knowledge of Anglo-Saxon Herefordshire, such as that about the defences of Hereford, with evidence from newer sources. This included very recent archaeology at Breinton (*TWNFC* 2022, pp. 85-106); earlier work near Sutton Walls and Marden, where the discovery of rare Anglo-Saxon mills supported the idea of a royal Mercian estate, and where it was likely that military mustering facilities had been located; and new understanding of Offa's Dyke in the county. He reviewed archaeological evidence for violent conflict and written sources that indicated military activity in and around Herefordshire. He also proposed fresh interpretation of the role of the '*radmanni'* or riding men mentioned in Domesday. By late Saxon times, they appeared to have acted as a military escort, or bodyguard, ensuring safe passage for the king. Their activities could well have formed part of border patrol and security measures that made full use of inherited Roman roads.

Prof. Ray demonstrated that people in what became Herefordshire had experienced warfare and the threat of it from the time that Mercia began to take much of the area into its sphere right up to the end of Anglo-Saxon England. Throughout that period, Herefordshire was part of a border zone adjoining Welsh kingdoms, a place where people of British / Welsh heritage remained very much in place and where varying levels of political and military tension were experienced. Viking incursions added a new source of marauding and a further layer of complexity. The combined evidence suggested not only the reality of conflict but also of systematic approaches to controlling a volatile frontier. Such approaches would have matched circumstances at different times and included protecting against the Vikings when that was relevant.

The discovery of the Herefordshire hoard, left by Vikings, raised another thought: might the executed people discovered at Sutton Walls have been Vikings, rather than the entourage of King Aethelberht as previously suggested? The age profile of those executed and the injuries inflicted upon them were strikingly similar to those of Vikings, found elsewhere, who had certainly been executed by Anglo-Saxons.

Second Spring Meeting
Saturday 28 January 2023; David Whitehead, President, in the chair. Mr Joe Kerr spoke on 'Alfred Watkins and the Woolhope Club, Reappraising a Reputation'.

Before discussing Watkins's espousal of leys and the many topics thus raised, Mr Kerr began by reviewing the scope of Watkins's life and achievement. As the *Hereford Times* put it, in its obituary of 1935: 'First and foremost he was a Herefordshire Man, as native to the county

as the hop and the apple.' His knowledge of the county was unrivalled, but he had offered so much more. He could be seen as representing what might be called 'Renaissance Hereford', characterised too by people like Sir Edward Elgar, Brian Hatton, and Mary Ella Leather.

As a photographic innovator, successful businessman (e.g., in the family flour business and as a manufacturer of light meters), considerable contributor to public life in Hereford, beekeeper, and a fine antiquarian Watkins achieved a great deal. Mr Kerr described the widespread impact of Watkins's inventions in light meters, noting that Herbert Ponting had made use of them to take the extraordinary photographs of Shackelton's Antarctic expedition of 1910. Watkins was a national force in photography, attracting, for example, the annual photographic convention of the United Kingdom to Hereford. As examples of Watkins's role in public life, Mr Kerr mentioned his chairmanship of the committee responsible for the war memorial in St Peter's Square, unveiled in 1922, and his contribution to the Hereford Music Festival of 1921. There was much more besides. He felt that Watkins's wide-ranging role in the Woolhope Club would be familiar to members but mentioned that, as President in 1919, Watkins had seconded a proposal to admit women ('ladies') as members. This came to nothing. The minutes of the AGM suggested little interest, and women were not admitted until 1954.

Mr Kerr moved on to review the steps whereby Watkins brought leys to public attention, starting at Blackwardine Hill on 30 June 1921. Watkins wrote that he had seen a straight line on the map, leading from the ancient monument at Croft Ambrey, to Blackwardine, to Risbury, and on to what he surmised was a Roman station at Stretton Grandison; and that, to his 'amazement', many more such lines could be seen on the map, connecting monuments which offered sighting points. He said that this recognition was new and not based on any previous knowledge or theory. Watkins presented his ideas to the Woolhope Club Committee in July and a full paper with photographs on 29 September. No full account of the paper was recorded because a book was forthcoming, and *Old British Trackways* was duly published early in 1922. Mr Kerr demonstrated convincingly, with numerous photographs and Watkins's comments about how 'my subconscious self had prepared the ground', that Watkins had developed the ideas over many years and not in a few months after the 'revelation' at Blackwardine. It was also most unlikely that such rapid publication of the book would otherwise have been practical, even more so given the extent of Watkins's public activities at this time. How Watkins saw the event at Blackwardine and the nature of leys remained hard to gauge: Mr Kerr wondered if there was an element of self-sabotage. His son, in 1972, wrote that Watkins talked of a 'revelation' but with embarrassment given his scientific credentials, an embarrassment accentuated because he was known within the family as a 'genuinely gifted psychic'.

Mr Kerr noted reports in the *Transactions* that suggested the scepticism of Woolhope Club members, albeit tempered by respect for Watkins. Perhaps George Marshall's comment in his private diary of 29 September 1921 represented the least ambiguous reaction to Watkins's initial lecture: '…received with rather incredulity by most. He has overdone the whole thing.' None of this prevented the formation of the Straight Track Club in Herefordshire, nor the participation of Woolhope Club members in 'ley hunting'. Arguably, Watkins had tapped into the growing interest in the countryside demonstrated by the mass trespass on Kinder Scout in 1932.

Mr Kerr set out the particularly hostile reaction of the contemporary archaeological establishment and especially of O. G. S. Crawford, all of which had been a great frustration to Watkins. Whatever social and personal factors lay behind this, some elements of the thinking of Crawford and Watkins were not so far apart. For example, Crawford was an avid photographer

and a pioneer in the use of aerial photography for archaeological purposes.

Today, the notion that ancient people could use landmarks to navigate long distances was not controversial. Whether that related to leys, as Watkins described them, was another matter. The ongoing legacy of leys was reviewed and the connection that had developed with a range of mythologies and views of the landscape which embraced a spiritual dimension. In that respect, among others, the debate continued.

Mr Kerr concluded with the comments of George Marshall in his obituary of Watkins in 1935. 'In his later years he took up study of ancient trackways and the question of their alignment in straight lines through ancient sites, and if the argument he brought forward in these did not always commend themselves to the more sceptical archeologist, yet in his book '*The Old Straight Track',* he has left behind much food for thought, and a wealth of images which will be a source of pleasure and instruction for years to come.'

In thanking Mr Kerr and in questions, the audience expressed great appreciation of the new and interesting insights he had raised in assessing a figure so important and so well known to the Club.

Third Spring Meeting

Saturday 8 February 2023; David Whitehead, President, in the Chair. Mr Tim Hoverd spoke on 'Snodhill Castle, Herefordshire's Forgotten Castle'.

Mr Hoverd energetically outlined progress since 2016 in understanding this unusual castle. Despite large-scale sale of stonework in the 1650s, wall lines, the north tower, a likely barbican, the frequent work to prevent collapse of the keep and other structures, and the nature of the chapel and vestry had all been investigated successfully. The initial motte and bailey would have supported Norman incursion into Wales, and the north tower was built to respond to Owain Glyndwr's campaigns, but much about the castle, its extensive deer park, and even a pleasance suggested that the Chandos family had used it for pleasure and entertaining.

Investigation of what was thought to be a 'Royal Free Chapel' had advanced considerably in 2022. It had been established that the chapel was a fully rectangular structure, and what appeared to be a plaster-faced altar base had been discovered against the east wall. A small, apse-like room had been revealed, apparently joined to the eastern end of the chapel at a later date and made accessible by the insertion of a doorway and steps. Since the room appeared to contain two ambries—secure cupboards for sacred items—it was likely to be a vestry. The discovery in this room, of a small, gilded, and enamelled figure, was consistent with this interpretation. It was a mount, of a type made in Limoges in the 12th and 13th centuries. Such mounts were often attached to reliquaries or processional crosses.

The castle was one of the oldest and most unusual stone-built castles in the country. Investigation of the structures continued to proceed well, with ongoing opportunity to discover more. Despite all this, Mr Hoverd noted that the Chandos family was not well understood at this stage, and that very little documentary mention of Snodhill Castle had been discovered.

Spring Annual Meeting

Saturday 11 March 2023; David Whitehead, President, in the chair.

Mr Ian Porter presented the Club's accounts for 2022 and talked about the entries and their significance. The accounts appear on p. 37 of this volume. In his capacity as Membership Secretary, Mr Porter reported that, on 31 December 2023, there were 620 members, an increase of twenty-one compared with end 2022.

At the Spring Annual Meeting, the President reached the end of his two-year term in that office, a period much complicated by the Covid outbreak. He noted that the Club's activities had recovered fully from the interruption caused by Covid-related restrictions, that confidence was returning, and that numbers attending the Club's talks, now held in the Assembly Room at the Town Hall, had returned to levels typical in 2019. He felt that the quality of the programme, the talks themselves, and the speakers delivering them were all impressive.

He reviewed too the Club's approach to the unfolding of major plans to redevelop the museum and library building in Broad Street, plans which the Club strongly supported. The Club had engaged in intensive and detailed discussion with the Council and its advisors over the previous year, with productive results: the importance of the Woolhope Room and its conservation had been recognised; sensitive improvements could be made to enable the Club to better operate its remarkable collections and reference library; and practical use of the room, as both the ongoing core of the Club's activities and a facility to help reinvigorate cultural life at the museum, had been discussed. The wider contribution that Club members might make to that reinvigoration had been discussed too.

In the meantime, it was anticipated that the Broad Street building would soon be closed as preparatory and building work began. Timescales were uncertain, but it was unlikely that the building would be re-opened until at least 2025. In the meantime, the Club's collections would be securely protected in the Woolhope Room.

The President thanked the Club's officers and committee members for their efforts at a time when a great deal had been taking place. Officers and committee members for 2023-24 were appointed, as approved at the winter meeting of 26 November 2022. The President moved on to his talk on 'Shobdon Court, a gardening correspondence'. The paper arising is published as the presidential address in this volume.

The new President, Prof. Rachel Jenkins, paid tribute to David Whitehead and thanked him warmly for his efforts in taking on the role of president for two years and piloting the Club through so unusual a period. Members applauded in appreciation and gave their thanks.

FIELD MEETINGS

First Field Meeting

Downton Gorge, Saturday 22 April 2023. The group met Tom Wall and his wife Gisele at Forge Bridge.

Since the Downton Gorge National Nature Reserve (NNR) is ordinarily closed to visitors, it was a privilege to be escorted through it by Tom, who had managed NNRs, including Downton, for over thirty years. He has written several books since he retired in 2010, including the hugely informative *Downton Gorge: the Matchless Valley*. Rachel Jenkins reviewed the book in the *Transactions* volume for 2022 (*TWNFC* (70) 2022, pp. 194-7).

Tom noted the Club's first visit in 1853, shortly after it was founded. Before 1954, when women were first admitted as members, Annual Ladies' Days took place. Dr Henry Graves Bull led the first in 1869; 131 Woolhopians, including seventy ladies, came to the gorge by train and horse-drawn carriage. Dr Bull recounted that, early in the 19th century, the idyllic site had been an industrial centre, with twelve water mills supporting iron forging and with packhorses transporting ore from Clee. Charcoal had been produced from Bringewood Chase.

Tom explained that Bringewood Chase had once been a forest managed by Commoners. It had been privately owned until the Forestry Commission leased it in 1927 and replaced

deciduous trees with conifers. Some native trees had been replanted recently; young trees needed protection from the increasing deer population, of Roe, Fallow, and Muntjac.

He went on to talk about the local iron masters, the Knights, and how Richard Payne Knight, who had inherited his father's fortune in 1751, designed and built Downton Castle as an asymmetrical house, not in the neo-classical style. Since insufficient Downton Castle Sandstone had been quarried, it had been necessary to face-bed the stones, resulting today in severe delamination.

The underlying geology here comprises the Whitcliffe Formation, the lower boundary of nodular Aymestry Limestone, and the upper boundary of Downton Sandstone. Among many fossils, members of the party spotted the definitive fossil of the Aymestry Limestone, the brachiopod, *Pentamerous knightii (Kirkidium Knightii*), and heard of the discovery, in 1982, of the only headshield ever found of *Sclerodus pustuliferus*, a primitive, jawless fish, in the Downton Castle Sandstone of the Castle Bridge Mill Quarry.

The influence of geology on the flora was particularly evident. Among an enormous range, the party saw an early Purple Orchid, Toothwort, and the delicate Oak Fern, *Gymnocarpium dryopteris*, with its black stems, a target during the Ladies' Day of 1869 at the peak of the fern-collecting craze. Dr Bull reported that 'many roots (were) carried off by the ladies, although a single season will amply fill the vacancies'. Times change!

The party saw neither the rare *Cinclidotus riparius* Fountain Lattice Moss, found only in the flood zone of the Teme and other rivers to the west, nor the rarer lichen *Endocarpon adscendens*, although both have been recorded here. However, we did spot Tway Blades, Herb of Paris, several lichens and, throughout the gorge, Sanicle, Moschatel, Wood Anemone, Wood-sorrel, Meadowsweet, Woodruff, various violets, potentillas, and sedges, Garlic Mustard, and many more. Tom Wall noted that Dr Bull, the originator of fungus forays, had invited James Renny, the London mycologist, to Downton Gorge, where he had recorded *Cortinarius cinnabarinus* Cinnabar Web Cap, not found again until 2010.

Typical plants on rich, lower soils included Ash, Field Maple, Large and Small-leaved Lime, Hazel, Dog's Mercury, and Ransom, with large oaks and some Wild Service trees on poorer, higher ground.

Tom described Richard Payne Knight's vision of creating a picturesque landscape, a natural but enhanced environment to stir the senses through the changing sounds of the river and by leading the eye and feet to stunning views and new angles. To this end, a couple of caves, including 'the Switchback', had been created along with hair-raising alpine bridges. Yew trees had been planted, apparently to provide a focal point or to hide landscape features. It was possible to compare today's views with those in twelve paintings, which Knight had commissioned from Thomas Hearne.

At Hay Mill, the party tasted the refreshing juice of the Downton Pippin apple, kindly provided by Gisele along with wonderful cakes. The last section of the walk ran alongside a magnificent cliff of Aymestry Limestone before leaving the gorge near a final bridge across the river, in fact an aqueduct taking water from the Elan Valley to Birmingham. The remarkable Elan Dam was built in 1896.

This was a special field meeting in surroundings of outstanding interest. All expressed thanks to Tom and Gisele Wall for their time, the extent of their insights, and the pleasure of their company.

Second Field Meeting

Purlieu, West Malvern, Wednesday 3 May 2023. A bright morning greeted thirteen Club members, including the leader, John Payne, at the Wyche Cutting, Malvern.

At a nearby site, overlooking the Severn Valley, John briefly described the background to the geological history of the area over 700 My (million years). 'The Purlieu' is an unmetalled track, an ancient 'salt way' that leads steeply downhill to the west of the Malvern ridge. Before the party descended the hill, the geology that underpinned the view to the west was described. The landscape had resulted from the sea of the Silurian period, 440 My ago, lapping against the exposed Malvernian rocks, leaving a sandstone band and the succession of shales and limestones which the party crossed during the descent of the track.

The group soon entered Park Wood. To the west of the path was a long, opencast working, dug to extract the limestone. This opened onto a larger quarry face in the Much Wenlock Limestone. The face showed a cross-section through about seven metres of the bedding. The beds at the bottom of the quarry face were much thicker than those at the top, having been deposited in deeper water with less disturbance by wave action.

Lower down the hill, patch reefs were observed in a small quarry. Such reefs formed in an environment like today's Great Barrier Reef, in a warm, shallow sea, rich in marine life. Members soon found examples of brachiopods, crinoid ossicles, bryozoa, corals, and the tail section of a trilobite.

The remains of two large lime kilns were noted as the party emerged from Park Wood. This area, of a subdued topography bounded by ridges of limestone, is a good example of the Silurian ridge-and-vale landscape, well known from the Wenlock Edge region. A small stream here crosses a valley of shales. It has cut down through those shales but only as far as the next limestone ridge to the west, a good example of the effects of geology on stream profile.

After lunch at the Wyche Inn, three local, Precambrian quarries were visited. In Tolgate Quarry, the area of the central boss shows very different types of dark-coloured rock to those seen elsewhere locally, with more iron and magnesium yielding primary minerals, like biotite mica, and secondary minerals such as chlorite. A form of glimmerite was also observed. In Upper Wyche quarry, we saw a red granite resting on top of a very large intrusion of dark-grey dolerite. Finally, on the west side of the Wyche Cutting, just behind the bus shelter, is a small quarry face, where rock shows the effect of the tectonic force called 'the Cheltenham Drive', directed from the south-east during the Variscan Orogeny. The pressure of the Cheltenham Drive caused the rock to be sheared and/or crushed, resulting in the shear zones and schistose rocks seen here.

This concluded a thoroughly enjoyable day of geological appreciation. On behalf of the group, Sue Olver expressed her thanks to our leader, John Payne, for his excellent presentation and choice of sites.

Third Field Meeting

Blackfriars Rose Garden and Coningsby Hospital, Wednesday 17 May 2023, led by Anne Harbour.

Members gathered at the Blackfriars Preaching Cross, which was heavily restored in the 19th century and which Pevsner believed to be the last surviving cross still in its cemetery.

Anne Harbour led the group around the friars' refectory, converted by Sir Thomas Coningsby into his town house in the late 16th century. An analysis of some aspects of that conversion could be found in the *Transactions* of 2018, pp.109-16. She noted that, after being heavily damaged during the Civil War, the house had fallen into ruin. Herefordshire Council

now cared for the Grade II* Scheduled Monument under the guidance of Historic England.

Anne explained that the Hereford & West of England Rose Society had planted the Blackfriars Rose Gardens in 1964, as a gift to the City of Hereford, to mark their centenary in 1967. The ten initial beds were expanded to twenty-eight, maintained by council gardeners until financial problems hit in *c*.2006. In 2017, a NADFAS Parks & Gardens team had researched the garden history, under the guidance of David Whitehead, and replanted the rose beds, aided by Geof Tarring, then Manager of Parks & Gardens in Herefordshire. In addition to caring for the roses, the Friends of Blackfriars Rose Gardens had planted the perimeters of the gardens to attract bees and other insects.

Anne pointed out the four new memorial benches that had been added recently for visitors. One honours George Thomas, for his over twenty years of service to the City through Hereford in Bloom; another marks the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. The Coningsby Hospital & Museum occupies the small hospice and chapel established by the Knights of St John of Jerusalem in *c*.1225.

Preb. Andrew Talbot-Ponsonby, a long-standing member of the Club and chaplain to the hospital, welcomed the group to the museum and the alms houses, the latter established by Sir Thomas Coningsby in 1614 for old soldiers, sailors, and servants. On three sides, the alms houses adjoin the museum to form the courtyard that pensioners still enjoy under the trust that Sir Thomas established.

The party enjoyed tea, served at the end of the visit, and thanked Anne and Preb. Talbot-Ponsonby for so interesting an afternoon.

Fourth Field Meeting

Herefordshire/Gloucestershire border, Saturday 27 May 2023. Unfortunately, this Field Meeting had to be cancelled.

Fifth Field Meeting

Offa's Dyke, Thursday 8 June 2023, led by Professor Keith Ray. A lively party boarded two small coaches for an exploration of Offa's Dyke in Herefordshire and Powys, ending with a visit to the Offa's Dyke Centre in Knighton.

Prof. Ray explained that the Dyke, built late in the 8th century, ran from the Severn near Chepstow to Prestatyn on the Irish Sea, a monument of astonishing scale and an expression of power in the border zone between Offa's kingdom of Mercia and the Welsh kingdoms. He believed that it had been built over a few years only and that 8th-century Mercia could deploy the labour, resources, and skills to deliver what would be a demanding project even today. Thinking about the Dyke was ongoing; for instance, he now believed that it had been built on a massive scale throughout, rather than at a different scale in different places, as suggested in his book of 2016 (*Offa's Dyke, Landscape and Hegemony in Eighth-Century Britain*, with Ian Bapty). Variable survival thus reflected differences in land use over the last 1200 years and not the original build.

Using LiDAR to reinforce other evidence, Liam Delaney's paper in *Offa's Dyke Journal* 3, 2021, had demonstrated clearly, for the first time, that Offa's Dyke had run continuously from Rushock Hill to Bridge Sollers, on the Wye west of Hereford. The day began by exploring parts of Herefordshire relevant to this work, with the first stop to view the Dyke as it ran northwards from the Wye to approach Garnon's Hill. Although high vegetation made it hard to see, the Dyke had evidently crossed the Roman road running to Brecon, thus posing questions about whether

it had blocked the route or whether a gateway had been installed. Prof. Ray thought the latter far more likely; evidence that control of movement and tax collection were both part of the Dyke's purpose was becoming ever stronger.

During a second stop, near Moorhampton, the line of the Dyke could be discerned as it approached Ladylift / Burton Hill. Soon afterwards, at Woonton on the A480, a very substantial bank was observed running along the eastern side of the road. Prof. Ray explained that other traces could be found next to the A480, but that much of the road—originally a turnpike—had been built over the Dyke. Perhaps the surviving bank at Woonton had been too big to remove.

Two longer visits followed, to Pen Offa (Bwlch) and Yew Tree Farm (Discoed), west of Presteigne. At Pen Offa, earthworks additional to the Dyke and a flat area further up the slope were visible. Prof. Ray suggested that a gateway had been placed here, and that the earthworks represented areas where cattle and livestock could be penned prior to movement across the Dyke and tax collection, all overseen from a viewing platform, the flat area above. He believed that excavation would be justified in so interesting a location.

At Discoed, a massive bank, deep ditch, and prominent counterscarp bank survive. Prof. Ray pointed out scatters of stone, indicating that the Dyke had been capped, and how the bank had been built in 'adjusted segments', that is in sections that met and ran at a slightly offset angle so that, in the case of slippage, even on steep slopes, only a short length would be damaged. These features were clearly visible and are characteristic of Offa's Dyke along its entire length.

At the impressive Offa's Dyke Centre in Knighton, the party reviewed the new, high-quality exhibition, curated by Prof. Ray, a key step in upgrading the Offa's Dyke Association's communications, which would also focus on outreach. Dave McGlade, Chairman of the Association, gave a talk briefly reviewing its history but mainly its role in conserving the monument and in research. A major survey in 2017, suggesting that only 8.7% of the Dyke was in favourable condition, had spurred the Association and authorities managing the Offa's Dyke national trail into greater action.

Members thanked Dave McGlade for his talk and for making the party so welcome. The afternoon ended with a stroll past Offa's Dyke in the park above the Teme. All expressed thanks to Prof. Ray for a remarkable day; enjoyable, stimulating, and full of fresh insights. It was plain that scholarship and thinking about the monument and its historical context were moving ahead.

Sixth Field Meeting

Presidential Day at Weobley, Thursday, 15 June 2023, led by Prof. Rachel Jenkins, Simon Ware, David Whitehead, and Duncan James.

It was as well that members had been warned to come prepared with hats, sunscreen, etc., as this was necessary protection on a very hot day. Wellies were an optional extra, as much for protection from nettles as from moisture, and your scribe is glad he did not opt in!

After initial uncertainty about the meeting place, the full party of twenty-four met at the village hall. The President had already outlined the principles of sustainable farming, and now we were introduced to our host for the first part of the day, Simon Ware, who farms at Throne Farm. As a leading proponent of sustainable and regenerative farming, he has been investigating and developing methods over many years. He was a leading contributor to the information about tenets of sustainable farming in the Club's major exhibition on the River Wye in 2022, which continued to be exhibited in public buildings across the county, through 2023 into 2024.

Over the next two hours, he explained the principles he adopted and the detailed measures he took to reduce, if not eliminate, leaching of phosphates from the land at Throne Farm into the

watercourses. He quoted a remarkable statistic: it was estimated that the Wye could cope with about 300 tonnes of phosphates per year without damage, and yet best estimates suggested that about 3,000 tonnes per year were entering it. This partly resulted from topsoil being washed off cultivated land during heavy rainfall, a process that also reduced the quality of the remaining soil. Very much less run-off occurred if the soil was not left bare and if there was a minimum use of the plough.

In the past, tests had shown that although there were enough phosphates in the soil, the levels in crops and pasture were lower, indicating that the phosphates were not stored in a form readily available to the plants. Land-management strategy had been altered to address this, first by going through a deprivation stage, with no use of supplementary fertilisers, and next by encouraging fungal and bacterial development to build up the health of the soil: for instance, doing away with monocultures was helpful in this respect.

Simon went on to discuss the disposal of manure from intensive poultry houses and from run-off when poultry were kept outside on an intensive basis. In Herefordshire, there was a large surplus of phosphates from this source, which even anaerobic digesters did not eliminate, and current levels of leaching into the Wye could not be sustained. In other parts of the country, such as East Anglia, there was a lack of phosphates, but the cost of transporting manure was high, both economically and environmentally. It would, of course, be better if the production and disposal of the waste products were in the same area, but there was an economic cost to achieve that. There was no easy answer.

He pointed out that water was tested for phosphates, in positions where drains ran off from his and neighbouring farms, to ensure that the level permitted for the Wye catchment area was not exceeded. This had proved effective; for example, although one set of tests showed that, overall, the water was of acceptable quality, it had also identified one drain where this was not the case, and corrective measures had been put in place.

Simon touched on the use of fungicides and herbicides. Their deployment was counter to the philosophy of the farm, which encouraged natural balance, but it was sometimes necessary to use chemicals such as glyphosate to deal with specific weed problems. Since inappropriate, widespread use of this weedkiller (as a dessicant at the harvesting stage of some crops) was associated with increased risk of cancer, it was only used at Throne Farm as a last resort, and then well away from any crop intended for human consumption.

Of course, it is only possible to pick out highlights of a very interesting and somewhat demanding technical discussion, but Simon's explanation of how he was working with nature and natural processes, whilst guided by science, was very much appreciated. The wish was expressed that others would go down this path.

After a lunch break to recover and rehydrate, we reassembled in the north bailey of the ruinous castle at Weobley, where David Whitehead went through its known history.

Although a deer park in the hands of the de Laci family had been mentioned in the Domesday book in 1086, there was no mention of a castle. The site of the earliest castle was uncertain. David mentioned a possible (small) motte at Garnstone to the south and the research report on Weobley Castle and its history, published in 2006 and funded under a local-history initiative, in which a possible early castle, to the west of the north bailey, was suggested. On the other hand, he felt that the first castle might in fact have been in its current position! He described the evidence of a castle at Weobley during the Anarchy, in the mid-12th century, and of surviving accounts that indicated money being spent on it during the 14th century. When Leland had visited in the 16th century, the castle was in decay.

Discussions took place about the value of the site map that Silas Taylor had produced in 1655, since it seemed suspiciously regular and did not seem to fit the topography. With limited intervention, the research report of 2006 had left the difficulties unresolved, and there was scope for modern techniques to identify the sites of former buildings.

The party left the castle by a path on the south side of the motte. On Hereford Road, Duncan James began a tour of some of the interesting houses of Weobley, long known for its half-timbered buildings.

On the way down to the village centre, Duncan pointed out a timber-framed house, sideways on to the road, which had been encased in brick in the 18th century. As we neared the end of the street, the owners of the Old Grammar School, formerly lived in by a long-time member of the Woolhope Club, kindly invited us into their home. All admired the restoration carried out in recent years (and also the Austin Seven in the drive!). Over the road was the Throne, with very early origins (the farm was named after it). Round the corner, we viewed the outside of the Unicorn Inn, a 17th-century building adjoining a row of half-Wealden type houses, a Weobley speciality. Duncan was able to explain how they differed from the Wealden-type houses of the Weald of Kent and Sussex.

Nearby, the range of four medieval shops date from the third quarter of the 15th century. After looking at the façade, we crossed the road to view the exterior of another half-Wealden house. To the south, a further range of half-Wealden houses is hidden behind a much later brick frontage and, to the north, another example, also hidden behind a later façade. We entered the butcher's shop, where Duncan pointed out the alterations made to the exposed timber inside. On the far side of the road, it was possible to view, at first-floor level, the exposed timbering of what is now the Green Bean Café, another medieval shop. Warm members were very pleased to buy an ice cream as well as local honey!

En route to the church, the former Red Lion was prominent. Its former hall was rebuilt in the 18th century: Duncan suggested, with a high degree of probability, that crucks from that hall were used to build the cruck-framed building to the north. On the corner opposite the Red Lion is the Corner House, a medieval hall house, which has lost its service wing and has the door frame of the former cross-passage incorrectly restored. The wing at the back, a former barn, is not *in situ*, and has been re-erected from elsewhere, a trap for an unwary historian!

Finally, we viewed the Manor House in Bell Square, a splendid, medieval hall-house. The owner, a member of the Club, very kindly invited us in so we could admire the lower cruck truss in the former hall, and the two levels of cusped wind-braces in the roof. This permission was much appreciated.

Thus ended a hot and tiring day, but one that was particularly worthwhile and instructive. Field meetings rarely incorporate three substantial topics, all handled with such expertise. Many thanks were expressed, to the President for making the arrangements and to the speakers for a day of sustained quality and interest.

Seventh Field Meeting

Black Mountains, Saturday 8 July 2023, led by Alan Bowring. Alan is a National Park Warden who knows the geology of the area extremely well and has made a 3D map of the terrain.

This field meeting took place in the stunning Vale of Ewyas, one of many valleys that pierce the Black Mountains. Here, landscapes are etched into the Old Red Sandstone of the district. The four-mile excursion from Capel y Ffin examined the role of ice and water in the evolution of the valley, in the context of the wider border area. The relevant geology map (BGS

Sheet 214, Talgarth) shows the ‘layer-cake’ strata based on the St Maughans and Senni formations. The valley's U-shaped cross section is thought to have been excavated by ice during episodes such as the Anglian glaciation of 450,000 years ago. The valley is drained by a river, the Afon Honddu.

The walk started at the hamlet of Capel y Ffin, at the Church of St Mary, a chapel of ease to Llanigon, built in 1763. It is set in the upper reaches of the Vale of Ewyas, colloquially referred to as the ‘Llanthony Valley' and surrounded by beautiful, ancient yew trees.

The group stopped for lunch at an intriguing feature first seen from across the valley (and centred on SO 254307), a bowl-shaped depression in the hillside. Alan explained that the feature had been variously interpreted as a glacial cirque and a landslip, whilst the bank had been seen as a cirque moraine or as a pronival (or protalus) rampart, formed when periglacial rock debris fell from a cliff onto a snow slope. However, each of these explanatory models posed some difficulties. The site is recorded as a RIGS (‘Regionally Important Geodiversity Site', the equivalent of the English LGS or ‘Local Geological Site') where a landslip/rampart origin is asserted.

Following tracks west-north-west across the ground brought us to an upright, rectangular, two-metre block of Old Red Sandstone, identified as a post-medieval ‘rubbing stone'. Moss species growing on it pick out weathered bedding planes (now upright).

Descending into a broad and partly boggy hollow, the group observed a huge block of tufa, sometimes referred to as the Honeycomb Rock (SO 238316). Tufa is a porous limestone formed by highly calcified water flowing across a surface and depositing calcium carbonate, which builds up over hundreds or thousands of years. The Tufa rock hosts a community of lime-loving spleenworts and other simple plants. It is no longer accreting, but springs can be seen in its vicinity.

As we retraced our steps to the rubbing stone, a right turn led back to Capel y Ffin, passing the monastery. Unlike Llanthony Priory, a few miles down the valley, which became redundant during the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 1530s, the monastery at Capel y Ffin is of 19th-century origin. The party expressed thanks to Alan Bowring, always an outstanding leader of field excursions in areas that he knows so well.

Extra Field Meeting

Arthur’s Stone, Friday 21 July 2023, led by Professor Keith Ray.

Some forty members met with Prof. Ray, at Arthur's Stone, to view investigations undertaken through partnership between Manchester University, Cardiff University, and Herefordshire Archaeology, with the permission of English Heritage and Historic England. Prof. Ray was co-director of the project with Prof. Julian Thomas.

The work of the previous two years had revealed traces of an original turf mound, a drystone wall forming a horn work and forecourt around the capstone area, and two parallel lines of large postholes, leading south-east towards the Skirrid. The campaign of 2023 sought further understanding of the monument, the phases of build, and the surrounding landscape.

In the field north of Arthur's Stone, a trench dug to investigate a possible long barrow had revealed natural Old Red Sandstone bedrock but nothing archaeological. However, the slight, oval-shaped ring of mounded material, occupying much of the centre of the field, had proved to be a quarry. A single, long trench across it had provided evidence of extraction and of stones being sorted, with those discarded filling up the central quarried pit. Given the absence of modern objects or debris, the manner of extraction, and scattered worked flints, it was likely that the

quarry had supplied stone for the dry-stone walling at the monument, a rare find. Future excavation might investigate working spaces, help estimate volumes quarried, and seek further artefacts—e.g., more worked flints and perhaps the antler picks used for mining and quarrying in Neolithic Britain—to reinforce confidence that the quarry was indeed of Neolithic date. The capstone could have come from local outcrops, but quarrying over centuries might have destroyed the source.

During the day, a drone was taking video and creating a detailed aerial survey, to be combined with terrestrial survey results. Prof. Ray explained the varied landscape thought likely in the 4th millennium BC, with some very limited growing of crops, extensive woodland, and partly cleared areas. People might have lived fairly mobile lives but have come together communally; the large timber buildings found on Dorstone Hill were believed to have been centres for that purpose. No contemporary smaller houses had been found in Herefordshire although their material traces might be too ephemeral to discover.

He also noted that Herefordshire was not isolated at this time. Previous finds of rock crystal and flint from distant places had now been complemented by a piece of the obsidian-like, black, and glassy volcanic rock known as ‘pitchstone', found only in natural dykes on the Isle of Arran. This find was likely to be the most southerly ever reported since most discoveries were limited to Highland and Lowland Scotland.

At the main monument, Prof. Ray explained the evidence that the crack dividing the huge capstone had appeared when the stone was first being installed. This had blocked the intended entrance to the main chamber: it had probably never been used for burials and had been replaced by a new chamber in front of the blockage.

Prof. Thomas and Dr Nick Overton explained findings deriving so far from excavations on the northern side of the monument, where well-preserved built structures and deposits survived, just below today's ground level. The sequence of construction was becoming clearer: first a turf mound; next the main chamber and capstone, surrounded by a wall made from boulders; and later the enclosing drystone wall and horn work, as well as a passage leading to the entrance, which may have offered additional burial space. Upright stones had been inserted next to the outer wall to help decommission and seal the monument.

Although acidic soil might prevent discovery of intact bone, evidence elsewhere suggested that the chamber was probably used for a few generations at most, to bury perhaps thirty to forty people. Plainly there had been criteria for deciding who would be buried in this way. It was thought that, once de-commissioned and sealed, the monument continued to be important as a place of the ancestors.

Members gave fulsome thanks to Prof. Ray and his colleagues. It had been a privilege to see such an excavation in progress and to have leading authorities give so much time. The group looked forward to the final results of the 2023 campaign and to further investigations.

Eighth Field Meeting

Kilpeck, Saturday 18 August 2023, led by David Whitehead, Vice-President.

On a fine afternoon, some thirty-five people gathered on the green adjoining Kilpeck Church. The Vice-President, David Whitehead, explained that his mission was to provide an explanation for the famous Romanesque sculpture found on the small village church. He thought that the clue, often ignored, lay in the extended enclosures which surrounded the adjoining castle. A short walk was taken into a raised paddock, to the west of the castle mound, where Mr Whitehead pointed out the ditch and revetted wall which encircled the field, implying that it was

a defensive enclosure. The distinguished castle scholar, Cathcart-King, believed that it was possible to detect at least five 'baileys' around Kilpeck Castle.

To view the situation more clearly, the group walked around the western ditch of the castle mound to stand on the lip of the dry moat, where other enclosures could be detected to the east. More thrilling, however, was the panorama to the north-west, which embraced the full length of the Black Mountains. Deep below our feet was the Great Mere, created by an unnamed stream running towards St Devereux.

In this striking setting, Mr Whitehead referred to Domesday Book (1086), reading part of the prologue to the Herefordshire section which referred to the Welsh district of Archenfield. Here, we are informed that, before 1066, the Welshmen of Archenfield formed an advance guard when the king progressed into Wales, with the implication that King William expected this service too. Elsewhere, we learn that this force numbered 100 men.

Mr Whitehead then turned to the entry in Domesday which specifically refers to Kilpeck. It was listed among the king's lands, but its tenant in chief was William fitz Norman. Here, we find fifty-seven men who pay a honey tax and serve in the king's army. Since they have ploughs, they also do some farming, and presumably they have serfs who accompany them on military service. We hear nothing about the other forty-three men, who are likely to have been found elsewhere in Archenfield. When required, they too presumably assembled at Kilpeck in the extensive baileys.

The party now examined what remained on the motte, *viz.,* two fragments of early 12th-century walling. These had recently been consolidated by Historic England, with financial help from the Whitfield Estate, which owns the land. The lord of Kilpeck was in charge of all the royal forests west of the Wye—Dean, Penyard Chase, Harewood, Haywood, and Treville. The castle was probably falling into decay by the end of the 12th century, albeit King John used it as a base for hunting in the early 13th century. The royal forester moved to St Briavels in the Forest of Dean at this time.

The party now turned its attention to the church, where the secular carvings on the corbel table under the eaves attracted much attention. Mr Whitehead suggested that the profane and vernacular nature of the carvings was explained by the character of the clientele that had periodically assembled at the castle. The rough soldiers who gathered here for a sortie into Wales would probably have found them amusing. We could imagine them circulating round the church, picking out the crudities, and using them to embellish their own experiences. On the door surround, the stylized 'knights', struggling with serpents and devils, would have reminded the soldiers that on entering the church they left the brutish world behind.

The afternoon ended at 4.00 pm. The Vice-President's longstanding interest in this extraordinary site, a true gem of Herefordshire, was apparent, and the party thanked him for the many insights he had offered. The Kilpeck Inn provided not only tea and cream scones but also a fine location, where we could relax on the lawn and discuss what we had seen.

AUTUMN MEETINGS

All Autumn meetings were held in the Town Hall, Hereford.

First Autumn Meeting

Saturday 16 September 2023, Professor Rachel Jenkins, President, in the chair. Duncan James talked about 'Recent research into timber-framed buildings in Herefordshire'.

Duncan began by reviewing one of the first investigations he had undertaken, illustrating

the value of drawings and photographs. Sir Alfred Nicholls bought a derelict house, in Etnam Street, Leominster, before dismantling and rebuilding it in the grounds of Lingen House. It was later demolished, but from the evidence of careful photographs, which Sir Alfred had taken during dismantling, Duncan had been able to make a measured drawing and to identify anomalies, proving that the building had been moved before, in the 17th century.

He noted that research on timber-framed buildings in Herefordshire and the surrounding counties mostly concerned structures built between 1400 and 1700, and that it made use of sources such as the Royal Commission's volumes of the 1930s and, more valuable still, the handwritten notes of the inspectors. Jim Tonkins's articles for the Woolhope Club and the Vernacular Architecture Group were important too, including his paper of 1971 showing that base crucks related to high-status buildings.

Duncan explained that dating had been difficult in the past, since little documentation existed for vernacular buildings and since they were often plain, thus limiting clues from style or decoration. However, dendrochronology had provided firm dating since the 1960s. 126 buildings had been dated in this way in Herefordshire, compared with 119 in Gloucestershire, 151 in Worcestershire, and 252 in Shropshire. Numbers in Wales were lower.

He reviewed the use of the cruck frame, formed from substantial timbers. This was common in Herefordshire, both for early houses with open halls and for barns. He showed that full crucks were concentrated in western England, with none in the east. Lower Hope Farm, in Ullingswick, had been tree-ring dated to 1373 and was one of Herefordshire's earliest. The crucks that once stood over the open hall survived although the roof had been raised.

If dendrochronology did not produce a date—because the timber had been grown too fast or had rings that did not reflect the climate—a new oxygen isotope method could be deployed, as at Wellbrook Manor in Peterchurch, a base-cruck hall and one of the high-status buildings that Jim Tonkin noted in his paper of 1971. The felling date, between 1370 and 1400, was in the late 14th century, as for Lower Hope Farm.

He talked more widely about the pattern of building in Herefordshire in the 14th and 15th centuries and showed its consistency, with typically a three-unit design, featuring an open hall one or two bays long; a solar bay at the upper end; a service bay at the lower end; and a cross passage through the building at the lower end of the hall, adjacent to the service end. This could be developed with a crosswing, to enlarge the solar bay or the service bay: these usually projected at the back of the building, although the front often had a jettied first floor. Later, open halls were often modified, to replace a hearth with a fireplace and chimney stack and to create an upper floor, often with a decorative ceiling below.

Using numerous, high-quality drawings, Duncan illustrated how houses in Herefordshire had been developed, including Wellbrook Manor and Upper Welson Farmhouse at Eardisley, where the layout had been changed in the 17th century. The many phases at The Throne in Weobley illustrated complexity: here, tree-ring dating (1477-80) had identified the early date of a two-storey hall, and a three-bay range had been added in 1560, with access for coaches to a rear porch of 1575. Sometimes, only the crosswing of a hall house survived, as at The Old House, Orleton, tree-ring dated to 1467. In contrast, at Meadow Cottage, Weobley, the two-bay hall and the service bay had survived. Here the crosspassage, usually at the lower end of the hall, passed through the service bay, an anomaly also found in several houses in the village.

Our buildings recorder showed that hall houses fell out of favour in the 16th century, although they were frequently modernised and remodelled. New buildings often followed the former layout pattern but featured a ceiled, two-storey hall, one or more fireplaces, and glass

windows. Examples included Lower Burton Farm, near Eardisland; the Ley, a widely referenced building just outside Weobley; and Angel House in Kingsland.

At Angel House, the upper bay of the hall has a six-panel counterchange ceiling with five joists in each panel. The joists in each panel run in a different direction to those in the adjacent panels, giving a chequer-board effect, once mirrored in the floorboards of the room above. Duncan said that he had now identified about 100 examples of this particularly smart type of ceiling, concentrated in and around north Herefordshire, with a group in Devon. Only three had so far been identified further east, in Norfolk. He reviewed examples at Almeley Manor, with sixteen panels and heavily moulded beams; the elaborate version at 5 Old Street, Ludlow; curious ones in Radnorshire, with triangular joists; and the extraordinary 16th-century ceiling he had discovered at Great Quebb, Eardisley. Here, lifting floorboards during repairs had revealed a counterchange ceiling, with each of the fifteen panels infilled with four smaller panels, taking the total to sixty.

He went on to explore some common characteristics of Herefordshire houses, including the fact that most were laid out with the upper ends to the south-west and the service end to the north-east, presumably to help keep food cool. The front of the building usually faced the nearest road. In contrast, the aisled hall or barn was rare in Herefordshire. The example at Eaton Hall, near Leominster, had notched-lap joints (also found in the timber-framed belltower at Pembridge), suggesting a date in the early 13th century.

Towards the end of his talk, Duncan moved on to describe his research into assembly and saw marks and its diagnostic application. Assembly marks, inscribed on the component parts of the structure, indicated how parts should be put together on site, in the correct order. Many variations on basic Roman numbering were used, as were symbols for tally marking, such as the quarter and half circles seen at the Old Priory, Titley. Unusually, Arabic rather than Roman numbering appeared at Church House, Titley, something normally found in buildings such as cathedrals. Analysis of saw marks, combined with tree-ring dating, had produced a particularly important diagnostic result in Herefordshire; pit sawing had evidently replaced trestle-sawing between 1530 and 1540.

Duncan concluded at this point, noting that he was now engaged in new analysis of chamfer stops. The audience was startled by the rate at which research was progressing and hugely appreciated the quality of the drawings and photographs shown. All of this was reflected in questions and the vote of thanks.

Second Autumn Meeting

Saturday14 October 2023; The F. C. Morgan Lecture. Rachel Jenkins, President, in the chair. Dr. Stephen Roberts, Editor of the *History of Parliament*, spoke on ‘Radicalism in Herefordshire, 1640-1660’.

Dr Roberts, who has edited nine volumes of the *History of Parliament, 1640-1660*, began with a quotation from Robert Harley, who described Herefordshire as ‘the most clownish county of England’, using ‘clownish’ in the sense of ‘rustic’ or ‘rural’. At that time, the shire was relatively small, with a population of around 16,000 people. Albeit remote, it was relatively well-connected with London via Ludlow, a regional centre of government in the 16th and 17th centuries. In religious terms, it was very conservative; there were no preaching ministers and even the moderate puritan bishop, Herbert Westfaling (1586-1602), failed to reform the conservative clergy.

The principal puritan layman in the county in the early decades of the 17th century was

Sir Robert Harley (1579-1656) of Brampton Bryan, who had a large estate in the north of the county. He filled the livings under his control with radical puritans such as Stanley Gower (1600-1660). At the southern end of the county, Viscount Scudamore (1601-71) of Holme Lacy was building up a high-Anglican network, epitomised by the high-church fittings inserted into the restored abbey church at Dore. He was an admirer of William Laud, Charles I's archbishop.

Harley was one of the Members of Parliament for the shire and, in 1640, to demonstrate the religious conservatism of the diocese, he drew up the 'Puritan Survey'. This dismissed the clergy of the county *en bloc* and condemned, in no uncertain terms, the cathedral establishment, which, he suggested, should be dissolved and replaced with a puritan seminary. Harley's radicalism was also revealed when he began destroying medieval stained glass in London and, nearer to home, at Leintwardine.

Meanwhile, Parliament itself was promoting Presbyterianism, but Harley, holding high office in London, was unable to implement these reforms locally. Instead, he left his wife, Lady Brilliana, at Brampton Bryan to keep the flag flying for Puritanism. However, in October1643 she died of pneumonia whilst holding the castle against a royalist siege.

The Civil War in Herefordshire ended when, in December 1645, Colonel John Birch (1615-19) took the city of Hereford for Parliament. He shared Harley's religious views but was resented as an outsider. Moreover, he enriched himself with royalist lands and settled at Garnstone, near Weobley. The next generation of Harleys, led by Edward, tried to control the arrogance of the parliamentary fortune hunters, like Birch, who arrived in Herefordshire, seeking confiscated royalist estates. They were also zealous puritans and wished to reform the established church.

In 1646, Edward Harley was challenged by newcomers in the elections of that year. Much money was used on both sides during the elections on 'treats' (bribes), but Birch secured a seat in Parliament as the member for Leominster. Edward Harley found that he was disadvantaged in Herefordshire because of his Presbyterianism, which was associated in the popular mind with Scotland and the recent siege of Hereford by a Scottish army in 1645.

Hereford Castle was garrisoned by Birch, and among his officers were several radical preachers, like Wroth Rogers (d.1683). His Puritanism was far removed from the moderate Presbyterianism of Harley. Military rule was resented in Herefordshire; a petition was drawn up which opposed it and urged Parliament to pay more attention to the 'conversion of Wales'—a particular ambition of the Harleys. Equally shocking for the moderates in Herefordshire was the execution of Charles I in January 1649.

Military rule was established in the county via the New Model Army, commanded by Thomas Harrison (1606-60), one of the regicides. He was assisted by Wroth Rogers and a small group of Herefordshire men of low status, such as John Herriot of Holmer. However, this group drew up a petition in March 1650 begging Parliament for 'fit ministers', lower taxation, strict laws against adultery, the abolition of feudal tenure, and a ban on ironworks, which blocked the Wye navigation with weirs. Parliament responded with an Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales, which included Herefordshire. More radicals appeared in Herefordshire in the 1650s, purchasing ex-Royalist lands. Among them was the regicide, Henry Marten (1602-80), who bought the manor of Leominster. He was a genuine republican and a supporter of the Levellers.

All this was too much for the conservative gentry of Herefordshire. However, military rule and the assumption of regal powers by Oliver Cromwell, as Lord Protector, calmed the country down. It also took the sting out of the radicals, many of whom became 'quietists' i.e., they supported religious movements like the Quakers, who established deep roots in Leominster

and Ross but were generally unpopular among the lower classes.

In 1660, with the accession of Charles II, radicalism in Herefordshire faded away, and the rule of the local gentry was restored. The Harleys, who twenty years before had been regarded as radicals, were now seen as respectable conservatives. John Birch survived by collaborating with the Harleys, and just before his death he set up a splendid tomb in Weobley church. A few radicals retained land in Herefordshire, but their influence diminished. Bishop Croft returned to Hereford Cathedral, but the preaching ministry proposed by the radicals remained a remote aspiration.

After twenty minutes of questioning from the floor, the President warmly thanked the speaker to much applause.

Third Autumn Meeting

Saturday 11 November 2023, Prof. Rachel Jenkins, President, in the Chair. Stuart Hedley spoke on 'Initial Studies on the Vegetation of Herefordshire'.

In a beautifully illustrated talk, our Botany Recorder began by outlining the history of vegetation study in the UK and the emergence of a modern scheme today, moved on to describe work done so far in Herefordshire, and talked through plans to better understand the vegetation of the county, so many facets of which seem challenging to grasp.

Stuart briefly described the path which had led to today's National Vegetation Classification (NVC). Sir Arthur Tansley had been a great pioneer of plant classification in Britain, first publishing his book, *The British Isles and its Vegetation* in 1911. Later, the work of Derek Ratcliffe in the early 1970s, core data gathering to 1980, and a great deal of work to merge data sets led to the publication of the five volumes of *British Plant Communities*, between 1991 and 2000. This described the plant communities forming the basis of the NVC scheme.

He went on to outline techniques used to conduct a survey on NVC principles. The first step was to identify homogenous stands of vegetation, i.e., stands where the vegetation was similar in composition and structure. In this context, 'vegetation' comprised vascular plants, lichens, and bryophytes but not fungi. As became clear from photographs, identifying homogenous stands required skill and experience. With stands identified, samples were taken from each and results collated from the stands sampled. Sample results were pooled to assess two key factors: *constancy,* a measure of how often a species occurred; and *cover*, i.e., how much of the plant was present and when. A simple technique using the Domin scale (after Karl Domin, a Czech botanist) was deployed to assess cover for each species within a sample area. Results were finally compared with the national data set, a hugely helpful categorisation of vegetation by types identified within the NVC.

Stuart noted that, in Herefordshire, various areas of grassland had been subject to *ad hoc* surveys between 1982 and 2021. It was likely that most SSSIs had been surveyed to varying standards, but the results lay in archives and might require a freedom of information request to access them. There was much scope for a more systematic approach to provide a clearer picture of our county.

In contrast, he noted that, for woodland, at least one systematic survey had been conducted. This was a three-year project summarised in *Ancient Woodlands and Trees of Herefordshire: Our Heritage Revealed. Woodland Restoration in Herefordshire Project Summary Report 2006-2009.* Written by the Project Officer, David Lovelace, this multi-faceted study included an important collation of data sources and was also pertinent to vegetation. *Ad hoc* work had also been done for woodlands, including an NVC survey of the

Downton Gorge NNR in 1999; there were some useful articles in the *Transactions;* and probably, with the same qualification as for grasslands above, surveys of most SSSIs. A survey of the Wye Valley Woodlands SAC was undertaken in 2019.

For the future, Stuart intended more sampling of vegetation in woodland, to investigate potentially subtle variance within woodland communities on the Moor Cliffs, Freshwater West, and Brownstones formations, and on drift-free soils; to assess the special character, if any, of the more free-draining Silurian strata of the Wigmore Dome and far south-east of the county; to begin to collate data from our (relatively few / localised) woodlands over limestone; to accumulate data for our very few, older wet woods on seepage or alluvium; and to consolidate illustration of community pattern in remaining medieval parks and wood pastures.

For grassland, he planned structured sampling to demonstrate the acid-neutral continuum across Herefordshire; as with woodland, to investigate potentially subtle variance within communities on the aforementioned beds of the Old Red Sandstone; to understand better where acid grassland and heathlands express in the landscape; to better illustrate grassland and mire relationships; and to improve understanding of grassland expression over limestone. New analysis of grasslands at Brampton Bryan and Bradnor Hill now appears in this volume of the *Transactions.*

After a series of slides illustrating the—sometimes dramatic—impact of underlying geology on plant community had been reviewed, the lecture drew to a close with consideration of how study of essentially small relicts of countryside could help build a picture of a prior whole, a point wittily made as an image of the *Mona Lisa* came together from fragments. A concluding observation of this whole was then made: that vegetation in Herefordshire, for climatic and geological reasons, was strikingly liminal, that is 'between or belonging to two different places'.

The audience was most appreciative of the talk, the first on a topic of this kind for some years and one which made it clear how much well-organised work could add to an understanding of our county's vegetation.

Winter Annual Meeting

Saturday 25 November 2023; David Whitehead, Vice-President, in the chair. Apologies were received from Rachel Jenkins, President, who was unavoidably absent.

Officers and committee members for 2024-25 were appointed, by vote of the meeting, to take up their roles from the Spring Annual Meeting 2024. It was announced that Mr I. K. Porter would resign as Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Membership Secretary with effect from that Spring Annual Meeting, and that Dr J. Adams had indicated that she did not wish to continue as Hon. Secretary but would fulfil the duties of the post for the time being. Acting officers would be advised to members as appropriate.

Once the Club business was complete, Dr. John van Laun spoke about: 'The 'destruction' of Hereford Cathedral: preservation, restoration and intervention.'

As a prelude to his talk, Dr van Laun produced an encaustic tile, made by Godwin & Co of Lugwardine, which he had recovered from the site of Longtown chapel, a building rebuilt by George Gilbert Scott in 1857. At that time, Scott was engaged in a comprehensive restoration of Hereford Cathedral, work that involved the wholesale replacement of the earlier Romanesque fabric, just a few years after Kilpeck had been recognised as a Romanesque masterpiece. In many respects, the fabric being renewed at the Cathedral in the 19th century had parallels with that admired and preserved at Kilpeck: as our speaker observed, this was rather ironic.

Hereford Cathedral had been subject to major restoration in the late 18th century,

following the collapse of the West End in 1783. The rebuilding, by James Wyatt, led to the disposal of much original Romanesque fabric, some of which was valued for its decorative character and was distributed as ornamental stone in gardens around the Cathedral Close. This was rediscovered in *c*.1840 by the then Dean, John Merewether, a serious antiquarian, and Canon Francis Havergal, who made a collection of the fragments which was put on display in the Bishop's Cloister and later moved to St John's Walk. This provided a reference collection to inform the next stage of restoration, which the Dean inaugurated in 1841 and placed in the hands of the architect, Lewis Knockalls Cottingham. Initially, he was employed to repair the windows at the east end of choir, but the perilous state of the crossing tower meant that 'patch and mend' was abandoned for a major campaign of reconstruction, taking in the crossing as well as the chancel. This added more ancient material to Havergal's collection, and more stone was added to the Dean's garden. These collections provided Dr Van Laun with a unique opportunity to compare the original work with what replaced it in the mid-19th century.

The capitals on the crossing piers of the nave were extensively repaired when the *pulpitum*, which supported the organ, was removed from the nave, thus opening up the chancel and choir. Dr van Laun used the illustrations in Thomas Garbett's *A Brief Inquiry into the Ancient and Present State of Hereford Cathedral* (1827), which show the capitals obscured and, therefore, the full extent of Cottingham's invention. This was aided by the speaker's detective work among the surviving stones. Most interesting was the context provided for Havegal's colour plate in *Fasti Herefordenses* (1869), Plate XV, which depicts, in vivid colours, the medieval washes. The speaker felt that the plate was rather speculative. Parallels were also drawn with Romanesque features found at Kilpeck, e.g., the tree of life motif on the tympanum, which appears upon a stone in the Dean's garden and was also carved at Dymock.

Dr van Laun stressed that, as an enthusiastic armature archaeologist, Dean Merewether found the early Georgian treatment of the choir intolerable. Much of the carving here had been damaged by the fixing of wood panelling so that a certain amount of creativity was necessary to restore something of the Romanesque character. Here again, the speaker introduced us to several images—both photographic and artistic—of the surviving stonework. Attention was also directed towards the re-cut Christ in Majesty, a contrast with the much-eroded original at Shobdon.

The final restoration of the Cathedral took place in the 1860s under the guidance of George Gilbert Scott. He too was keen to restore or replicate Romanesque detail, and surviving fragments of the damaged sculpture which he removed can also be viewed today: for example, a large fragment marooned in the Cathedral café.

Finally, Dr van Laun turned his attention to the remains of Bishop Robert's chapel, visible from the garden of the Bishop's Palace. This, he believed, contained worked stone from the earliest phase of the Romanesque in Herefordshire and deserved special attention. Equally interesting was a proto-Romanesque gryphon depicted on the Mappa Mundi. Finally, he paid tribute to Lewis Knockalls Cottingham, whose collection of Romanesque plaster casts, now in the Victoria & Albert Museum, enabled him to write his thesis on the subject. A copy of his study is held in the Hereford Cathedral Library.

There were many questions from the audience, and an interesting discussion ensued on state of the cathedral in the 18th and 19th centuries.

WOOLHOPE NATURALISTS' FIELD CLUB

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
for the year ended 31st December 2023

2022						2022	
		RECEIPTS					
							63854.84
65.96		Interest on investments	Subs Reserve	366.16			85000.00
28.26			GW Smith Reserve	156.29			33000.00
1782.01			Charity Bonds	2920.50			
59.37			National Savings	494.04			
	1935.60				3936.99	423.90	
						1824.30	
7011.12		General Subscriptions		6648.54		4499.03	
60.00		Sale of Transactions		0.00		30384.81	
91.21		Publishers Licensing Society (Royalties)		75.80		13000.00	
1296.62		Gift Aid Tax Reclaim		1250.80		21029.73	
		Miscellaneous		212.76		1118.66	
							72280.43
	8458.95				8187.90		
							254135.27
	10394.55				12124.89		
		PAYMENTS					
37.00		Insurance		37.00			
7578.74		Stationery, Printing & Binding		6865.48			
438.87		Meeting Expenses		422.54			
1819.60		Postage		2469.00			
429.00		Subscriptions		344.00			
141.61		Materials		330.97			
441.60		Website		489.60		260151.84	
		Miscellaneous		99.12			
1500.00		Grant for Downton Gorge Book (GW Smith Fund)					
	12386.42				11057.71	6016.57	
							254135.27
54.43		Field Meetings Account	Net Deficit	212.58			
3970.27		Library Account	Net Deficit	75.00			
	4024.70				287.58		
	16411.12				11345.29		
Deficit	6016.57		Surplus		779.60		254135.27

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2023

ASSETS			
National Savings Investments			64348.88
United Trust Bank Charity Bond			85000.00
Cambridge & Counties Bank Charity Bond			34518.00
Bank accounts:			
General	1905.55		
Subscriptions	472.84		
GW Smith Account	6057.82		
Subscriptions Reserve	27750.97		
GW Smith Reserve	13000.00		
Library Account	20954.73		
Field Meetings Account	906.08		
			71047.99
			254914.87

Note that the following assets of fluctuation or indeterminate value are not included in this balance sheet:
The contents of the library and stock of publications
Photographic and computer equipment etc.

CAPITAL			
General Funds			
Balance brought forward	254135.27		
Add surplus in year	779.60		
Deduct deficit in year			
			254914.87

Editorial Message

This year, we have formalised steps to support good sustainability practice in producing the *Transactions*. Our printers, Orphans Press, use paper that is either certified by the Forest Stewardship Council—that is from forests that are sustainably managed—or recycled. Orphans is also an accredited Carbon Balanced Printer in partnership with World Land Trust, a charity whose patrons include Sir David Attenborough. This means that Orphans have measured and reduced their carbon emissions and balanced what remains via the Trust's work in planting trees, as well as protecting and restoring threatened land and habitats. The Club has also supported this activity, to balance emissions arising from paper used for this edition. The Trust's Carbon Balanced Paper logo appears on the back cover.

This year's *Transactions* continues the plan to include strong material that reflects the range of members' interests, this time with the first paper (rather than recorder's report) on a botanical topic for some years. The paper, a high-quality analysis of two acid grasslands in North-west Herefordshire, is planned as the first in a series to document and characterise the vegetation of the county, a matter of ever-increasing importance at a time when understanding, protecting, and improving our natural environment is so high on the agenda. It is right that the Club should play its part in such efforts.

At the same time, the President's address and papers across a range of historical and archaeological topics share crucial characteristics; all of them are based around extensive research, and all strive to communicate fresh knowledge and understanding. At times, they offer startling, new insight into Herefordshire and its place on the wider stage.

It is pleasing too that the mix of new authors and authors familiar to us, whether as general readers and/or as members of the Woolhope Club, continues to be healthy, something that strengthens the publication for this year and for the future.

I would like to thank all our contributors, the members of the publications committee, the specialists who willingly review papers in their areas of expertise, thus helping both authors and the publication, and Suzy Craddock, whose proofreading is so valuable. As always, a special word of thanks is due to our recorders, whose work keeps us reliably informed about trends and events that affect Herefordshire and the surrounding counties and reinforces the value of the *Transactions* as a document of record.

Finally, my thanks to Ian Porter, who has provided his excellent weather summaries since 2015. Now that Ian has stepped down, we are seeking alternative means to record weather information, especially as climate change makes such data ever more relevant.

Terry Morgan

Biographies of Contributors

Brief biographies of four contributors who, for the first time this year, have written papers for the *Transactions,* are given below.

Stuart Hedley
Stuart Hedley is an environmental consultant who specialises in British vegetation. He has been an active member of the botanical recording community in the UK for forty years, working throughout Britain in its full range of habitats, before finally settling in Herefordshire's Golden Valley in 2015. His work experience was largely gained through various posts in the Nature Conservancy Council and its successor body English Nature, which gave privileged access to Sites of Special Scientific Interest and opportunities to engage in the complex issues around their management. Three years spent working in Spain then offered a very valuable perspective on Britain's wild plant heritage in its European context. In addition to being the Woolhope Club's sectional recorder for botany, he is the County Plant Recorder for Herefordshire and a trustee of the local charity, Herefordshire Meadows.

Andy C. Tatchell
Andy Tatchell has had an interest in watermills since he was at school, when he helped in the restoration of Finch Forge at Stickelpath in Devon. On leaving school, he trained as a mining engineer and worked in the industry for twenty years. In 1986, he acquired Mordiford Mill, a corn mill close to the confluence of the rivers Wye and Lugg at Mordiford, with the aim of restoring it back to working order to operate as a flour mill. The restoration took thirty-seven years, and the first sack of flour was produced in 2023. During this time, Andy undertook a lot of historical research on his own mill and surrounding mills. This revealed just how many there were in the area and also the yawning omission, that no proper account of the largest complex of medieval mills in the City of Hereford, the Hereford Mills, had ever been written.

Chris Saville
Chris Saville is a retired civil servant, having worked primarily for the Welsh Assembly and the Property Services Agency (PSA). Following retirement, he took a degree in history and then a master's degree, also in history, with the Open University. The dissertation for the latter forms the basis of the article about the Kington Police, contained herein. He is currently considering further research into the development of very early police forces in Herefordshire (i.e., prior to the establishment of an official countywide constabulary in 1857). He now works as a volunteer twice a week: for half a day at the Herefordshire Archive and Record Centre (HARC) and similarly as a guide for the Mappa Mundi and Chained Library at Hereford Cathedral.

Tim Hoverd
Tim Hoverd attended Bournemouth and Sheffield Universities before working in commercial archaeology. He joined Herefordshire Council in 1999 and is currently the Archaeological Projects Manager, undertaking community research and conservation projects within Herefordshire and neighbouring counties, assisting Historic England with management of scheduled monuments and heritage crime, and working in partnership with agencies such as the Forestry Commission, Environment Agency, and English Heritage.

Presidential Address
Shobdon Court, Herefordshire, and its Landscape: A Gardening Correspondence

By David Whitehead

Garden making is a transitory activity and, in the past, generally carried out for the élite by illiterate practitioners. It is thus rare to find a correspondence which deals with the minutiae of park and garden making, written by a figure at the centre of Georgian society such as Richard 'Dicky' Bateman, a confidant of Horace Walpole. However, such a correspondence survives for Shobdon Court, in the north-west corner of Herefordshire. Although today marked only by a fragment of its great mansion, what remains is surrounded by a substantial park, enhanced by a famous 'gothick' church (a Romanesque eye-catcher), a classical temple, and a large walled garden. The estate was put together by Sir James Bateman (c.1660-1718) in the early 18th century but, fortuitously, was slow in becoming the principal residence of this London-based family. Consequently, it was maintained by its steward, Benjamin Fallowes, who corresponded with his employers via regular letters. Fallowes recognised the risks of maintaining a great house and its estate at a distance and kept all the letters he received from a variety of family correspondents in case his guardianship was challenged. Embedded in these letters, now found in the Herefordshire Archive and Records Centre (HARC), is a gardening correspondence for the middle decades of the 18th century.

THE EARLY HOUSE AND GARDEN

Sir James Bateman (*c.*1660-1718) was the son of a Huguenot refugee, whose father established himself as a successful London merchant and became an alderman of the City. Sir James, who followed him, consolidated this position and held many offices: he was founding director of the Bank of England, director of the East India Company, and deputy director of the South Sea Company. Finally, he became mayor of London in 1716. It was through his acquaintance with another successful citizen and a fellow director of the South Sea Company, Sir Robert Chaplin, that he acquired Shobdon Court.[1] It seems likely that Chaplin began to build a new house at Shobdon, which is depicted on an undated print by John Harris, with the title 'the South Prospect of Shobdon Court in Hereford Shire. The Seat of Sir James Bateman, Knight' (Fig.1). The design of the house and gardens is quite old-fashioned for an early 18th-century date. The print is most likely to date from *c.*1690. Conveniently, the south front of the house is reproduced again—without any sign of a garden—in *Vitruvius Britannicus* (1717), by Colen Campbell (Fig.2).[2]

William Bateman (1695-1744), the 1st Viscount and eldest son of Sir James, also appears to have shown very little interest in Shobdon and, for personal reasons, spent much of his life abroad. However, in 1720 he married Anne Spenser, who was the daughter of Charles Spenser, Earl of Sunderland, and therefore granddaughter of John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough. Almost immediately after the wedding, she found herself at Shobdon, apparently without her husband, and a letter to her grandmother, Sarah, describes the house, suggesting that it was barely habitable. She writes that it was 'partitioned', i.e., divided up, and that the rooms were without floors or ceilings. Following her grandmother's advice, she removed the partitions to better

assess the scale of the house. On the positive side, she regarded its position 'as extreme good and the prospect four ways, the finest that is possible to imagine...it is as pleasant a place as much as I have seen of it, as ever I saw'.[3]

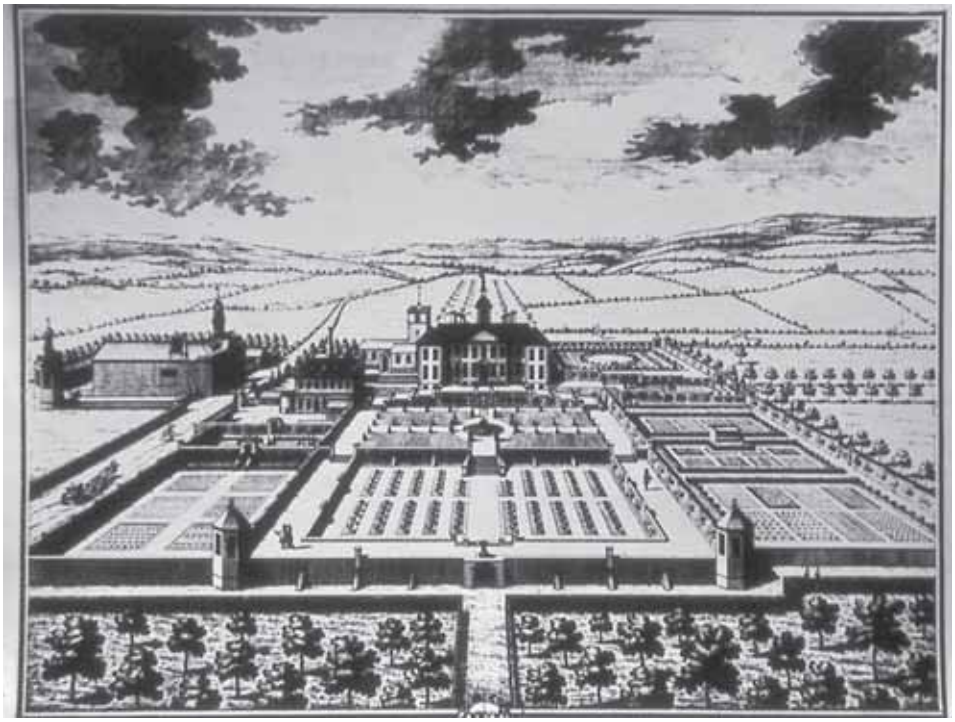


Figure 1. A print by John Harris, dating from *c.*1690. 'The South Prospect of Shobdon Court in Hereford Shire. The Seat of Sir James Bateman, Knight' (Hereford City Library)

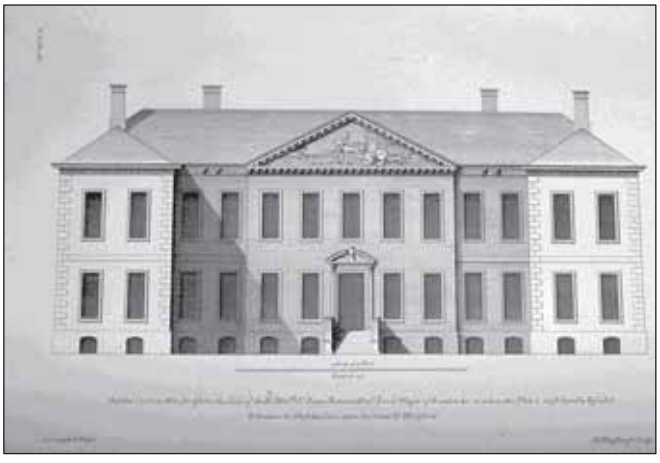


Figure 2. 'Shobdon Court in Herefordshire'. Colen Campbell, *Vitruvius Britannicus* II (1717), Pl. 60

COMPLETING THE MANSION

Bravely, with her husband very much in the background but assisted by a most capable steward, Benjamin Fallowes, who kept detailed accounts, she began, in the early summer of 1721, to give the house a grand interior, employing some very eminent craftsmen.[4] The first of several small payments were made to James Richards, a London stone carver. He had succeeded Grinling Gibbons as master mason to the crown in 1721 and was working at Kensington Palace, Kew, Whitehall, and St James's Palace. He appears in the accounts in August 1721 and is assisted by Nicholas Abraham and John Farroll, also from London. Some of the stone used in the building Robibmade a long journey. In August 1721, 'Ross stone' was carried by water to Hereford and by road to Shobdon. It was clearly regarded as special for, on a later occasion, at William Bateman's expense, a load was shipped from Ross to Gloucester for the use of the Duke of Marlborough, presumably at Blenheim Palace. Other stone came from Bristol by river, via Hereford to Shobdon, but a quarry was also opened on the estate at Coppice Wood and worked by George Saunders. A mason, Nicholas Abraham, was employed in September 'scalping' the stone, which, according to a later entry, was to prepare the stone for carving by 'the London masons', i.e., by Richards, who was a figurative sculptor.[5]

Accompanying Richards was the decorative plasterer, Isaac Mansfield, who received his first payment in July 1721, followed by further small sums in March 1722 when he was accompanied by his assistant, Charles Carlile. Mansfield was the most sought-after ornamental plasterer of the era and worked for another Herefordshire client, James Bridges, Duke of Chandos, at Cannons in Middlesex and possibly at The Mynde, Much Dewchurch.[6]

The carpenters and joiners are much more difficult to trace, but among the names that make repeated appearances are Robert Cook, David Morgan, and William Beverstock. The last was a joiner and received regular, large payments during 1721-2. Since they do not appear in other contemporary accounts in Herefordshire, they were presumably also outsiders, again probably from London.[7] The timber they used was also carried up the Wye to Hereford, but hardwoods were found locally at Titley and at Bronwood in Radnorshire.

Building permanent partition walls inside the shell of the house required a large number of bricks, which were all produced at Shobdon. Thomas Perks received an early payment of £13 in August 1721 for the wall around the garden and carting the bricks to the site. The bricks were made by William Matthews, and an adjacent entry in the accounts suggests that twenty-five loads of 'great and small' coal were employed to produce them. Another clamp was also built by Matthews and his team later in August 1721; this produced 55,200 bricks, for which he was paid £32 4s. 11d. A month later, another clamp produced 60,000 bricks, fired by a Robert Mackrell. Two bricklayers, William Lloyd and William Gray, worked throughout the autumn of 1721, laying the bricks. The obvious destination for many of these bricks was the walled garden to the west of the house, flanking the drive. Only the top end of this wall appears on the Harris print (Figure 1), suggesting that the walled garden had been another unfulfilled aspiration from the Chaplin era and that the brickwork of the early 1720s completed it. Lime was essential for making mortar but also for plasterwork. Rather conveniently, local limestone was available from Clee Hill and was carried to Shobdon, where it was fired in a kiln to make it suitable for mortar.

From September 1721, a good deal of glazing work was taking place. Margaret Price was paid £22 19s. for this, after Thomas Perks was paid for a 'days work in the great House to pull out the old windows'. Whilst the house was subject to this major overhaul, John Powell was employed as a night watchman to care for the fires drying the interior and to protect building materials. December 1721 was very cold, which made fires necessary every day. To protect the

new brickwork from frost, Thomas Perks was paid to cover the new work every night. The fires required fuel from coppiced woods, and throughout the winter Walter Taylor was rewarded for a regular supply of faggots. Extraction of wood and stone damaged roads and access routes, giving rise to calls for compensation and restoration. As the temperatures picked up in February, painting began, and Samuel Breach was paid for 'painter's work' and plastering in April. Bricks were still being laid, and in April nine tons and sixteen hundredweight of coal was delivered to Aymestrey to burn lime and make more bricks. We are left with the impression that no expense was avoided to obtain the best building materials available.

One of the last additions to the mansion came late in 1725, when Painswick stone and alabaster were brought to Shobdon, and a new craftsman, Thomas Scarborough, was paid for building a 'portico' or a pediment on the front of the house, in which he carved the Bateman arms. He was paid twelve guineas and, before he left, he also made a model for a chimney piece in the hall. Thomas Scarborough is difficult to trace, but it seems likely, given the metropolitan roots of the other craftsmen, that he was a relation of John Scarborough, the clerk of works responsible for building Greenwich Palace in the 1680s and 90s.[8] Most of the metropolitan craftsmen disappeared in the autumn of 1722. Work continued on the service buildings, large quantities of bricks were still being made locally, and 3000 tiles were delivered in July 1723 for 'the low house in the backyard'. Thomas Perks was still busy on the kitchen-garden wall in August 1723.

A SETTING FOR THE MANSION AND THE FIRST PARK

Meanwhile, changes were in hand to alter the setting of the mansion. Harris's perspective of *c*.1690 shows an elaborate, formal garden, divided into a number of enclosures which embrace the mansion on all sides. Each enclosure contains formal bedding in a variety of different styles. The ensemble is walled on the south and west, but on the east the garden is open and looks into a pasture bounded by an avenue of trees. To the north, the entrance front looks up an immature double avenue across rough pasture, which stops short of a boundary hedge. The gap shown in the hedge was later to be filled by the Arches. Harris's drawing gives little indication of the steep rise to the skyline, but generally the formal planting appears to be immature.

The accounts, by their very nature, make no specific reference to the eradication of the formal arrangements. It seems almost certain that avenues survived until the mid-18th century, when the 'Long Walk', which sounds very much like the main avenue depicted by Harris, is mentioned in 1747. The first sign of interest in the park comes early in the accounts, in June 1721, when Thomas Smith is paid £20 for 'building the park wall'. Work on the park wall seems to pause during the winter of 1722, but from April onwards the park receives copious attention; unwanted trees are rooted out, and the timber is sold. In their place, young trees, including ash, are planted. Stone is raised from unidentified quarries, and Elizabeth Mason is paid £4 8s. for carrying eighty-eight loads of stone to 'finish the wall below Swanpool', i.e., the park boundary on the east side of the entrance gates. Later, on 21 June, Thomas Smith receives a further £30 for 'park and garden walls' but is not finally paid off until August 1724. The large payments made to Smith suggest that he was accompanied by a team of workmen, but later evidence shows that the enclosure wall was incomplete and confined to the south.

A month later, on 17 July, the accounts produce a significant name which places the new Shobdon landscape, as created in the early 18th century, in the company of royal parks and metropolitan pleasure grounds. Thomas Greening was paid £50 'on account of gardener's work'.[9] He seems to have been assisted by Richard Barnard who, in December 1721, received a further

£50 'to pay the workmen employed in the garden'. In the following February, Greening received an additional £80 'to pay for his men for gardener's work done at Shobdon' (Figure 3).[10]

THOMAS AND ROBERT GREENING

The centre of Greening's empire at Shobdon was presumably the walled garden, across the drive to the west of the mansion (Plate 1.1). The accounts are very explicit: Greening was paid for 'gardener's work'. From the evidence of Harris's 'South Prospect' print, the walled garden had clearly existed before the Bateman era but now appears to have been extended considerably westwards. Certainly, the wall is a persistent feature in the building accounts, and when Thomas Perks, the bricklayer, first appears, he is paid for 'rebuilding the kitchen garden wall'. Only later does it become the 'new brick wall'. Substantial progress had certainly been made by the autumn of 1723, when peach and plum trees had been bought 'to be set in the Shobdon garden'.[11] In November, with first frosts threatening, the 'frame for the greenhouse' was protected with straw coverings. The walled garden appears to have become fully operative in the spring of 1725, when Henry Moule of Bridgenorth, apparently a nurseryman, received £1 0s. 8d. 'for seeds etc. [for] use of the gardens', and a year later supplied young elms for the garden, presumably as a shelter belt.



Figure 3. Payment of £80, in Benjamin Fallowes's account book on 26 February 1721, being the final payment to Thomas Greening 'for his men for gardener's work done at Shobdon.' (HARC, G39/98/916)

It is likely that the mansion would have had a simplified garden setting replacing the compartmentalised gardens shown on Harris's 'South Prospect', but this is only incidentally noticed in the accounts. In January 1723, three men spent three weeks 'raising timber' to make pales (fences) in the garden, and, in April, Fallowes claimed nearly five pounds for 'work on the lawn and flowerpots'. The latter were expensive and probably the large vessels often found in a formal arrangement near a mansion. In June, twenty-six bushels of grass seed were purchased and six garden scythes, whilst, in October 1725, £1 3s. 0d. was paid to a Worcester plumber 'who came to Shobdon to see if he could repair the fountain'.[12] In the following year, there was a plague of moles in the 'middle court', and Richard Taylor was paid 14s. 6d. for killing fourteen dozen of them. I suspect that these activities related to the immediate surroundings of the mansion, but they could just as easily be seen in connection with the walled garden. When the correspondence between Richard Bateman, William's younger brother, and Fallowes begins in *c.*1740, we are provided with further details of the immediate setting of the mansion. The fountain was causing trouble again and was losing water. Richard urged that it should be given a new clay lining, a task carried out by Robert Greening, Thomas's son, early in 1741. We also

learn that there were ornamental trees 'set in the walk around the house', which needed topping, and that the east lawn required a slope to be made.[13]

The nature of Greening's work at Shobdon is thus only incidentally described in Fallowes's accounts and letters, and after 1721 there are no further regular payments to him. It seems that, as a metropolitan artisan, he was paid by Bateman in London. Thomas Greening (1684-1757) was a very successful London nurseryman. During the early 19th century, he and his sons virtually monopolised the management of royal parks and gardens in and around London. In her book on Capability Brown, Dorothy Stroud notices that Thomas Greening preceded Brown as the designer of parkland and gardens at Kirtlington in Oxfordshire and Corsham Court in Wiltshire. Assuming correctly that many of her readers would not have heard of Greening, she provided an extended footnote recording other notices.[14] David Jacques, in *Georgian Gardens* (1983), also noted that, in 1751, Greening had a monopoly position with regard to the royal gardens and in effect kept Lancelot 'Capability' Brown at bay until the 1760s.[15] The gardens at Shobdon thus have a very significant pedigree.

Notwithstanding their prominent position in the metropolitan gardening world, the Greenings have, until very recently, been virtually ignored. However, an online article by the garden historian, Val Bott, has now rectified this lack of exposure. Bott also noticed that Greening was probably well known to Sir James Bateman, who owned a small estate at Castlebar in Ealing, a few miles from Thomas Greening's popular nursery at Brentwood. As we have seen, Greening makes his first appearance in the Shobdon accounts in July 1721, but Val Bott found a cache of letters in the National Archives, indicating that, in 1719, Greening leased Court Farm in the village of Aymestrey from Bateman, suggesting that Greening was brought to Herefordshire specifically to organise Bateman's new garden.[16]

It also seems likely that Greening was looking for a nursery site in the west of England to expand his business. Around 1720, he supplied fruit trees to Paul Foley for his new gardens at Newport House, Almeley, *c*.10 miles to the south-west of Shobdon, and in 1724 he was laying out an elaborate water garden at the Gnoll, near Neath in South Wales (Plate 1.2).[17]

Given that garden historians have been slow to acknowledge the significance of Greening as a garden designer, we can anticipate other discoveries in the provinces. In the Hereford sources, Thomas is recorded in 1733 as the gardener at Shobdon, employing staff there. He appears to have taken over from his father, who left his tools and some seeds behind for his son's use. They are referred to in an inventory of 1735 and include some surprising items such as thirty-seven orange trees, twelve pots of myrtle, and seeds 'not set down' worth 18 shillings (Figure 4).[18]



Figure 4. Thomas Greening's inventory of gardening tools, seeds etc., on leaving Shobdon in 1735 (HARC, G39/9)

Richard Bateman's correspondence with Fallowes in 1740-41 suggests that Greening had become a problem tenant during the years when William Bateman was absent from Shobdon.[19] When Richard Bateman took up the reins in 1740, the rent for the property at Aymestrey was £390 in arrears and, having paid for repairs for the Aymestrey property, he wrote strongly to Fallowes that 'as I fulfil my agreement, I do expect that he does his....or I shall stand undone; he shall never govern while I am master'. It seems fairly clear from other evidence that the Greenings were disenchanted by the situation at Shobdon, with William Bateman almost permanently domiciled in Paris and the estate run at a distance by his brother. Moreover, as no interest was being shown in developing the park, there was little for a family of ambitious garden managers to do. By 1740, Thomas senior and junior are chief gardeners at Richmond for Princess Caroline, and John Greening, the second son, was working at Claremont for the Duke of Newcastle. Robert, Thomas senior's third son, complained that at Shobdon he was marooned in a 'burial place for the indolent and not the industrious'.[20]

Since it seems unlikely that the Greenings laid out the parkland, which extended to 3,639 acres by the mid-19th century, we must look to other features at Shobdon for their creativity. Thomas was paid £180 in three instalments for his 'workmen' doing 'the gardener's work', which sounds like the formal layout immediately round the mansion and, perhaps, the extensive walled garden. As we have seen, Lady Bateman, Anne Spenser, took over a house that was barely habitable but, with the help of Fallowes, she embarked in 1721 upon its completion. The accounts imply that this was her priority; she may thus have ignored the park and looked back to an earlier gardening tradition, which was more suitable for a woman living alone. Contemporaries called this 'immuring', i.e., creating a pleasure garden which provided 'private Walks, Cabinets of Retirement and some select Places of recess for Reading and Contemplation' and, if carefully placed, could also 'open to all View to the unbounded Felicities of distant Prospects'.[21]

The accounts suggest that, apart from building a new boundary wall on the southern approaches to the mansion, Lady Anne concentrated upon her immediate surroundings, which included the mansion and the walled garden. Indeed, the accounts show that the latter was her priority (Plate 1.3). In an elevated position, it shared with the house fine views to the south, across the Vale of Leominster. Indeed, as *The Gardener's Magazine* noticed in 1838, the walled garden was badly placed because it was 'much too steep for convenient working'.[22] But the Victorians had no knowledge of walled gardens used as recreational assets, valued by their genteel owners as a quiet retreat from a busy house. Wide views would have been an added bonus. Moreover, just below this garden, on the south, there was the Swan Pool, suitable for boating (Plate 1.4). This appears on late 19th-century maps with a boathouse and, perhaps significantly, Fallowes's accounts mention £2 10s. paid in 1723 to Joseph Walker for 'trimming and repairing the boat and skip', providing Lady Bateman with some diversity in her 'immured' state.[23] The paucity of evidence on the making of the large park is thus explained because Lady Bateman deferred this expensive work until her husband returned from his travels. There is no sign of a paled park at Shobdon until Taylor's county map of 1754 (Figure 5).

In the event, Lady Bateman's interest in Shobdon was short-lived. Albeit early in their marriage William Bateman made regular short visits to Shobdon, most of his time was spent abroad without his wife. By the 1730s, Lady Bateman had fallen out with him permanently and took up residence on her brother's estate at Althrop, where she died in 1769. In these circumstances we can understand why she took her pleasure in her intimate walled garden and ignored the park which, after all, was basically a male playground.[24]

Thus, the Greenings and their labour force may not have been involved in the maintenance

of the park, and its planting and embellishment had, perhaps, to await the intervention of another male Bateman. Their attention was principally directed to the intimate walled garden. Greening's inventory of tools (1733) is typical of a hands-on head gardener, not a prototype of 'Capability' Brown, and includes hand rollers, six rakes, four Dutch hoes, six old water pots, three dung forks. two reels and lines, four long frames, nine and half dozen flowerpots, and a long list of garden seeds, including four quarts of 'Greenings fine peas', i.e., from his nursery at Brentwood End, Isleworth. This equipment does not belong to a man in charge of a 3000-acre park but is more typical of a nurseryman, called in to design and manage a recreational walled garden and the immediate policies of a new mansion.[25]



Figure 5. The park pale as drawn on Isaac Taylor's *New Map of the County of Hereford* (1754)

THE INTERVENTION OF RICHARD BATEMAN

Richard took his responsibilities for the well-being of the Shobdon estate very seriously, and between 1739 and 1767 he wrote over 400 letters to Fallowes, sometimes two a week. He managed the financial affairs of the estate with the help of a clerk or personal assistant, who often followed up Richard's requests with more formal letters. Richard, it seems, was also responsible for forwarding the income from the estate to his brother. Occasionally he became quite assertive, but Fallowes generally satisfied him, albeit we never see his letters. There was very little that did not come within Richard's purview, which ranged from choosing wallpapers for a bedroom, hanging a picture sent from abroad, or dealing with recalcitrant tenants. If a more hands-on approach was needed, he had horses sent from Shobdon to London and turned up in person. He was quick to show appreciation of Fallowes's endeavours, but also kept him on his toes by noticing fairly minor irregularities in his book-keeping. He had a detailed knowledge of the tenants and even minor members of the household. During hard times, he issued generous instructions for the relief of the poorer members of the Shobdon community, and several letters are concerned with the management of the Shobdon workhouse or manufactory.

These remote domestic issues, which never seem to tire or irritate Richard, were far removed from the fashionable life he lived in London and at Grove House, on the Thames at Windsor. The latter, according to his close friend Horace Walpole, was a shrine to 'sharawadgi' taste, i.e., Chinese culture. To confirm his oriental leanings, in 1741 Richard had himself painted in Chinese costume, reading a Chinese manuscript, with a building enhanced with Chinese fretwork in the background. His house—painted twice by the Gloucestershire artist Thomas Robins—was full of Chinese knick-knackery (as well as much else). It was set in a fourteen-acre meadow, broken up with irregular flowerbeds—very unusual for the time—and embraced by a meandering walk, punctuated by seats and 'alcoves', some of which were also in the Chinese style. Richard's exotic tastes, according to his friend and neighbour, Horace Walpole, were eclectic, and by the 1750s he had persuaded him to change his 'religion' and converted him from

'Chinese to a Goth'. Consequently, every pagoda in his garden 'took the veil'. In his gothic mood of course, Richard embarked, early in 1749, upon the rebuilding of Shobdon Church.[26]

THE SUCCESSION OF JOHN BATEMAN, 1744

The letters between Richard Bateman and Benjamin Fallowes are missing between October 1742 and October 1745. When this hiatus comes to an end, Richard had received a bill for £6 19s. 8d. for broken windows at the Court and questioned Fallowes about the cause. Clearly, there had been some neglect, and further evidence is provided in November 1745, when he questioned the gamekeeper, Bull, about the informal hunting that had recently been taking place in the park. A month later he was moaning about the kitchen garden 'not being half stocked and the table not being supplied with the necessaries'.[27] It seems that, for two years, Shobdon had been an orphaned estate. This is explained not only by the death of William, the 1st Viscount, in Paris in 1744, but also his wife Anne's flight from Shobdon earlier in 1738, when she went to live at Althrop. The heir, John Bateman (1721-1802), was still enjoying his grand tour but in March 1748 married an heiress, Elizabeth Sambrook. However, John spent much of his time in London, where he became a royal favourite and lived in Swinely Lodge, in Richmond Park, which was managed by Thomas and Robert Greening at this time.[28]

Richard reported, in March 1748, that 'my Lord is going to be married and will this year bring a lady into Herefordshire'.[29] Their visit goes unrecorded in the letters as did any subsequent visits. Richard's management of Shobdon continued uninterrupted but, in some areas, there was increased activity. This included the walled or kitchen garden, the pleasure gardens around the mansion, and, eventually, the wider parkland. Also, Richard was given licence to develop his enthusiasm for gothic taste. The rebuilding of the church commenced in 1749.[30] Richard's attention was also directed towards the walled garden.

THE WALLED OR KITCHEN GARDEN

Richard's relationship with Benjamin Fallowes was generally fairly good. The latter's wife was prone to regular bouts of illness; Richard rarely forgot to mention her and was insistent that she should spend some time in Bath, presumably at the expense of the estate. The main threat to their harmonious relationship came from the Herefordshire émigrés, whom Richard met in London and who fed him misinformation about life at Shobdon. Just such an occasion occurred early in 1741, but Fallowes's explanation was accepted and Richard assured him that 'I have a great partiality for Shobdon and a great regard for all its inhabitants and I hope to contribute to their ease and happiness'.[31]

The letters to Fallowes, which commence in 1739, are initially principally concerned with the produce of the kitchen garden, which appears to be satisfying Richard's needs in London as well as the household at Shobdon. In September 1739, Richard and his sister (either Judith or Anne) received figs, peaches, and nectarines from the garden, as well as carp from one of the many ponds on the estate.[32] In May 1740, Richard complained about the expense (£112 per annum) for running the garden and wondered how productive the garden was, when his garden at Old Windsor was particularly unproductive in this season. Matters seem to have improved, and later in the year he acknowledged receiving pears and apples, but in December he was moaning again about the monthly account of wages and expenses 'for keeping the garden'. By July 1741 he was happier, after receiving greengages and apricots, made more palatable by being laid down in sugar. Pears and apples followed in October. Richard clearly valued the produce from the estate.

As noted above, in December 1745, soon after three-year gap in surviving correspondence ends, Richard was especially critical when he described the garden as half-stocked and the table as not supplied with necessities. As it was December, Fallowes was quick to defend the gardener. By the following May, Richard had changed his mind and found it 'very well stocked with everything necessary'. In June, he let Fallowes know that he was coming down to Shobdon in July, and that since 'the expense of this year has been so large, Morgan [the gardener] can have no excuse if it should be otherwise', i.e., highly productive. [33] Presumably, he found everything in order. In October 1747, he sent a small box of seeds to the gardener and, in November, a parcel of roses and honeysuckle to be planted in the kitchen garden. A little later he inquired about their progress. He complained again in February 1748 about expensive undertakings in the garden without providing evidence, apart from referring to the purchase and fitting of a new garden door. The cost problem arose again in June 1748, when the annual expenditure for the garden came to £139, exclusive of the wages for the gardeners. He insisted that, in the future, the total garden expenditure must be reduced to £100.[34]

Richard's enthusiasm for the kitchen garden intensified in the late 1740s, when hardly a year passed without his intervention. He was keen to increase both the productivity and the beauty of the garden but also began to view it as a nursery for the enhancement of the park. In November 1747, he sent down some beech mast, and further unnamed seeds followed in February 1748. After a serious storm in February 1749, which, according to Richard, 'created havoc at Shobdon', Hartland, the new gardener, was encouraged to send to Shrewsbury for twenty larch trees to plant at the bottom of the garden. A little later, an unknown number of fruit trees arrived to be planted near the pigeon house. The kitchen garden increasingly came into the purview of Richard because of the establishment of a workhouse or manufactory on the estate, used to employ the poor, who apparently received free meals. He urged the gardener to keep a good stock of seeds in addition to those he sent every spring. Richard got into his stride in March 1749 when he enquired about the 'great many parcels of trees' he had dispatched, plus a great many seeds, some of which cost 2d. and 3d. each, and some 6d. Among them were 'flowers of different sorts' which the gardener was to plant 'as he thinks proper'. A few days later, the trees and plants arrived at Leominster and Richard urged Fallowes to send a wagon to pick them up. He was worried that the plants had been out of the ground for a long time and that some of them were 'scarce and dear plants'.[35]

Richard was clearly an enthusiastic gardener, and, in December 1749, he warned Hartland that a box of 'foreign seeds' was on its way, which required special treatment. They were not to be planted in a bed that had recently been enriched with fresh dung. Instead, fresh 'mould' was to be used, and the bed was to be protected with 'bows and reeds', i.e., small sticks. The following March, three parcels of seeds and trees were dispatched. The trees were recommended by Richard's gardeners at Old Windsor. Since Richard took a proprietary interest in the garden, he expected it to be in good order when he visited Shobdon. In June 1750, Fallowes was warned that William Bateman, Richard's nephew, was coming to Shobdon. Richard instructed Hartland that he should 'have as many things in the garden as possible' and that specifically he was 'to net the cherry trees to keep them [the fruit] until I come'. Later in the year, Hartland was instructed to construct a brick frame for a hotbed, a contrivance for 'forcing' (perhaps of rhubarb),[36] but the fact that it was still incomplete at Christmas disappointed Richard, who had anticipated putting tanner's bark in it in February.

In April 1752, Richard mentions 'my little house' which 'my Lord proposes'. This was presumably designed to give Richard an independent base at Shobdon, separate from the great

house which William Bateman and his immediate family began to visit, on a regular basis, for two or three months in the late summer. Richard's house was to be set 'a little higher up the field', perhaps to the west of the mansion, to have a better prospect. However, Richard had reservations about this because 'the garden would not then be round it'. There is no trace of this today, nor on the 1884 O.S. map (Figure 6), but it implied that Richard's diligence in managing the estate for two decades was being rewarded with a residence he could call his own. It was rather typical of the man that he should be worried about its garden.[37]

We learn from a letter in December 1752 that Richard was becoming dissatisfied with his garden at Old Windsor, albeit he had improved it by cutting down 150 trees. In the same letter, he indicated that Fallowes and his wife had been guests there, apparently 'taking the waters'. Incidentally, Richard later hinted that he had exchanged Christmas presents with Mr & Mrs Fallowes, and, when Richard learnt that the Shrewsbury nursery had propagated 'Wright's new cherry', he called upon Fallowes to send six of the trees to him in London together with woodcock, partridges, and brawn. Bucks were also sent on a regular basis to New Windsor and to Richard's friends. Sometime later, he requested Hartland to send him some seeds of 'peach, endive, and reside'. In January 1763, Hartland was replaced by a new gardener. Richard insisted that the departing gardener handed over all his seeds to the new man and made a list for Lord Bateman.[38]



Figure 6. The 1884 6-inch Ordnance Survey map showing the park at its full extent, not achieved in the 18th century

Richard's new house re-emerged in the correspondence of 1759 but on a different site, to the north of the walled garden, near some barns. Richard noted that there was plenty of stone available on the site as he believed that 'a religious house once stood there'. This was presumably the mid-12th-century priory, founded by Oliver de Merlimond and later succeeded by Wigmore Abbey. There is no sign of a building today, nor is there on the large-scale 1884 survey, despite the name 'Chapel Field'.[39] In 1761, another building was proposed for 'the garden', and Fallowes was instructed 'to employ the people Mr Pember recommended'. Pember was involved a few years earlier in re-building the church, where he assisted a shadowy figure, John Gethin, a master mason.[40] The new building was, it seems, to be a 'greenhouse', and Pember was to 'draw-out the design'. It was to have a brick floor, set in 'stone frames'. However, it was more than just a propagating house, for Pember was 'to find out how much green and white check was needed for the chairs and couch' and to send for it from London. A visit by Lord Bateman was

anticipated in July, but this was delayed until September because of the coronation of George III and Lord Bateman's illness.[41]

The new gardener arrived in the spring of 1763, but Lord Bateman could not remember his name. Seeds were handed over, and Fallowes was instructed to employ more labourers in the garden. Subsequently, the gardener made a list of the seeds he required, which was sent to Lord Bateman, who purchased them in London.[42] A further letter from Lord Bateman recommended that the new gardener visited Croft Castle 'to know what fruit Mr. Knight and Mr. & Mrs. Johnes would have from Shobdon', thus implying that the family at Croft had regularly relied upon the walled garden at Shobdon to satisfy their requirements in vegetables and fruit. A subsequent letter from Lord Bateman confirmed that Shobdon was a repository of 'rare fruits'.[43] In March 1764, a letter informed Fallowes that a parcel was on its way via Leominster containing 'fig trees'. These were to be planted at Easthampton, just outside the north-eastern boundary of the park, and Fallowes was to make sure that each tree was provided with its variety label. Later in the year, Lord Bateman launched a campaign to increase the number of fruit trees on the estate and instructed the gardeners to plant apple trees 'in any place you think proper'.[44] After 1764, Lord Bateman's attention was directed towards extending and enclosing the park, and the management of the walled garden appears to have been taken for granted in the letters.

The Wider Landscape and the Park

As we have seen from Harris's drawing of the south prospect, the mansion was surrounded by a string of compartmentalised formal gardens, but there are few clues to indicate what happened in the wider parkland. Taylor's map of 1754 (Figure 5 above) provides us with a thumb-nail sketch of the park which pre-dates the early 1760s, when Lord Bateman began redefining its boundaries. The sketch shows that the park had an irregular shape and was enclosed by a rustic pale. The northern boundary of the park appears to have been close to where it is today, following the lane through Uphampton. The eastern pale may also have been where it is today but stopping short at the Swan Pool. The western boundary met the modern drive just below the walled garden. The Canal Pool seems to be ignored, but the boundary probably followed the wooded dingle which stretches up to Morehampton. Clearly, a large section of the western park was missing, together with much of the southern park, which flanks the drive and joins the modern turnpike road of 1764. This road helped define the southern boundary of the park, which had hitherto been further to the north.

Timber was always an important product extracted from the Shobdon estate, both within and without the park. Much of it was coppiced and cut down to fuel the iron forge on the Teme at Downton, belonging to the Knight family. In October 1739, Fallowes corresponded with Richard Knight (1659-1745) about the increased demand for iron resulting from the war recently proclaimed against Spain, and the likelihood of this inflating the price of charcoal.[45] In the following winter of 1740, Knight was, with difficulty, extracting wood from Aymestrey Valley and offering Fallowes 5 shillings for a cord. Richard recommended that Fallowes employ the poor of Shobdon parish to help with the extraction, and thus he was able to offer Knight a 6d. rebate to prevent him from going elsewhere.

In the late autumn of 1739, Richard Bateman, following instructions from his brother, William, ordered Fallowes to plant a clump of trees on Downwood Common, a high point just outside the south-western extremity of the modern park.[46] This was opposed by some of the tenant farmers, and two of the trees were vandalised. Richard was indignant and had a relevant Act of Parliament read out in Shobdon Church. The Act apparently defended a landowner's

rights to plant ornamental trees on common land. He threatened a serious punishment if the culprit was discovered, and he informed Fallowes that he would 'pursue any man who removed a tree even if it cost him £100'. He also threatened to 'find a method of making the common unprofitable' for those who used it. However, by April 1740 his language had moderated somewhat once he had been presented with two acts of Parliament defending common rights. Nevertheless, by September 1740 eight groups of trees had been planted at Downwood, which terminated the view from the walled garden. Today, Downwood Common hosts a small group of cottages but remains just outside the park.[47]

In the mid-1740s, Richard began to consider enhancing the park, no doubt aware that its rigorous formal design was beginning to appear dated, and that his own garden at Grove House, albeit a miniature compared with Shobdon, demonstrated the move away from continental formality towards something more relaxed and floristic. The first signs of this are reflected in the quiet pressure being exerted on the Shobdon gardener, Hartland. He was persuaded to establish a nursery garden within, and adjoining, the kitchen garden, and Richard expected him to nurture young trees bought from nurseries in London and Shrewsbury. His letters to Fallowes regularly contain enquiries about trees he had forwarded. For example, in November 1746 he informed Fallowes that some 'firs' had been sent down to Leominster. He had put them on a wagon at Tyburn and, when he enquired later, a group of women reported to him that they had seen them go.[48] In December 1747, he was enquiring about trees he had purchased, coming from Shrewsbury, accompanied by honeysuckle plants. After a storm in February 1749, larch trees were also ordered from Shrewsbury, which were to 'form a grove next to the Shobdon road'. Groves were very much in fashion in the less formal landscape parks of the mid-18th century.[49] Some firs that had been planted here had apparently been 'spoilt by sheep'. Richard also invited Hartland to choose twenty fruit trees from the Shrewsbury catalogue. Further trees arrived from London in March 1749; Richard noted that all the trees were named and that the parcel also included 'flowers of different sorts', which Hartland could plant 'where he thinks proper'. After a short delay, the trees were delivered to Leominster and, to avoid a long wait since they were bare-rooted, he urged Fallowes to send a cart from Shobdon to pick them up. He added that some of the plants were 'scarce and dear'.[50] Storms often removed mature trees in the park, as in April 1760, when Richard queried a bill from a carpenter who had been contracted for 'cutting the trees that were blown down and mending the pails [*sic*]'.[51]

Among other references to the parkland was a delivery in March 1749 of 1000 roots of Lily of the Valley, which Richard urged Hartland to plant 'at the corners of the different walks along the edges in the great garden within the woods'. Also, there were 300 roots of single white Hyacinth, which were to be planted alongside the Lilies of the Valley. The intriguing 'great garden within the woods' is difficult to place today. The plan of this garden, with its corners along the different walks, suggests a very formal layout and is the best evidence we have of earlier landscaping in the park.[52] Another letter, of 29 December 1746, also refers to 'the great walk' which was to be 'planted-up'. This is probably illustrated on Harris's perspective but may also have been repeated to the south of the house, in an area with copious water, which is managed today as a natural garden. Harris's view shows a wide walk leaving the formal garden to the south, passing through a densely planted 'wilderness' which seems to have been well regimented on his drawing but may have become more informal with age. This may account for Richard's insistence, in the same letter, that the new planting he recommended with elms was not to be in 'clumps' but 'planted irregularly like a wilderness'.[53] He was clearly trying to 'soften' an established formal arrangement. Irregularity was, of course, the leitmotif of the Rococo era,

c.1740-60. It was well displayed at Old Windsor and, in architectural terms, on Richard's new church at Shobdon. As the paintings by Thomas Robins of Richard's gardens at Old Windsor demonstrate, there was a major shift in garden design, epitomised by the extensive deployment of flowers to soften earlier formality. This we can detect at Shobdon.

The changes indicated above were no doubt stimulated by the increasing recreational use of parkland. Lord Bateman writes to Fallowes in June 1760, instructing him to make a bench 'to go quite round the great tree which is in the walk called mine'—presumably meaning a walk called 'Lord Bateman's Walk'. He insisted that 'it must be made in 'barrs [*sic*] to let the rain through'. It was to be painted white immediately 'so that it may be dry when we come down'. We learn a little later that it was to be a copy of a seat which already existed around a 'large elm by Nine Pin Alley'. One last detail was insisted upon: the ground was to be made up around the tree, about six inches above the surroundings. Thus, we might imagine Lord and Lady Bateman enjoying a Gainsborough moment, depicted on the famous painting of *Mr & Mrs Andrews* (*c*.1750).[54]

THE RUIN ON THE HAYS

In rebuilding the church in 1752, Richard created a new focus within the park by taking the redundant Romanesque chancel arch and placing it on a high point north of the mansion. This was already the unmarked termination point for the avenue depicted on Harris's *South Prospect* and was called The Hays. In a letter of January 1752, Richard urged Fallowes 'to examine the ruin on the Hays and send word if it stands well' (Figure 6).[55] Once again, Richard was adapting a strictly formal landscape and adding a 'gothick' incident to its classical design.[56] He was clearly pleased with the result and mentions the Hays regularly in his correspondence, where he expresses concern for its rather exposed position, close to a public road, which was initially a problem. Since the park appears to have lacked a formal pale, the Arches were originally planted in the midst of a plantation of young elms, replacing some firs that had been vandalised for firewood during the winter of 1747.[57] In a later letter, Fallowes informed Richard that there were also some oaks nearby. The immediate area of the Arches was treated as a special spot since regular instructions were given to Fallowes to 'mow the bents (grass) on the Hays', and in March 1755 hurdles were erected to prevent cattle from damaging the new ground.[58]



Figure 7. An early 20th-century view of the Arches with parkland trees planted beyond, to the north (HARC)

THE POOLS

Several of Richard's letters are concerned with the water features found within the park. On the O.S. 6-inch plan of 1884, there are at least six large pools in the park. Most of these were probably natural but, nevertheless, they were closely managed and regularly enhanced. In

November 1747, ash and poplars were being planted round one of the pools, but there was an issue relating to the water rising and potential damage from cattle. Richard suggested they should be protected with a fence (or 'quick'—hawthorn).[59] A later letter implies that they were indeed inundated, but a decision on their fate was left to Lord Bateman. The ponds were regularly re-stocked with edible fish. In December 1747, tench were put into several ponds but perch, which were regarded as predators, were only put in the Peypond 'where they will not hurt other fish'. Forty brace of 'best' carp were removed from the Canal and Swan Pools in March 1759 and put in Downwood Pool.[60] The latter suffered degradation in 1759 when a substantial peat deposit was discovered there. A quantity was dug out, dried, and protected by a fence. Later, a shed was built to house it. The peat was probably destined for soil enrichment, and Lord Bateman wrote to Fallowes in June 1756, reporting that Lady Bateman had 'set her heart on having it tried'.[61] In April 1760, Hartland was instructed again to cut peat for Lady Bateman. Richard, meanwhile, was concerned about the state of the pool and insisted that it should be restored to look natural, a further indication of Richard's sensibility and desire to enhance the parkland. On the 1884 O.S. plan it is marked as a marsh.[62] The exploitation of the water supply close to the mansion, in February 1764, led to accusations by some of the tenant farmers that the gardeners were starving the water meadow to the south of the park, which they used for common pasture. After due consideration, Lord Bateman supported his farmers, and labourers were employed 'to dig more trenches for flooding the meadows'. Presumably, he also reduced the use of water around the Court.

RECREATIONAL USE OF THE PARK

Deer, which presumably had the run of the park, are mentioned on several occasions, and a letter from Richard in June 1750 reported that Lady Bateman took a keen interest in the fawns. She instructed Bull, the gamekeeper, to destroy all the fawns 'except the pretty marked ones'. This suggests that there was probably a surfeit of deer, and all the stags were to be 'cut' (castrated?), 'the more we can cut the better'.[63] Because the Batemans were absentee landowners, it seems that they made few demands on the park for recreational use. Rather generously, it appears from a letter of December 1748 that the 'local gentlemen' were 'at liberty to hunt and shoot' over the whole Shobdon estate, but Fallowes made himself unpopular by forbidding the use of hounds. There were, however, limitations to Lord Bateman's generosity. In January 1755, Mr Stead, of Wharton, near Leominster, was found shooting with several companions in Lord Bateman's woods. The gamekeeper, Bull, intervened because they were shooting hares, which were regularly sent to London for Lord Bateman's consumption. Lord Bateman was consulted, and Stead was regarded as a poacher. On the other hand, in January 1760 Lord Malpas and the Cheshire Militia were billeted close to Shobdon, and Lord Bateman gave permission for them to be shown the best sites for cock shooting. Wine and cheese were made available and 'good beds' provided at the Court for any who wished to stay overnight.[64]

It was, perhaps, Elizabeth, the wife of the 2nd Viscount, John, who appears to have valued most highly her infrequent visits to Shobdon. She wrote effusively to Fallowes in December 1763, looking forward to her spring visit: 'I saw no country abroad more beautiful than Herefordshire, which I shall admire again with great pleasure.' During the winter she was often urging Fallowes to give the poor firewood and kill a 'little bull' to provide them with meat. She also had her own herd of cows, and when she learnt, in June 1764, that her husband had sold them, she immediately ordered Fallowes to replace them and expected to see them when she arrived at Shobdon a fortnight later. Sitting with her husband, on their new seat attached to an

ancient tree, surrounded by her cows, Lady Bateman no doubt felt she was in her own Arcadia.[65]

Her letters also reinforced her husband's instructions, especially if he was incapacitated. For example, in May 1765 she reminded Fallowes that he had promised to send down to London four hogsheads of cider, but in the same month she rebuked him for exaggerating the bad behaviour of the Cox family, presumably tenants, who were 'neither drunken nor mad' and urged him to take their troubles seriously. She was also well informed in agricultural matters and, in February 1766, urged Fallowes to buy 700 bushels of oats, sufficient, she estimated, for the land ploughed for them.[66]

EXTENDING THE PARK

As we have seen, there is some doubt about the extent of the park at Shobdon in the 18th century. The references that survive—e.g., to the extent of the pale—refer to identifiable landmarks to the east and south of the mansion, but the west remained relatively uncharted territory. Some of this complexity is revealed in letters from Lord Bateman, received by Fallowes in March and April 1764. He wanted an enclosed area for his horses and chose a site to the north-west of the walled garden. Rather helpfully, he provided a sketch-plan showing a new pale built above the dingle which emerges just below Uphampton Farm and feeds the Canal Pool. The northern boundary of the enclosure was to be made from 'palisadoes' removed from The Hays. These proved to be ineffective in corralling the ponies, and later a ditch, two feet deep, was dug in front of the fence (Plates 1.5 and 1.6).[67]

In March 1760, Lord Bateman expressed his concern about the new turnpike road, which had reached Aymestrey. By May 1761, it was progressing through Shobdon, where he had recently improved the entrance to the estate by putting in new hedges and gate piers. He had also removed an orchard, 'grubbed-up' the adjoining hedges, and carried out some replanting. Such schemes required a ready supply of young trees. As we have seen, nursery stock was produced in the walled garden, but Lord Bateman often saw other opportunities. In November 1763, he ordered the gardener to plough up the top of North Field, to hedge it securely, and to sow it with acorns and beech mast; 'The sooner the better' he commented in a letter from London. By the mid-1760s, there seems to have been a surfeit of nursery trees at Shobdon; in March 1765, Lord Bateman was ordering Fallowes to get rid of twenty to thirty Scotch firs to 'young Mr. Oldberry of Leominster', and some chestnut trees were to be taken to Mr Johnes at Croft Castle. The rest of the trees in the nursery, which had become very large, were therefore to be destroyed.[68]

In the spring of 1765, Lord Bateman's letters become preoccupied with the construction of a ha-ha in the vicinity of the Easthampton Gate. This involved the enclosure of another nursery area and the removal of a 'pillar'. The ha-ha was to extend as far as the Hays, i.e., across the entire north-eastern segment of the park.[69] Where stone was excavated, it was to be re-used, and he hoped the work would be complete by the summer when he intended to visit Shobdon. Fallowes was to provide a sketch-plan, but this was clearly a tall order for the steward, and Lord Bateman was soon complaining that it had not arrived in London. However, by the end of April the poor of the parish had been recruited to work on the project. Horses were made available to haul the stone, and a source of clay was identified to help bond the stonework. The route of the wall was settled; it included cutting across several cottage gardens and enclosing the Easthampton Pond. In compensation, a new pump was to be set up for the inhabitants of the hamlet who, it seems, were also reluctant to give up any garden land. Access to the park was to be facilitated by a new wicket-gate.[70] Earth excavated from the ditch was to be spread on the slopes above the wall, which Lord Bateman hoped would 'make the meadow look more

handsome'. Notwithstanding his enthusiasm, there were some difficulties in securing land from tenants, and the earth moving resulted in one of the wells at Easthampton silting up.

On 16 July, Lord Bateman arrived at Shobdon, and no further letters are filed by Fallowes until January 1766, when the improvements were still in his mind. His solution was to use 'the poor in distress' and to make £20 available to pay them for work on the road being disturbed by the new ha-ha. On this project he relied upon the aesthetic judgement of the gardener to ensure that it was 'done natural'. Further instructions included keeping the excavated material away from the new trees but ensuring that it was 'spread around the new beech trees' to 'look natural'. In February, Lord Bateman was disappointed to learn that the cattle had 'cropped' the new quick hedge around the hop ground. The gardener was to cut the hedge down to encourage regeneration. The arrival of spring provided an incentive to re-seed the bare areas created by the construction of the new ha-ha and, as a result, the gardener was sent to Leominster to buy a quantity of 'hay seed'. The family arrived at Shobdon in early July and stayed until the following December.[71]

From a letter of December 1766, we have the first inkling that Lord Bateman had plans for a major extension to the park, which would bring it close to its modern extent. A further letter in January implies that most of the land to the west of the Court was on a long lease to the Woodhouse family. But we learn that Fallowes was in touch with Woodhouse, and he had hinted that he might be open to a generous offer from Lord Bateman for the land. Meanwhile, labourers were busy creating a new bowling green, laid to the north of the walled garden, close to the area under discussion. The winter of 1767 brought its normal problems, and Fallowes submitted a list of the very needy poor to his master, who agreed to pay each one a shilling but suggested that they should be employed 'sticking-up the hedgerows', i.e., filling up the gaps with cut sticks. Meanwhile, good news came from Fallowes in February, when he informed his master that Mr Woodhouse had agreed to terminate his lease for the land he occupied to the west of the existing park. Bateman quickly formulated the process of integration. The land was to be ploughed to eradicate the ridge and furrow and re-seeded by the gardener. Lord Bateman warned 'that not a twig of a tree was to be touched' unless permitted by him. However, 'stub-trees' (i.e., those regularly subject to pollarding) could be felled and suitable timber used for poles and rails to begin the extended pale. He also lavished effusive praise upon Fallowes and could not stop himself speculating upon the benefits of integrating the new land into the existing park.[72]

Within the package of miscellaneous fields and closes was a cottage called Bailey's Place. We are not informed whether it was tenanted, but it was to be pulled down and the materials used to construct a deer barn on the same site. Lord Bateman also asked Fallowes to produce a sketch of the new park boundary to indicate where the pale was likely to be between the kitchen garden and Downwood, which was seen as another convenient place for Fallowes to cut rails and posts. This implied that the addition to the existing park was confined to its south-west corner, thus leaving the north-western section of the modern park still outside Bateman's control. The new segment of the park was to have four access points: one by the 'corner of the canal gutter'; a second on the 'best ground near the clump'; a third 'into the woodland by the Lyes'; and a fourth 'beside the rough wood'. Whilst it is difficult to place these access points, it seems clear that the new addition to the park contained some varied ground. The arable was to be planted with 'good sorts of grass-seed' which, again, was to be obtained from Leominster.[73]

Lord Bateman was very keen to view the ongoing work. In April 1767, he informed Fallowes that he was coming down to Shobdon but asked him not to inform the rest of the household since he would not need servants or any special victuals. However, the housekeeper

was to air the bed. He presumably stayed for some time since the letters to Fallowes do not start again until June. There appears to have been a problem with draught animals as the gardener was told to buy two teams of oxen, but these were unavailable, and he was instructed instead to buy two teams of horses if he thought they could do the same job successfully. He also urged his farm manager, Bull, to buy some white paint from Leominster to paint the new gates into the park, together with the palisades around The Hays and the bowling green. The long letter of 6 June 1767 again refers to the difficulty of creating an effective pale on the undulating ground taken into the park. The deer were still escaping, and Lord Bateman reluctantly agreed to heighten the fence. Probably as a result of the loss of deer, he ordered Bull not to kill any fawns that season and, in addition, to make a visit to Croft Castle to buy six or seven fawns, or failing that, Hampton Court. He added that he had delayed his visit to Herefordshire because of illness but now intended to come 'hoping to be better in Herefordshire'.[74] A week later, he was still in London, wrote expressing his disappointment that no oxen could be bought, and reluctantly accepted horses as a substitute. The white paint from Leominster was also a disappointment, and he promised to purchase some in London. The new park pale was still causing problems and had accidentally annexed some neighbouring property. He eventually left London on 2 July and urged Fallowes to buy four hogsheads of good cider for his use, and to persuade his son, who apparently had good taste in wine, to buy a hogshead of port. We learn in the very last letter that he was expected on 5 July.[75]

FARMER RICHARD AND HIS ANTIQUARIAN INTERESTS

From the early 1760s, Richard's letters to Fallowes became more infrequent. He had served his nephew well and, during his minority, had taken an extraordinary interest in Shobdon, recognising at an early stage its potential. His interest in the walled garden and the parkland provided a broader canvas for his creativity, which, at Old Windsor, was constrained by its use as a weekend estate. No doubt some of his horticultural extravagance at Shobdon had an impact on his gardening at Old Windsor. There were also more direct benefits. In May 1762, he discovered that Mr Woodhouse had cut down, without permission, some valuable timber. Woodhouse blamed Richard for his confused instructions, but peace was soon established between them. Woodhouse expressed his gratitude by presenting Richard with a basket of medieval painted glass from the windows of Wigmore Abbey. How Richard's friend and fellow antiquarian, Horace Walpole, would have responded to this stroke of good fortune is not recorded.[76] In the last years of his life, still communicating infrequently with Fallowes, Richard began to take farming at Old Windsor seriously, commenting in April 1764 on the progress of his winter corn and the thirty-nine fine lambs bred from the ewes that Fallowes had sent to him. In the following August, he wrote to Fallowes, expressing his fondness for farming and asking him to send another fifty ewes down. He was getting 'two fine rams', and Lord Beaulieu would provide him with forty wethers and an additional ten ewes. He wanted them as soon as possible as he had a great deal of grass, but he was concerned about the skill of the 'driver' who would accompany the ewes to Old Windsor. Richard, who was approaching sixty-years old, had changed; the frivolous 'Chinaman or Goth' had, apparently, given way to the prudent farmer.[77]

Nevertheless, a letter written to Fallowes in March 1766 indicated that Richard's antiquarian interest remained insatiate. Accompanying an order for six-dozen bottles of Shobdon cider was a request that somebody should be sent to Richard's Castle to investigate the Boney Well, 'collect as many of the bones they can pick-up out of the well' and send them to Richard in a little box he had sent. It was apparently 'just the time of year the bones are thrown-up'. He

promised to pay any person for their trouble and reimburse Fallowes accordingly.[78]

CONCLUSION

The park that emerged on the 19th-century Ordnance Survey maps, and obscurely in *Country Life* in 1906, had clearly been extended westwards beyond the boundaries reached in the mid-18th century, since it embraced the New Decoy Pool and its adjoining woodland. The boundary to the north and east remained as it was established by the 2nd Viscount in the mid-18th century. The new turnpike road of 1764 made it necessary to lengthen the drive to the south and, to the west, provided a compact domain for the rector of Shobdon, but the park boundary never encroached upon Hillhampton Farm, to the north-west of the main road. In terms of park embellishments, the Arches have been much admired in the 20th century and were joined in the late 18th century by a well-articulated classical temple, which provided an incident on the lawns when viewed from the mansion. In the 20th century, the south-eastern corner of the park, below the site of the mansion, was developed as a small landscape garden, focused around the Rookery and Swan Pools. The mansion itself was demolished in 1933, but the service range—mostly added in 1858—was refurbished as the modern Shobdon Court. Industrial buildings were erected to the north of the old services and walled garden, and on the northern tip of the park, close to the Arches. Historic England's *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England* Part 20 (1986) gives the park a grade II listing as a 'C18 landscape park, at most extensive c.130 ha. with C19 formal gardens to south of house'.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

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[4] Herefordshire Archives and Record Centre (HARC), Hanbury Collection, G39/98—Receipt Book kept by Benjamin Fallowes.
[5] Ingrid Roscoe, *A Biographical Dictionary of Sculptors in Britain, 1660-1851* (2009), Richards, pp. 1031-3; Abraham, p. 3.
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[12] *Ibid*., 19 Oct.1725.
[13] HARC, G39/III/E37,67.
[14] Stroud, *Brown*, 83 note 7.
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[24] Pfeull, *Shobdon,* 40-41.
[25] HARC, G39/94.
[26] John Harris, 'Father of the Gardenesque' in *Country Life* 7 June 1979, pp. 1838-40.
[27] HARC, G39/111/E97, pp. 100,103.
[28] Pfeull, *Shobdon*, p.47.
[29] *Ibid*., p. 184.
[30] For the most recent account of the rebuilding of the church see Gill Hedley, The *Ingenious Mr. Flitcroft, Palladian Architect, 1697-1769* (2023), Chapter 8.
[31] HARC, G39/111/ E66.
[32] *Ibid*., E1-2.
[33] *Ibid*., E22, 25, 40, 47, 70, 74, 116, 123.
[34] *Ibid*., E103, 116, 123, 98, 163, 169.
[35] *Ibid*., E162, 176, 203, 206, 207, 213, 216-17.
[36] E237, 254, 266, 275.
[37] E320.
[38] E326, 328, 366, 580, 587.
[39] E511, 513.
[40] Joan Lane, 'Shobdon Church, Herefordshire: A Rococo Gothic Masterpiece' in *Apollo* CXXX, Jan. 1995, pp. 23-7; Pfeull, *Shobdon*, pp. 63-70.
[41] E563.
[42] E591.
[43]E567.
[44] From January 1764 the letters are without numbers and will be referred to by date- G39/111/ 15 March 1764.
[45] HARC, G39/111/E4, 42, 75.
[46] G39/111/E12, 16, 19-21.
[47]E20, 37, 47.
[48] E98, 103, 116, 123, 133.
[49] E 169; Michael Symes, *A Glossary of Garden History* (1993), p.62.
[50] E 176, 203, 213, 216.
[51] E 507.
[52] E 218.
[53] E 137.
[54] E 543.
[55] E 317.
[56] Albeit the Arches would later be defined by architectural convention as Romanesque.
[57] E 142.
[58] E 266, 295, 319.
[59] E 161.
[60] E 170.
[61] E 450, 459, 506.
[62] E 535-6.
[63] E 267.
[64] E198, 407, 529.
[65] E609, 450, 590, 29 June 1764.
[66] 29 June 1764, 2 May 1765, 26 May 1765, 11 February 1766.
[67] 14 April 1764, 21 April 1764, 26 May 1764.
[68] E534, 556, 18 November 1763, 15 March 1765.
[69] 17 April 1765. It was presumably dug in front of it.
[70] 17 April 1765, 23 April 1765, 29 April 1765, 1 May 1765.
[71] 17 Jan. 1766, 13 Feb. 1766, 20 March 1766, 17 June 1766.
[72] 23 Dec. 1766, 8 Jan. 1767, 9 Jan. 1767, 17 Jan. 1767, 3 Feb. 1767.
[73] 3 Feb. 1767, 17 March 1767.
[74] G39/ 111/ 11 April, 6 June 1767. Herefordshire was late in abandoning oxen for ploughing, compared with the rest of southern England—see Katherine Lack, *Herefordshire Farming through Time* (2021), pp. 138-42.
[75] 13 June 1767.
[76] 18 Dec. 1762. Georgian antiquarians glazed the windows of their homes with shards of medieval glass, e.g., the cottage of the Ladies of Llangollen.

[77] 3 April 1764, 3 Aug. 1764.
[78] The Boney Well at Richards Castle is occasionally mentioned in 19th-century Herefordshire directories. The bones appeared in March and October and were 'supposed to be the bones of frogs' –*Littlebury's Directory of Herefordshire* (1876), p. 549.

Two Acid Grasslands of North-West Herefordshire

By Stuart Hedley

Vegetation studies can be important ways of understanding our natural heritage and making sense of the landscape. At a time when it is more desirable than ever to understand semi-natural ecosystems in order to inform conservation practice, this paper is the first of a series, planned for these Transactions, to document and share the character of Herefordshire's vegetation. The series begins with a description of two remarkable acid grasslands that overlie the Silurian rocks of Bradnor Hill and Brampton Bryan. The paper itself begins with a description of the National Vegetation Classification (NVC) and a comment on how it has so far been applied within the county.

THE NATIONAL VEGETATION CLASSIFICATION AND HEREFORDSHIRE

The study of vegetation in Britain gained hold in the course of the last century alongside the wider discipline of ecology. *Types of British Vegetation* (Tansley, 1911) is generally recognised as the first description of plant communities in this country, although one can feel the inevitability of the shift in focus from species to community even in our own 19th-century *Flora* (Purchas & Ley, 1887), where occasional comments about plants' predilections punctuate an exhaustive listing of the individual species themselves. A series of other studies, many of which became classics in their field, followed Tansley before and after the Second World War, often highly localised and reflecting their authors' particular areas of interest. Wider schemes of classification emerged as the discipline of nature conservation gained strength after an important Act of Parliament in 1949.[1]

Of overriding importance over the last thirty-five years has been the emergence and adoption of the National Vegetation Classification (NVC), published as *British Plant Communities* in five volumes between 1991 and 2000. This massive undertaking, which involved synthesizing earlier datasets as well as the collection of new data in the field, was driven by the need for a single, modern scheme, which permitted application and comparison across all the landscapes of Britain. Conducted by the University of Lancaster, it was eagerly anticipated by the Nature Conservancy Council and its successor bodies in England, Wales, and Scotland and rapidly became *de facto* policy for the description and selection of special sites. The 'end points' of the classification are a series of defined plant communities, given both alphanumeric codes and lexical names. For example, W10 denotes woodland ('W') community number 10, which may be expressed as 'Oak-bracken-bramble woodland'.[2] A more detailed classification, 'W10a', includes a letter that denotes a *sub*-community of it, in this case where the range of plants found is typical (unsurprisingly termed the Typical sub-community). Other sub-communities, such as W10b and W10c, include various other sets of distinctive species, whilst remaining part of the overall W10 community.

At the same time that the NVC was being shaped at Lancaster, many systematic resource appraisals were being conducted by the Nature Conservancy Council from the mid-1980s onwards in order to inform the notification of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), then given increased weight by another landmark Act of Parliament.[3] Both sets of work informed one another, allowing some of the emerging NVC categorisations to be reshaped. Some of these systematic surveys understandably escaped Herefordshire—for example, those for sand-dunes

and saltmarshes. However, although the NVC has been deployed in the description and understanding of SSSI in Herefordshire, as elsewhere in Britain,[4] for reasons which are interesting to speculate upon the county largely escaped other wide-ranging resource appraisals, for example those for lowland and mountain hay meadows. In addition, our county appears to have been relatively thinly sampled by the University of Lancaster during its main phase of fieldwork for the emerging NVC itself. In comparison to other counties, we have thus been bequeathed relatively few systematic vegetation surveys. The very few that have come to the author's attention to date comprise some for woodland[5] and an early, brief, and localised assessment of some of our limestone grassland.[6]

Whilst all these surveys were taking place over the last decades of the 20th century, concern about the loss of nature and the wider issue of sustainability was growing. It was perhaps inevitable that deep-rooted traditions of both the study of nature and its conservation were recast with a sense of urgency for a wider audience: *Biodiversity* became part of the lexicon of both policymakers and the general public. Long lists of threatened species were produced by every local authority in the land and likewise within the other states of Europe. Given this backdrop, it was perhaps also inevitable that the exhaustive itemisation that characterised many Biodiversity Action Plans should be extended to the vegetation in which the various organisms subsisted, equally as threatened. Thus, the plant communities of the NVC settled, for many, into yet more names on a list.

In an effort to develop better contextual understanding of Herefordshire's wildlife habitat and thus continue to inform the development of conservation practice, the author has been sampling vegetation within the county now for several years. The NVC effectively constitutes a national dataset against which local studies of this type can be compared to obtain information on typicalness and rarity and, sometimes, to gain insights into management history. After discussion with the editorial committee, a series of papers is now planned for future volumes of the *Transactions,* designed to document and share a characterisation of the County's vegetation. We live in a time where there has never been more interest in conserving and, crucially, re-building the countryside. We cannot meaningfully rebuild the countryside without a true appreciation of what it consisted of at a time when nature flourished more universally than at present. The series begins here with a paper on two acid grasslands in North-west Herefordshire, one on Bradnor Hill above Kington and the other at Brampton Bryan, both overlying Silurian rocks. Bradnor Hill is an open-access site owned by the National Trust and let to Kington Golf Club, and Brampton Bryan is an ancient parkland in private hands whose owners, Edward and Victoria Harley, kindly gave permission for this special study. At each site there was apparent variety within the acid grassland, and the work was partly about investigating this phenomenon.

METHOD

Vegetation sampling in the manner of the NVC is now widely practised. Those interested in a full account of the method should see Rodwell (1991, 1992). In summary, a tract of vegetation, such as a woodland or grassland, is sampled consistently by the use of quadrats (square sampling units). A preliminary investigation of the tract is beneficial to ensure that the structure and species composition is fairly uniform throughout, a so-called *homogeneous* stand. This is undoubtedly a skill which takes time to acquire.

Quadrat size depends on the habitat in question. For most grasslands, it is a square of 2m sides; larger quadrats are used for less diverse plant communities such as woodland canopies or heathlands. A total of five quadrats are taken from within the community under investigation,

for reasons explained further below. Within each quadrat, all vascular plants,[7] mosses, liverworts, and terricolous lichens are recorded, with an approximation of cover made for each, using the Domin scale (explained in Table 1). Though a coarse scale, this has the major advantage of being quick to deploy, where a lot of data needs to be gathered, and is intuitive, being based around readily appreciated fractions of the quadrat, such as a quarter, a third, or three-quarters. It is thus well suited to this particular purpose. In addition to the Domin values, a plus sign (+) may be used to indicate that a species did not fall within the quadrat, but just outside, a useful trick where vegetation is species-poor and its constituents thinly spread. Ancillary information, such as amounts of bare ground, aspect, and context may also be recorded.

Table 1. The Domin Scale

Domin Value	Plant Cover Represented
1	Less than 4% of the sample area with 1-2 shoots present only
2	Less than 4% of the sample area with a few shoots represented
3	Less than 4% of the sample area but with shoots numerous
4	4 -10% of the sample area
5	11 - 25% of the sample area
6	26 - 33% of the sample area
7	34 - 50% of the sample area
8	51 - 75% of the sample area
9	76 - 90% of the sample area
10	91 - 100% of the sample area

Once gathered, the information is drawn together into a *constancy* table, examples of which, containing the data from Bradnor and Brampton Bryan, are given in Tables 2 to 4. All the species found in the combined sample of five quadrats are listed on the left-hand side. In the centre of the table is a series of five columns, one for each quadrat, with the Domin value for every species that occurred within it (or a plus sign if a species fell just outside).

On the right-hand side of the constancy table is a column headed 'F', denoting *frequency*. It contains a Roman numeral of between one and five, which represents the overall frequency of a given species within the *combined* sample. Thus, 'I' denotes an overall frequency of between 1 and 20% of the samples, 'II' denotes an overall frequency of between 21 and 40%, and so on, so that 'V' denotes an overall frequency of between 81 and 100% of samples. The constancy table thus depicts two types of information: firstly, how frequently a species crops up in a sample, and secondly, how abundant it is where it is present. It now becomes apparent that this quintile-based frequency appraisal means there is an advantage to gathering data in sets of five, as it makes the arithmetic easier.

The final act of organisation in the preparation of a constancy table is to sort the species list so that those species with higher frequency are blocked together at the top of the table. Species with frequency values of IV or V are bracketed together, and the group referred to as *constant species* or just *constants.* The constants in Tables 2-4 have been boxed in bold and shaded grey. The table is now complete and in a format which permits comparison to the national

dataset published in *British Plant Communities.* This is in a slightly different format as it holds data from a very large number of samples taken across Britain, but the difference need not concern us here.

ASCRIPTION OF THE VEGETATION TYPES AT BRAMPTON BRYAN AND BRADNOR HILL

Data Shown in Tables 2 and 3

Table 2 shows the data for the acid grassland sampled at Brampton Bryan. It shows columns for ten samples, which fall into two groups of five, reflecting two somewhat different types of plant community in the acid grasslands present here. In effect, the table is two constancy tables laid alongside one another for purposes of comparison.

Note that although three species are constant across all the samples (Common Bent, Sweet Vernal-grass, and the moss *Rhytididelphus squarrosus*), a larger number partition depending on the grassland type. Thus, the left-hand group has five constants not, or more poorly, represented in the other grouping, *viz.* the moss *Pseudoscleropodium purum,* Germander Speedwell, Creeping Soft-grass, Common Dog-violet, and Heath Bedstraw. An even more convincing partitioning is seen for the six constants in the right-hand grouping, where Sheep's Sorrel, Early Hair-grass, Wall Speedwell, Squirrel-tail Fescue, and the two mosses, *Ceratodon purpureus* and *Polytrichum juniperinum,* are, if anything, even less well-represented in the contrasting left-hand group. Note how other species in the list, which do not attain constancy either in the right- or left-hand groupings, nevertheless appear to prefer one plant community over the other. For example, both Bluebell and Harebell are better represented in the left-hand group, and a string of species prefer the right-hand group, including some exclusively represented there, such as Sheep's Fescue and the diminutive legume, Bird's-foot. Such species are termed preferentials: they may not crop up in a sample of a given vegetation type but, if they do, they add weight to a community (or sub-community) diagnosis. A long 'tail' of species at the bottom of the table shows those which only occur in the data as a single record. It is hard to know, with only five samples, whether these rarities are simply chance occurrences or preferential; more samples would be needed to determine this. A long tail is, however, often suggestive of patchy vegetation with a large edge-to-area ratio.

Table 3 presents equivalent data for Bradnor Hill, where variety in the acid grassland is also apparent. Like Brampton Bryan, Bradnor has three species common to both column-groupings, although in this case the constant Sweet Vernal-grass of the former has been displaced by Sheep's Fescue, which had instead been preferential to one community in that data. Again in common with Brampton Bryan, the plants constant to both communities are outnumbered by those which show a preference for one community over the other. At Bradnor, however, these suites of plants are even more strongly drawn. There are seven species constant on the left, three of which are completely absent from the grouping on the right, and a yet larger contingent of constants on the right—eight, in fact, disallowing bracken (where the values are not so different between the columns) and records for bare ground; the latter is a variable rather than a plant species, but one we shall return to. A further similarity between the Bradnor and the Brampton Bryan data is the outnumbering of the generalists by the preferentials.

Detailed Ascription: Community and Sub-community

Taken in their entirety, these data show two well-separated vegetation noda, with many species

choosing one over the other. This is very commonly not the case in vegetation study, especially in Herefordshire, where plant community boundaries are often rather vague on account of underlying environmental variables which grade over broad fronts, rather than sharply. However, the marked degree of separation in our data on the page is, of course, nowhere near so readily apparent in the field, at least to the untrained eye.

The differential constancies in the tabulated information allow us to assign the two types of grassland with confidence to the national scheme, by comparing our tables to the grasslands volume of the published NVC (Rodwell, 1992). The association on the left-hand side in both tables shows a strong agreement (or *fit*) to the NVC community U4, and that on the right to the NVC community U1. If we pool the data from the two sites in a mini-sample for North-west Herefordshire as a whole, we end up with four differential constants for the U4 community and seven for the U1 community. A simplified representation of this is given in Table 4 (too large to publish here, but available online at the same time as this paper) where the long 'tails' of species with single occurrences only have been removed.

The convenient but soulless terms 'U4' and 'U1' might be given more vivid and engaging names by replacing the codes with the combined names of their most characteristic species, as outlined in the introduction. This can be an exercise fraught with difficulty, however. Whilst many find Latin binomials off-putting, the notorious unwieldiness of some standard English equivalents may be far worse: Opposite-leaved Golden-saxifrage and Corky-fruited Water-dropwort come especially to mind. We could content ourselves for now with a *bent-fescue-bedstraw* grassland for U4 and a *bent-fescue-sorrel* grassland for U1.

U4 bent-fescue-bedstraw grassland is the typical hill pasture of acid mineral soils in the north and west of Britain, frequently occurring in association with moorland habitats and including heathland over much of its area. Our constancy tables allow us fairly easily to ascribe our samples to the level of sub-community, again by comparing it to the national dataset. In this instance, the U4 sample shows a good fit to the U4a sub-community, the so-called typical community. Many vegetation communities within the NVC contain a Typical sub-community, with a series of additional sub-communities reflecting deviation from it in response to regional climate, landscape context, or management history. In many parts of Britain's upland fringe, a second sub-community of U4, U4b, is more common. This sub-community differs in having a high proportion of species characteristic of more intensive pastoral management (e.g., through occasional use of compound fertiliser or through its developing in places where sheep, the main grazers of this vegetation, congregate in large numbers). It will not then be a surprise to learn that U4b, the *clover-Yorkshire Fog* subcommunity, is probably also the predominant type of acid grassland across Herefordshire, an upland fringe county. Here it is found over a range of different strata where relics of old pasture survive on steeper slopes that are difficult to work, whether they be over Old Red Sandstone (such as the Brownstones of south-west Herefordshire, or on the north-east plateau near Leysters, or at Coppett Hill) or Silurian strata as here. However, it is pleasing in nature conservation terms that the stands at both Bradnor and Brampton Bryan can be shown to be of the Typical sub-community. This will be due to a combination of the extensive nature of management there and, in the case of Bradnor, the particularly free-draining soils over the Ludlow series rocks. U4 can be a colourful vegetation type, which one can rapidly learn to recognise, with brilliant-yellow quatrefoils of Tormentil *Potentilla erecta* set against the red slashes of Good-Friday Grass *Luzula campestris* and the white stars of Heath Bedstraw *Galium saxatile.* Specialists of the west tucking themselves away here may include the Glittering Wood-moss *Hylocomium splendens,* its similar relative the Red-stemmed Feather-moss *Pleurozium*

schreberi, and Wavy Hair-grass *Avenella flexuosa,* a sure-fire indicator of unimproved ground.

The subcommunity of the U1 bent-fescue-sorrel grassland is a little more challenging to ascribe. Whereas U4 is the acid grassland of our oceanic north and west, U1 is the acid grassland of the warmer and drier south and east, where habitat fragmentation has evidently been much, much more severe. These are grasslands which potentially develop where there is less than 1000mm of rainfall annually, under 140 wet days per year, and with mean annual maximum temperatures above 26°C.[8] They are often scorched and withered by summer heat and have become known in conservation circles as 'parched grassland', a term endorsed by the greater incidence of bare soil in our sample. Such grasslands are characterised by short-lived annuals that can complete their life cycles following spring rains, before the heat of summer strikes. There are a large number of different sub-communities for U1, but two candidates emerge as best fits for our data: a U1b Typical sub-community, and a U1c Storksbill-Shepherd's Cress sub-community, with a third sub-community, U1e, also meriting some consideration. The Storksbill-Shepherd's Cress sub-community is a high-profile vegetation type, forming, as it does, the core of the parched grasslands of the Suffolk and Norfolk Breckland, an area of postglacial sands, smothering chalk.

In considering the climatic circumstances in which these different sub-communities develop, notably rainfall, wet-days, and mean annual maximum temperature, Rodwell shows how the typical sub-community can be expected across the whole of the Midlands, extending to the lowland north-east, in addition to its heartlands in East Anglia.[9] He goes on to explain that, throughout this wide range, the U1b sub-community does not represent the full potential species-richness of the community in Britain (that honour belonging to the U1c sub-community of Breckland), but that that richness is 'sometimes approached locally elsewhere throughout the range of the typical sub-community'. It would seem that our data represent one such example of an 'extra species-rich' U1b. Firstly, the absence from our sample of the two nominal species of U1c, Common Storksbill *Erodium cicutarium* and Shepherd's Cress *Teesdalia nudicaulis,* is not quite what it seems. Both these species still occur in the environs of Bradnor Hill, the rarity Shepherd's Cress most famously at Stanner Rocks NNR (Plate 2.1), less than a kilometre over the Welsh border, and once at a site on our side of the border as well.[10] Furthermore, mean total species-richness in the national sample is 13 species/quadrat for the U1b sub-community and 24 for the U1c sub-community. Our data from the North-west Herefordshire Hills has a mean species-richness of 20.7 (Table 4, published online), closer to the richer Breckland type.

Some stepping back is required here. Vegetation is variable, often frustratingly so. A widely understood axiom of biology is that species are distinct entities which cross-breed at their peril (think of red, yellow, and blue). Vegetation, a community of dozens or even hundreds of plants, will vary enormously from place to place depending on precise conditions of soil, moisture, and insolation. Continuing the analogy, we need to recognise that red, yellow, and orange, and orangey-red and yellowish-orange as well, may all have equal legitimacy. This is not to say that organisms inhabit the world in a complete jumble, of course: clearly one is more likely to encounter a bluebell in association with an oak-tree than a water-crowfoot. Very frequently plant communities will show inconclusive fits to published types. There need not necessarily be a sense of failure here, although this may indeed be justified if a rare or high-value vegetation-type has been tangibly damaged by human activity. What is important is less a decisive ascription to either the U1b or U1c sub-community, and more the astonishing recognition that the Herefordshire environment, in the rain-shadow of the Cambrian Mountains, is capable of producing a grassland so very prone to summer parching that it resembles closely,

if not exactly, some of the swards of Breckland, more than 250km to the East; a similar leap again would take us to the Veluwe of the Netherlands, a yet drier and more summer-baked relict wildness on the sands of the North European Plain.

A third sub-community, U1e, has been mentioned. This is the bedstraw-tormentil sub-community. Both these species are more at home in the U4 grassland, as Tables 2-4 illustrate, and indeed it is regarded as something of an intermediate sward.[11] That our data do not generally support a U1e diagnosis (a possible exception is quadrat 6 at Brampton Bryan) is a further testament to the remarkable character of rocks in this part of the world, which lie on the edge of oceanic mountains, yet clearly express communities of the dry east. Returning to a name before moving on, let us settle for U1b, the typical sub-community of bent-fescue-sorrel grassland, for these fascinating grasslands at Bradnor and Brampton Bryan.

CONTEXT IN THE LANDSCAPE

The Silurian strata which support this U1 grassland in Herefordshire extend into Shropshire, from where their principal components, the Ludlow and Wenlock series rocks, take their names. The expression of U1 grassland in that county is referenced in a very readable account by Allott (2011),[12] largely drawing on the results of an earlier, unpublished survey of the Long Mynd for the National Trust by A. K. Thorne. The Long Mynd is composed of older, harder rocks than those of the Silurian Period and shows that U1 vegetation is not restricted to Silurian rocks in the Welsh Marches. Different sub-communities, and almost certainly undescribed variants, characterise a range of rock types over a wide area of Shropshire and Herefordshire, although all are relatively resistant beds capable of producing the steep terrain which, where suitably orientated, creates the parched circumstances in which this vegetation develops. An earlier study, part of the very impressive *Ecological Flora of the Shropshire Region* (Sinker *et al*., 1985),[13] also provides vegetation samples of this type. Both studies yielded results very similar to those recorded in Tables 2-4.

Returning to North-west Herefordshire, a wider variety of grassland types than those dealt with in this account occurs at both the study sites. Indeed, Brampton Bryan is famous as a deer park, and many areas are either closed-canopy woodland or parkland trees situated in rather more fertile, gang-mown valley bottoms, with bracken dominating the slopes where management is more extensive. Bradnor Hill is also widely colonised by bracken, and the continuous mowing of fairways and semi-rough on the golf course has had the effect of impoverishing the already unfertilised swards, by weakening any species not able to complete their life cycles in vegetation of less than a few centimetres in height. However, of the more natural-looking grasslands still present on both sites, the bent-fescue-bedstraw grassland (U4) is overwhelmingly the predominant type, with the bent-fescue-sorrel grassland (U1) much more locally represented. This is the pattern in Shropshire too.

At Brampton Bryan, there appear to be two situations where U1 develops. The first is over exposures of the Brampton Formation, a purple, conglomeratic, lithic greywacke.[14] These are very limited in extent. Quadrats 1 and 2 were taken from this area where, by late June, many of the spring ephemerals had been largely burnt off, leaving swathes of Squirrel-tail Fescue in their wake (Plate 2.2). This highly unusual area also hosts Prickly Sedge *Carex muricata* ssp *pairae* and the very local mosses *Hedwigia stellata* and *Grimmia trichophylla.* More commonly, U1 is developed at Brampton Bryan on insolated, south-facing slopes over the main formation of the Park, the Radnor Forest Formation, a tough, microlaminated, subangular quartz siltstone.[15] As already mentioned, tree cover and bracken spread mean that relatively little space is occupied

by long-established grassland, and it is only on the steepest slopes, where summer parching is most pronounced, that small tracts of U1 develop. Often, these sit atop the small cuttings where ancient tracks have been driven into the contours and the consequent break of slope increases drainage and drought-stress.

Contexts like this partly explain the greater prominence of the bent-fescue-sorrel grassland at Bradnor, where the construction and maintenance of the Kington Golf Course have necessitated much re-working of the land. Level tracks for golfing access have necessitated many cuttings and embankments, and tees and greens have been constructed with batters and embayments facing in all compass directions. Cottages on the common are also serviced by unmetalled tracks in which steep, dry soil banks are frequent. Table 3 shows how the U1b at this site is well-characterised by Upright Chickweed *Moenchia erecta* (Plate 2.3). This charming plant, now listed as Vulnerable in the England Red Data Book,[16] is an annual, briefly conspicuous in May only, which serves as a valuable indicator plant for the bent-fescue-sorrel grassland at Bradnor. It has been lost from suitable substrate in most of the British Lowlands due to the abandonment of stock grazing, alongside the nutrient-enrichment of semi-natural grassland; the latter has arisen through combinations of aerial and soil-borne nitrogen deposition and run-off, as well as dog excrement on small, relict nature reserves, close to densely populated areas. It has been a surprise to hunt for it at Bradnor and surrounding areas and find it in local profusion, perhaps tens or hundreds of thousands of plants, a situation in stark contrast to its fortunes in most of the country. Whilst finding *Moenchia* is predictable on some trackside cuttings here, it also occurs on gently sloping ground on primary (i.e,. unaltered) surfaces, showing that the rock-type here is especially amenable to it. In contrast to Brampton Bryan, the rocks of the Hergest—Bradnor ridge are of the Whitcliffe Formation, a grey, flaggy, bioturbated siltstone that extends eastwards to Ludlow. The presence of the U1 grassland on primary surfaces here shows that it is, if anything, more prone to summer parching than on the Radnor Forest Formation at Brampton Bryan, although this may be due to the greater incidence of gentle south- and south-east facing slopes. The sheer local abundance of *Moenchia* probably explains its capacity to exploit secondary surfaces that are sometimes relatively remote from its main centres of occurrence, as for example on the south-facing batter of the 16th tee; no doubt, golf shoes also constitute excellent vectors for seed spread. The Bradnor bent-fescue-sorrel grassland also supports other individual plant species of note: for example, Common Cudweed *Filago germanica* (not at all common), Little Mouse-ear *Cerastium semidecandrum,* and a subspecies of Blinks—normally a seepage plant—that is especially adapted to droughty conditions, *Montia fontana* ssp *chondrosperma.* The knobbly tubercles on the seeds of this subspecies perhaps aid in moisture condensation and retention during the critical germination phase.

One part of the common is particularly fascinating in demonstrating the effects of physiography on soils and on the plant communities they support. The western flank of Bradnor Hill presents a large, bowl-shaped amphitheatre, facing toward Wales, perhaps a glacial or periglacial erosion feature. It appears to intercept cloud, driven on Atlantic weather systems, forcing it upwards where it dissipates in the breezes blowing across the plateau. The difference in rain days and cloud cover between this amphitheatre and other parts of the hill must be significant: it supports a strong representation of the other acid grassland type, U4a, with quadrats 4-6 taken from this area. So like a ‘normal’ upland sheepwalk is this small subsection of the site that bilberry persists in places: dwarf shrubs of any sort are now rare on the Hergest—Bradnor ridge. However, at the very lip of the bowl, the soils thin over small exposures of bedrock. Here, sure enough, the U1 grassland, complete with *Moenchia,* is locally developed

(Plate 2.4).

Similar patterning of U4 and U1 grassland has been seen at Bircher Common and probably awaits discovery at other places on the Silurian rocks of North-west Herefordshire. Unfortunately, at Bircher the spread of bracken has caused an even greater erosion of character. A campaign to clear it is making significant strides, but it may be some time before something of the local distinctiveness, as described for Brampton Bryan and Bradnor, is able to re-establish itself. Stock grazing would be an important component of a recovery plan. Nevertheless, the bent-fescue-sorrel grassland lives on in the same sorts of places as at the other sites. At one site, in the north-east of the common, a narrow strip of U1b follows a vehicle track for almost a hundred metres. Although the gradients are very gentle, the small incision into the surface by wheel-ruts is enough to increase the drainage on the miniature turf cliffs that result, and the whole is of south to south-westerly facing aspect. This is enough to give the extraordinary annuals that characterise the vegetation the slight competitive advantage they need to make their living alongside the mostly perennial plants.

The tiny and localised areas in which this vegetation manifests are spread over many hundreds of miles of countryside. In reading publications on parched grasslands in Britain, one is left feeling that this has not aided their full characterisation. The NVC chapter on U1 grassland shows the national picture was based on a total of 203 samples, a fair sample size, but it seems likely that additional variety could be uncovered by anyone with the time and interest to take a close look at this fascinating vegetation. A regional study across the Welsh Marches would be a good place to start.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

The acid grasslands of Brampton Bryan and Bradnor Hill are surviving examples of places where distinctive vegetation, highly characteristic of place, has developed. In particular, the Bent-fescue-sorrel grassland, U1, is a rare and threatened vegetation type which also supports a number of uncommon plants. From a national perspective, the rather more extensive presence of such grassland in the Shropshire Hills has overshadowed its occurrence in Herefordshire, the work of Sinker *et al.* (1985) predating and informing the content of the NVC itself. This latter document, in its regional account, thus includes mention of Wenlock Edge, The Wrekin, the Long Mynd, and the Stiperstones, but not of the Ludlow siltstones which tend to function as weak rocks in that county. From a local perspective in Herefordshire, however, the Ludlow series rocks that characterise the North-west Herefordshire Hills NCA[17] are productive places to look for this vegetation, where they are relatively more resistant and provide suitable, elevated terrain. The Whitcliffe beds of Bradnor in particular may, in fact, be nationally significant for this vegetation, even though, to date, much more attention has been paid to its presence along the well-studied Malvern Ridge.[18]

The NVC by its very nature presents a broad picture of British vegetation, but places like Brampton Bryan, and especially Bradnor Hill, are extraordinary and instructive, showing how, in the centre of the country, two acid grasslands characteristic of east and west can manifest right alongside one another in intimate mosaics. It is the particular combination of rock and local climate that creates this possibility, with small variations in aspect and drainage determining the pattern.

TABLES

Tables 2 and 3 below provide data by species for the acid grasslands at Branpton Bryan and

Bradnor Hill respectively. A larger-format version of these tables, with additional notes, will be published online in *Transactions Extra* to coincide with the publication of this volume. The online publication will also include Table 4 (too large to publish here) which combines all the data from both locations to create a 'mini sample' of grasslands in North-west Herefordshire.

Note: using the tables. In both tables, data recorded for constant species are highlighted in grey. Totals recorded for forbs, bryophytes, and all species in each quadrat are given, with details of quadrat locations and recording dates.

TABLE 2. Data by Species for Areas of Acid Grassland Sampled at Brampton Bryan Park

Table 2		**U4a (bent-fescue-bedstraw)**						**U1b (bent-fescue-sorrel)**					
		Domin Values and Frequency Values (*F*) by Quadrat						**Domin Values and Frequency Values (*F*) by Quadrat**					
Quadrat No.		6	5	3	4	6	***F***	2	1	2	5	7	***F***
Agrostis capillaris	Common Bent	6	8	7	7	8	*V*	7	4	4	5	6	*V*
Anthoxanthum odoratum	Sweet Vernal-grass	6	7	2	3	4	*V*	5	4	2	4	6	*V*
Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus	Springy Turf-moss	5	6	5	4	4	*V*	3	5	5	5	4	*V*
Pseudoscleropodium purum	Neat Feather-moss	4	5	8	8	4	*V*			2	2	3	*III*
Veronica chamaedrys	Germander Speedwell	4	4	3	3		*IV*						
Holcus mollis	Creeping Soft-grass	+	2	4	3	2	*IV*				+	1	*I*
Viola riviniana	Common Dog-violet	4		1	4	2	*IV*					2	*I*
Galium saxatile	Heath Bedstraw	1		1	4	4	*IV*					3	*I*
Carex muricata ssp pairei	Prickly Sedge	3		4	2	+	*III*				2		*I*
Holcus lanatus	Yorkshire Fog	2		2	4		*III*						
Luzula campestris	Good-Friday Grass			3	2	4	*III*		3		3	4	*III*
Hyacinthoides non-scripta	Bluebell	3	3				*II*						
Poa pratensis ss	Smooth Meadow-grass	2	3				*II*	3	+		2		*II*
Quercus	Oak (sdg)	1	1				*II*						
Campanula rotundifolia	Harebell	3		1			*II*				3		*I*
Potentilla sterilis	Barren Strawberry	3			2		*II*						
plant litter		4				4	*II*						
bare soil		2				4	*II*	3				4	*II*
Myosotis discolor	Changing Forget-me-not			3	2		II				3		*I*
Taraxacum officinale	Dandelion			2	1		II						

Table 2, continued…		**U4a (bent-fescue-bedstraw)**						**U1b (bent-fescue-sorrel)**					
		Domin Values and Frequency Values (*F*) by Quadrat						**Domin Values and Frequency Values (*F*) by Quadrat**					
Quadrat No.		6	5	3	4	6	***F***	2	1	2	5	7	***F***
Vicia sativa ssp *nigra*	Narrow-leaved Vetch			3	2		*II*						
Acer pseudoplatanus	Sycamore (sdg)			1		3	*II*					2	*I*
Veronica officinalis	Heath Speedwell				3	2	*II*					3	*I*
Rumex acetosella	Sheep's Sorrel				3	2	*II*	6	4	5	4	4	*V*
Aira praecox	Early Hair-grass							2	3	4	3	4	*V*
Ceratodon purpureus	Redshank			1			*I*	3	1	2	2	3	*V*
Polytrichum juniperinum	Juniper Haircap							4	4	4	4	+	*IV*
Veronica arvensis	Wall Speedwell			2			*I*	2	4	4	3		*IV*
Vulpia bromoides	Squirrel-tail Fescue			2			*I*	3	8	7	5		*IV*
bare rock								4	3	3			*III*
Hypnum cupressiforme	Cypress-leaved Plait-moss							4	3	3			*III*
Bromus hordeaceus	Soft Brome							4	4	4			*III*
Festuca ovina	Sheep's Fescue							2	1	+	4		*III*
Phleum bertolonii	Small Timothy							3	2		3		*III*
Ornithopus perpusillus	Bird's-foot								4	5	3		*III*
Hypnum lacunosum	Great Plait-moss								2	2	3		*III*
Achillea millefolium	Yarrow							2	4	+			*II*
Brachythecium albicans	Whitish Feather-moss							+	4		4		*II*
Grimmia trichophylla	Hair-pointed Grimmia								3	4			*II*
Hedwigia stellata	Starry Hoar-moss								1	1			*II*
Stellaria graminea	Lesser Stitchwort	2			+		*I*				2	1	*II*
Carex pilulifera	Pill Sedge					3	*I*				1	4	*II*
Festuca rubra ssp rubra	Red Fescue	7					*I*	4				+	*I*
Stellaria holostea	Greater Stitchwort	3					*I*						
Ranunculus bulbosus	Bulbous Buttercup	2					*I*						
Ranunculus repens	Creeping Buttercup	2					*I*						

Table 2		**U4a (bent-fescue-bedstraw)**						**U1b (bent-fescue-sorrel)**					
		Domin Values and Frequency Values (*F*) by Quadrat						**Domin Values and Frequency Values (*F*) by Quadrat**					
Quadrat No.		6	5	3	4	6	***F***	2	1	2	5	7	***F***
Dactylis glomerata	Cock's-foot	+	3				*I*	+					
Conopodium majus	Pignut	+	4				*I*						
Fraxinus excelsior	Ash (sdg)		1				*I*						
Cerastium fontanum	Common Mouse-ear			2			*I*				2		*I*
Pteridium aquilinum	Bracken	+		1			*I*		+				
Agrostis canina	Velvet Bent				4		*I*						
Potentilla anglica	Trailing Tormentil				3		*I*						
Cirsium vulgare	Spear Thistle				1		*I*						
Poa trivialis	Rough Meadow-grass				1		*I*						
Potentilla erecta	Tormentil					5	*I*					5	*I*
Teucrium scorodina	Wood Sage					4	*I*				2		*I*
Hypericum pulchrum	Slender St John's-wort					3	*I*						
Calluna vulgaris	Heather					2	*I*						
Dicranum scoparium	Broom Fork-moss					1	*I*						
Lolium perenne	Perennial Rye-grass							4					*I*
Cerastium glomeratum	Sticky Mouse-ear								2				*I*
Trifolium dubium	Lesser Trefoil								2				*I*
Cladonia pyxidata	a lichen								2				*I*
Cladonia subcervicornis	a lichen								2		+		*I*
Hypogymnia physodes	a lichen								1				*I*
Bryum capillare	Capillary Thread-moss								+	2			*I*
Aphanes australis	Slender Parsley-piert										2		*I*
Hylocomium splendens	Glittering Wood-moss											4	*I*
Lotus pedunculatus	Greater Bird's-foot Trefoil	+											
Urtica dioica	Stinging Nettle	+											
Rumex acetosa	Common Sorrel		+										

Table 2		**U4a (bent-fescue-bedstraw)**						**U1b (bent-fescue-sorrel)**					
		Domin Values and Frequency Values (*F*) by Quadrat						**Domin Values and Frequency Values (*F*) by Quadrat**					
Quadrat No.		6	5	3	4	6	***F***	2	1	2	5	7	***F***
Ranunculus acris	Meadow Buttercup												
Arrhenatherum elatius	False Oat-grass			+									
Cirsium arvense	Creeping Thistle			+									
Hypericum humifusum	Trailing St.John's-wort				+								
Cladonia fimbriata	a lichen							+					
Pogonatum aloides	Dwarf Haircap							+					
Spergularia rubra	Sand Spurrey										+		
Total forb		5	4	4	5	6		6	5	6	5	5	
Total bryophyte		5	6	9	9	5		4	7	8	6	5	
TOTAL NUMBER OF SPECIES		**19**	**12**	**21**	**21**	**19**		**17**	**25**	**17**	**25**	**17**	
OS reference (SO)		36023 71326	36403 71466	35745 71957	35773 71974	35810 71491		3661571897	36649 71849	36678 71851	35661 71908	35934 71571	
Slope, degrees		15	5	10	10	15		20	10	10	10	15	
Aspect		NNW	NNW	SSE	SSE	SSE		WNW	SE	S	ESE	SSE	
Date of recording		08.08.22	08.08.22	27.06.23	27.06.23	27.06.23		08.08.22	27.06.23	27.06.23	27.06.23	27.06.23	

TABLE 3. Data by Species for Areas of Acid Grassland Sampled at Bradnor Hill

Table 3		U4a (bent-fescue-bedstraw) Domin Values and Frequency Values (*F*) by Quadrat						U1b (bent-fescue-sorrel) Domin Values and Frequency Values (*F*) by Quadrat					
Quadrat No.		4	5	6	1	2	***F***	1	2	3	7	8	***F***
Festuca ovina	Sheep's Fescue	6	6	5	6	8	*V*	2	4	7	5	4	*V*
Agrostis capillaris	Common Bent	4	4	4	5	4	*V*	5	9	4	4	5	*V*
Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus	Springy Turf-moss	2	4	2	4	5	*V*	2	3	3	2		*IV*
Hylocomium splendens	Glittering Wood-moss	5	5	3	5	5	*V*						
Galium saxatile	Heath Bedstraw	3	4	2	5	5	*V*		+	2			*I*
Luzula campestris	Good-Friday Grass	2	3	4	5	4	*V*	+	4				*I*
Pseudoscleropodium purum	Neat Feather-moss	5	6	5	4		*IV*		+	2	2		*II*
Potentilla erecta	Tormentil	4	3	4	4		*IV*						
Anthoxanthum odoratum	Sweet Vernal-grass	1	4	3	4		*IV*						
Pleurozium schreberi	Red-stemmed Feather-moss	4	4	4		4	*IV*			2			*I*
Rumex acetosella	Sheep's Sorrel				+	+		5	5	5	5	2	*V*
Aira praecox	Early Hair-grass			4	1		*II*	4	3	4	5	4	*V*
Polytrichum juniperinum	Juniper Haircap			2			*I*	4	1	3	5	2	*V*
Ceratodon purpureus	Redshank			1			*I*	3	2	4	2	2	*V*
Aphanes australis	Slender Parsley-piert							3	2	1	3	5	*V*
bare soil				4			*I*	2	1	5	4		*IV*
Pteridium aquilinum	Bracken	6	6	2			*III*	2	2		2	2	*IV*
Veronica arvensis	Wall Speedwell							1	3		3	3	*IV*
Hypnum cupressiforme	Cypress-leaved Plait-moss							4	2		5	4	*IV*
Moenchia erecta	Upright Chickweed							4	3	+	2	4	*IV*
Veronica officinalis	Heath Speedwell	1	3		2		*III*						
Dicranum scoparium	Broom Fork-moss	2		3		2	*III*	2		4	1		*III*
Pilosella officinarum	Mouse-ear Hawkweed		2	4	2		*III*	2			4		*II*
Avenella flexuosa	Wavy Hair-grass	4	4		+		*II*						
Vaccinium myrtillus	Bilberry	3	2				*II*						

Table 3, continued…		**U4a (bent-fescue-bedstraw)**						**U1b (bent-fescue-sorrel)**					
		Domin Values and Frequency Values (*F*) by Quadrat						**Domin Values and Frequency Values (*F*) by Quadrat**					
Quadrat No.		4	5	6	1	2	***F***	1	2	3	7	8	***F***
Festuca rubra ssp rubra	Red Fescue				5	4	*II*	2					*I*
Cerastium glomeratum	Sticky Mouse-ear							2	2			3	*III*
Poa annua	Annual Meadow-grass							1	1			3	*III*
Cladonia furcata	a lichen							3		4	3		*III*
bare rock										2	3	4	*III*
Polytrichum piliferum	Bristly Haircap							4			2		*II*
Erophila verna sl	Common Whitlowgrass							2			2		*II*
Ornithopus perpusillus	Bird's-foot							1				5	*II*
Digitalis purpurea	Foxglove		+					2		+		2	*II*
Montia fontana chondrosperma	Blinks								3	2			*II*
Cladonia rangiformis	a lichen									3	2		*II*
Peltigera hymenina	a dog-lichen					1	*I*			1	+	1	*II*
Polychastrum formosum	Bank Haircap	3					*I*						
Carex caryophyllea	Spring Sedge		+	2			*I*				+		
Thymus polytrichus	Wild Thyme			4			*I*				4	+	*I*
Hypnum lacunosum	Great Plait-moss			3			*I*						
Campanula rotundifolia	Harebell			2			*I*						
Phleum bertolonii	Small Timothy				3		*I*						
Trifolium repens	White Clover				2		*I*						
Holcus mollis	Creeping Soft-grass					2	*I*						
Holcus lanatus	Yorkshire Fog	+						4					*I*
Cladonia portentosa	a lichen			+				2					*I*
Achillea millefolium	Yarrow							2					*I*
Brachythecium albicans	Whitish Feather-moss								4				*I*
Poa pratensis ss	Smooth Meadow-grass					+			3				*I*

Table 3, continued…		**U4a (bent-fescue-bedstraw)**						**U1b (bent-fescue-sorrel)**					
		Domin Values and Frequency Values (*F*) by Quadrat						**Domin Values and Frequency Values (*F*) by Quadrat**					
Quadrat No.		4	5	6	1	2	***F***	1	2	3	7	8	***F***
Cladonia arbuscula	a lichen									2			*I*
Ptilidium ciliare	Ciliated Fringewort									2			*I*
Collema sp	a jelly lichen										4		*I*
Pleuridium acuminatum	Taper-leaved Earth-moss										1		*I*
Cerastium fontanum	Common Mouse-ear											1	*I*
Cirsium vulgare	Spear Thistle											1	*I*
Cardamine hirsuta	Hairy Bittercress											3	*I*
Syntrichia ruralis ssp *ruralis*	Great Hairy Screw-moss											5	*I*
Senecio sylvaticus	Wood Groundsel											1	I
Sonchus asper	Prickly Sowthistle											1	
Hyacinthoides non-scripta	Bluebell	+											
Rhytidadelphus triquetrus	Big Shaggy-moss		+										
Carex pilulifera	Pill Sedge				+								
Cladonia chlorophaea	a lichen							+		+			
Ulex gallii	Western Gorse								+				
Pohlia nutans	Nodding Thread-moss									+			
Trifolium dubium	Lesser Trefoil											+	
Total forb		7	7	8	6	5		7	10	7	8	7	
Total bryophyte		8	8	6	6	6		8	4	6	7	5	
TOTAL NUMBER OF SPECIES		**16**	**15**	**20**	**15**	**11**		**25**	**19**	**18**	**22**	**22**	
OS reference (SO)		27875 58274	27905 58337	27906 58425	28792 57985	28579 57991		28964 57819	28886 57803	28632 57870	27926 58427	28890 57903	
Slope, degrees		30	30	30	10	25		25	5	35	35	15	
Aspect		WNW	WNW	WSW	NE	ENE		S	S	ESE	SW	SW	
Date of recording		30.04.23	30.04.23	30.04.23	04.07.23	04.07.23		30.04.23	30.04.23	30.04.23	30.04.23	30.04.23	

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NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.
[2] English translations of the Latin binomials are given here.
[3] Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
[4] Including some relatively large tracts of land, such as the Black Mountains and Malvern Hills.
[5] 'Ancient Woodland and Trees of Herefordshire. Our Heritage Revealed', Unpubl. Report to The Wye Preservation Trust, SITA, Natural England, Butterfly Conservation and the Duchy of Cornwall, 2010.
[6] D. W. Shimwell (1982), 'A Survey of the Calcareous Grasslands of the Silurian Limestones of Hereford & Worcester', Unpubl report to NCC W. Midlands Region.
[7] Plants with conducting tissues: trees and shrubs, wildflowers, grasses and ferns.
[8] J. S. Rodwell (ed), *British Plant Communities Volume 3. Grasslands and montane communities* (Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 303-4.
[9] *Ibid*., pp. 306-7.
[10] W. H. Purchas & A. Ley, *A Flora of Herefordshire,* (Jakerman & Carver, Hereford, 1889), p.29. 'By the old tramroad, near Kington; Billiald, 1882. Mr Billiald informs me that this location has since been destroyed by the cutting away of the bank.'
[11] Rodwell (1992), *Ibid*., p. 307.
[12] Allott (2011), pp. 103-106.
[13] Sinker *et al* (1980), pp 107-112.
[14] Source: the recently published Knighton sheet of the British Geological Survey. England and Wales Geological Sheet 180, 1:50,000 scale Provisional map by independent survey. Available from Hereford & Worcester Earth Heritage Trust.
[15] *Ibid*.
[16] P. A. Stroh, S. J. Leach, T. A. August, K. J. Walker, D. A. Pearman, F. J. Rumsey, C. A. Harrower, M. F. Fay, J. P. Martin, T. Pankhurst, C. D. Preston. & I. Taylor, *A Vascular Plant Red List for England* (BSBI, Bristol, 2014).
[17] National Character Area. See https://nationalcharacterareas.co.uk.
[18] A full NVC survey was carried out in 2013 for the Malvern Hills Trust.

The Hereford Mills

By Andy C. Tatchell

The Hereford Mills were a medieval complex of fulling and corn watermills, located in Lower Bullingham on the banks of the River Wye. They were an important part of Hereford's medieval economy of cloth-making, corn-milling, and fishing, until Henry VIII had the weir, on which they depended, destroyed. The weir and mills were rebuilt twenty years later in Queen Mary's reign and continued to operate until the Wye and Lugg Navigation removed all the Wye weirs around 1700, rendering the associated watermills inoperable once more. Henry VIII's reasons for destroying the weir have often been misrepresented; with new access to original documents and searchable catalogues, a much more accurate and interesting account can now be given. Also, enough documentation has been found to pinpoint the whereabouts of the mills and the weir that were once the two dominant features on the Bartonsham bend of the Wye below Hereford. They have now completely disappeared, and with them a vibrant story of the city's corn-milling and cloth-making economy has been forgotten.

FIELDWORK—LOCATING THE MILLS

No physical remains survive to orientate the reader to the location of the site or the large scale of the enterprise. As outlined below, several years of tracking down original documents and making observations on the ground, both at the end of dry summers and when the river was in full flood, made it possible to understand the layout fully. The overlay map of Plate 3.1 shows where the weir and mills were located.

The Weir

Two surveys, associated with the Wye and Lugg Navigation, pinned down the location of the weir. One, in 1696, said that it was half a mile below Hereford Bridge.[1] The second described it as a quarter mile below the city,[2] thus pointing to a shallow rapid just by Bartonsham Farm dairy.

In 1871, when John Lloyd published his account of the Wye Navigation, he described the remains of a weir below Hereford Bridge, saying that 'old framing, piles, and quarried stone point to the existence of a weir across the river'.[3]

The navigator, Frank Barton, also provided information about the location of the mills and types of weir found on the Wye. In his preparation for navigating his 38m Dutch barge, the Wye Invader, up to Hereford in 1989, he had walked the whole length of the river several times, studying the obstructions, many of which were old fish weirs built on shallows. In his extensive historical research, published in 1996,[4] he pointed out that most of the weirs were not at right angles to the riverbanks but were long, diagonal weirs; a good example is Hancock's weir on the border of Holme Lacy and Ballingham parishes, described in the 1696 survey as 160 yards long.

In the summer of 2018, when the river was low, the author, with fellow members of the Bartonsham History Group, explored the weir site, from a flotilla of coracles and a canoe, and searched the riverbed. It was confirmed that a long line of angular rocks ran diagonally downstream from the Bartonsham dairy towards the King George V playing fields on the opposite bank. The rocks stopped two thirds of the way across, where the current is much faster and had washed away the weir debris. The width of the river was 44.5m and the diagonal line of the weir debris 118m, bank to bank. To give the full context, the 1696 survey described the

Hereford weir as ‘a stone weir 5ft high laid by masons and is the first weir from ye mouth of ye river that is soe built’.

Also, a large, rectangular, foundation stone was observed on the line of the weir, measuring 51in. by 24in. This protruded 12in. above the riverbed; when exposed at low water it is often frequented by ducks. Finally, a photo of the site, taken in 1925 by Alfred Watkins, shows a large rock on the Bartonsham side. The rock is no longer there, probably indicating the erosion capabilities of the river over the last 100 years (Figure 1).[5]



Figure 1. Photo by Alfred Watkins of the ford at Bartonsham, 1925. HARC, Alfred Watkins photo collection, 1241 and 1243

The Mills Site

A search through the Herefordshire Archive and Records Centre (HARC) and Cathedral Library archive quickly produced a valuable series of documents, dating from 1396 to 1691, many stating that the mills were in Lower Bullingham. An indenture of 1604 provides the most detailed description of the buildings, recording two corn mills, three fulling mills, a mill house, and a barn.[6] The description also includes several adjoining fields, but none of their names survived through to the 1843 tithe-map survey.[7]

There are no maps showing the mills at the time they were operating. However, maps of 1779, by James Whitworth, represent a survey of the Wye’s riverbed levels from Hereford to Monmouth. Its purpose was to establish where pound locks could be installed to improve navigation. Included is a small map of Hereford, showing a building named ‘old mill’ in Lower Bullingham, opposite the bottom of the Bartonsham meadows (Figure 2).[8] The house is plotted on Taylor’s Wye survey of 1763 but is not named.[9] Successive maps show that this one building remained in use until the second half of the 20th century. Tracy Goodwin, a farmer whose family

owned the land until recently, remembers it being derelict when he was a child. It disappeared eventually in the 1960s.

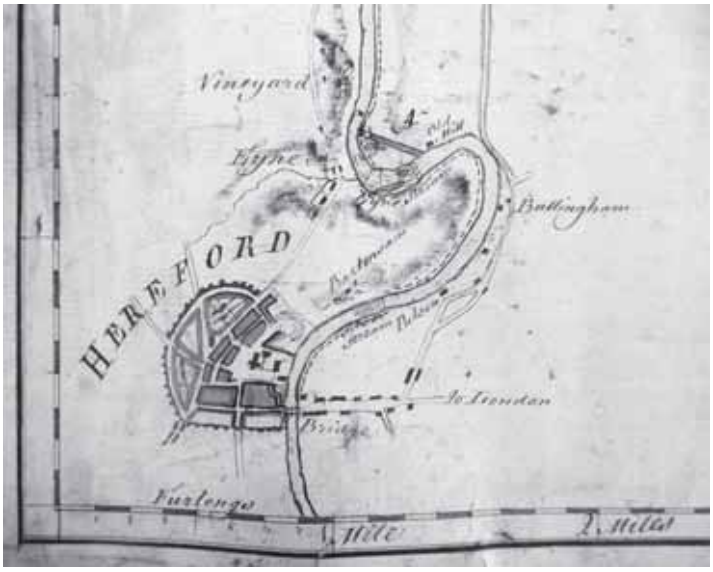


Figure 2. Whitworth's Map of Bartonsham bend, dated 1779, with 'old mill' marked. HARC, Q/WRn/2

The house—Mill House, Lower Bullingham, St Owens, Hereford—was inhabited throughout the period of census records from 1841 to 1911.[10] It was easy to identify in those records since it was located in St Owens parish, so within Hereford's city limits despite being on the opposite side of the river. The parish boundary still crosses the river into Lower Bullingham parish in the shape of a long finger of land at right angles to the river, marked by boundary stones.[11] The historical reason for including this area within the city limits is very much associated with the mills and is discussed below.

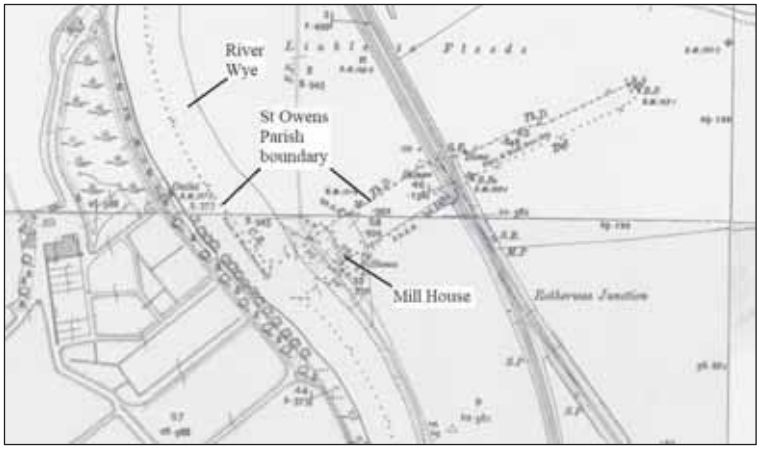


Figure 3. 1903 OS Map of St Owens Parish showing the finger of land in Lower Bullingham

The Leat

The leat carrying water from the weir to the mills passed around the outside of the bend of the river at Lower Bullingham. Today, this route looks unattractive since it implies a lot of

maintenance to protect the bank and leat from erosion. However, as demonstrated below, the bend was less vulnerable at the time when the mills were in use.

In addition, the site of the mills themselves, below an old river terrace opposite the modern sewerage works, met the essential requirements for any mill: sufficient vertical drop to operate the waterwheels; a convenient place from which to trade; and a location where flooding would not destroy the buildings. Several records, mainly in inquisitions, describe destruction of mills on the Wye, including one at Fownhope, destroyed by 'the rage of the river' in 1353.[12] Observations during the record floods in 2019/20 indicated that the Hereford Mills were well located in this respect; in this extreme event, the site was the last area thereabouts to be flooded. By that time, the Bartonsham meadows had been entirely submerged, right up to the garden walls of the houses in Park Street.

Also, at just over a mile, the leat may seem long; however, there are many examples of longer leats, such as those at Staunton-on-Arrow which pass along both sides of the river valley for several miles, feeding mills as well as the extensive water-meadow complex.

The site of an 18th-century house, Panson Cottage, located above the beginning of the bend and marked on the map in Plate 3.1, indicates how erosion has changed the outside of the bend over time. In front of the building that occupies the site today (a block of flats, No. 20 River View) lies a wood with a near-vertical drop to the river. However, two paintings, one by James Wathen in the 1790s (Plate 3.2),[13] and a second watercolour and associated engraving by Humphrey Repton, published around 1802 after the redevelopment of the cottage, show a gently sloping lawn down to the river.[14] Evidently, the banks of the Wye here were much shallower in past centuries and quite capable of supporting a leat. Many sketches and engravings in the late 1700s show riverbanks far gentler than today's. In the absence of fencing, livestock accessing the river for water and grazing broke down the banks.



Figure 4. Bartonsham Bend, Hereford: RAF, 1952. Historic Environment Scotland, National Collection of Aerial Photography, EAW046836

Riverbanks generally remain stable over long periods unless large objects deflect the river's flow. Here, willows next to the sewerage works on the inside of the bend have caused erosion in relatively recent times. When they reach maturity, they collapse into the river and regrow, thus deflecting the flow more strongly against the outside of the bend and accelerating erosion. In previous centuries, the riverbanks around Hereford were stripped bare of wood, reflecting the constant shortage of fuel. The advent of coal in the navigation era relieved the fuel problem, but

trees continued to be removed nonetheless because barges needed clear banks for their tow ropes.

The installation of the pipe-bridge, in the early 1960s, has accelerated erosion further since the east pier deflects water against the bank in the area where the Mill House was located. An aerial photograph of 1952 shows the garden boundary and no willow trees on the inside bend (Figure 4).[15] Modern satellite overlay shows that the river is now much wider here. However, it has not consumed the area of the house so that its foundations may remain under the brambles.

EARLY HISTORY OF THE MILLS

The Early Medieval Period

In Herefordshire, the Domesday survey of 1086 recorded 108 mills, of which 99 were assigned a monetary value; the average was 8s 9d.[16] Two mills in Bullinghope were owned in equal shares by three people: Roger de Lacy; Ansfrid of Cormeilles; and Gilbert son of Thorold. Their valuation has been open to interpretation. However, taking additional data into consideration, it is concluded that their total value was 14s 8d, so that each mill was worth 7s 4d.[17] They seem to have been unexceptional corn mills located on a brook, with each mill having a waterwheel that powered one pair of stones, that being the technology of the time.

The exact location of these mills is unknown. However, the human-made, right-angled bend at the end of the Withy Brook, near its confluence with the Wye, could suggest the start of a leat, supplying water to the Hereford Mills site and safe from flooding (Figure 5),[18] possibly as early as Domesday.

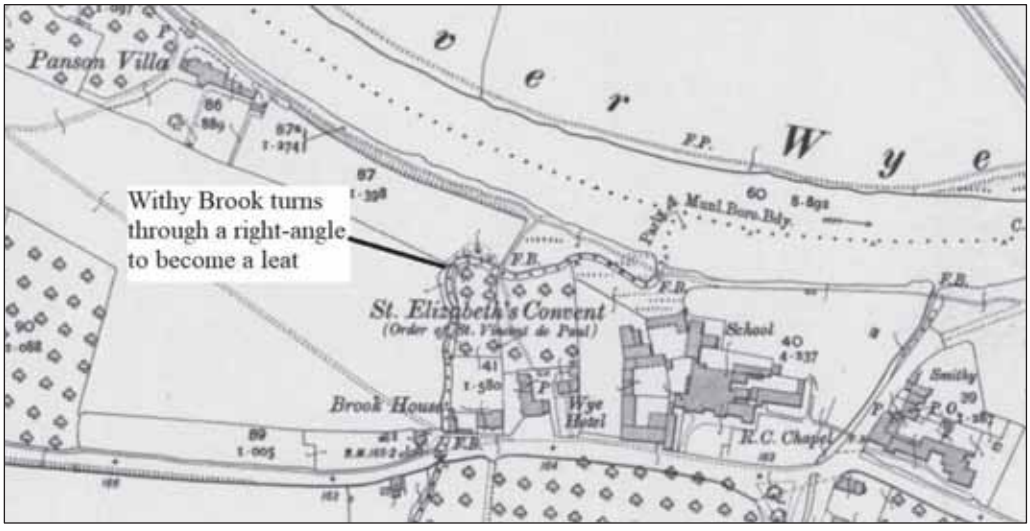


Figure 5. Map of the confluence of Withy Brook and River Wye, 1885. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland

Many mills in the county, including the Bullinghope mills, would have had a low value because they were powered by small brooks that dried up in the summer. The most valuable mill in Herefordshire, at Shelwick on the Lugg, 2.3 miles north-east of the city, was valued at 30s.,

almost certainly because it worked the whole year round and had fish traps as well. The Lugg was always a prolific source of eels right up to the mid-20th century. Quite a few mills and fisheries paid all or part of their dues in sticks of eels.

Weir Building and Military Defence

There is no definitive evidence to show why the Hereford Weir was built or when, except that the mills which depended on it were fully operational before 1355.[19] However, as early as 1086, weirs were being built on the Wye; the Domesday survey recorded three fisheries at Fownhope, which paid 300 eels and would have had weirs or part weirs on the river.[20]

The Wye acted as the moat on the south side of Hereford Castle, but in dry periods can easily be forded immediately upstream and downstream from the ramparts of the bailey. So, perhaps the Hereford Weir was originally built for military purposes as it raised the water level in front of the castle by 2ft. 3in.[21] The weir would also have supplied a good catch of fish close to the city, and the mills could have been added later to make profitable use of it.

The weir could have been built when the Normans upgraded defences from 1067, after the sack by the Welsh in 1055, or more likely after 1138 when Matilda's forces entered across the river, seen as a weak point.[22] In the following century, the castle was considerably upgraded with stone and a stone quay, able to resist likely erosion from higher water levels.[23] Two further attacks in 1246 and 1645 failed to take the city.[24]

The Mills Pass Fully to the Dean & Chapter of Hereford

The first document found mentioning the Hereford Mills is an Inquisition in 1355, at which time 'two mills with appurtenances in the suburbs of Hereford and Lower Bullinghope' were held jointly, by the Prior and convent of St Leonard of Wormesleye for a rent of 100 shillings a year and by the Dean & Chapter of St Ethelbert of Hereford for a rent of seven pounds a year, both to the king. King Edward III now requested his legal clerks to grant the property fully to the Dean & Chapter.[25]

A newly discovered document shows that a watermill and two fulling mills were operating in Hereford in 1355.[26] Fulling mills were introduced into England in the late 12th century from the continent; the earliest recorded examples date from 1185.[27] The fulling mill mechanised the labour-intensive process of walking cloth, whereby the newly woven cloth was first washed in fuller's earth and urine to remove the grease, then trodden in tubs of warm water by bare-footed 'walkers' to tighten and felt the weave. The labour shortage caused by the Black Death of 1348 created impetus in cloth-making regions to convert corn mills to fulling mills,[28] especially in towns, where there was a trend for urban merchants to buy cloth from country weavers for finishing.[29]

MILL FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS BETWEEN 1385-1415

David Lovelace's discovery, in the cathedral archive, of a set of medieval accounts for the Hereford Mills has opened real insight into the whole operation.[30] The accounts, written in Latin and Norman French, cover four separate years (1385, 1395, 1403, and 1415, always starting at Michaelmas) and span the period from just after the Peasants' Revolt to the month before the Battle of Agincourt. They provide good evidence of economic life relating to the mills, surrounding fields and the woods owned by the Dean & Chapter, and of medieval technology, people, and trades.

The accounts record activity during the year under the supervisor—John Abraham in

1385, followed by Chaplain William Love and Richard Young in the latter years. In monetary terms, they record surplus income generated for the Dean & Chapter and external costs incurred by a business unit whose activity included maintaining the weir, catching fish, milling corn, fulling cloth, farming the adjoining fields, and operating a ferry. So, although the use of items such as quantities of timber and stone from the estate of the Dean & Chapter are recorded, the only costs noted are those of external labour and haulage pertaining to the relevant activity.

Under the supervisor was the 'Keeper of the mills and weir with the ferry of the livestock', and below him a weirman, miller, and fuller. Woodsmen, carpenters, blacksmiths, and labourers carried out farming and repair work, and were paid on a job-by-job basis. Costs detailed include those for tools and day rates of individual trades.

As shown in Table 1, the corn mill provided the bulk of the income; it took payment in kind as a toll, known as 'multure', which was then sold. The fulling mill charged 6d. per operation, and its business steadily increased through this period. Fishing income recorded sales of only two salmon and small amounts of eels to various canons, which certainly do not reflect the scale of the catch; the purchase of numerous traps indicates that many more were caught. The bulk of the catch would have supplied the Dean & Chapter for the many fish days, not only on Fridays but on religious feast days and throughout Lent.

Table 1: Summary of Mill Income, 1385, 1395, 1403, and 1415

Year from Michaelmas	1385	1395	1403	1415	Average
Annual Income £. s. d.	16.0.2	12.5.5	17.9.7	14.4.0	14.19.9
Source of Income %					
Corn Mill	64	55	72	60	63
Fulling Mill	11	10	12	17	13
Fishing	18	12	4	4	10
Grazing and Pasture	7	23	12	19	15

Types of Activity

The insight that the accounts provide into different activities is summarised below.

Weir Repairs

The maintenance of a weir across the Wye was carried out annually in the spring. There is no indication that the medieval weir was built of stone, as described in the survey of 1695; rather, the accounts show that a traditional medieval construction was used, with primitive gabion baskets.[31] Wooden stakes were driven into the riverbed in a long diagonal line. Behind this, further stakes were installed to make compartments, bound together with hurdles of withies in a process called winding, before rocks, gravel, and turf were packed into the compartments. The stakes, made of oak for strength and durability, can still be seen at low water at the site of some of the Wye's medieval weirs; at Fownhope Weir at Mill Farm, they appear as short, stubby, very hard posts with sharp points, just below low-water level. To strengthen the structure, willow stakes were used which sprouted; the branches were woven together to form a hedge across the top.[32]

Medieval winters were so cold that rivers would freeze. This design of weir was not watertight so that, when the internal structure of the weir froze, the ice expanded between the stones, thus breaking the windings. Many records, especially in the Middle Ages, describe weirs abandoned after hard frosts when damage and the cost of repair were too great; in 1634, for example, many on the Severn were not rebuilt after exceptional floods followed by a cold spell.[33]

Floods were very destructive too. Rising waters increased the hydrostatic pressure exerted on the weir wall, the greatest pressure being at the bottom. Two methods were used to reduce the height of flood water passing over a weir. First, a line of flood gates was installed in the weir wall with a walkway of planks above them, known as staging, from which the gates could be operated.[34] Secondly, the weir could be built diagonally across the river, as observed at Hereford during the field survey.[35]

Fishing

A key activity at this time was catching fish, on the weir and in the leat, to supply the many fish days in the calendar. Extreme measures could be taken to this end, as recorded at nearby Aconbury Priory,[36] and also Llanthony Priory.[37]

Eels were caught in basket traps call 'welys' or wheels, known today as putcheon traps but not to be confused with putches used in the Severn and Wye estuary for catching migrating salmon. Wheels were long, cylindrical willow baskets with a funnel entrance, one or two non-return compartments, and a small hole at the narrow end, blocked with a wooden bung or rag.[38] During stormy nights in the autumn floods, large, black eels, migrating downstream, were caught in large numbers, swimming in the main flow close to the riverbed. Flood gates were built across this section of the river to lower the wheel traps to the bottom so that the eels would not turn down the mill race;[39] the traps were thus located near to the right bank, close to the leat offtake. At the far end of the leat, beyond the mills, additional flood gates were placed to catch errant eels.[40] At other times, small wheel traps were baited in suitable places; mill leats were favoured to catch immature yellow eels called 'shutlings' and 'taleels', as recorded in the accounts.[41]

Migrating salmon were caught in the spring and summer, using hatches with stake fences to direct fish swimming upstream through a narrow pinch point into a holding pool or pond, where they were netted, gaffed, or caught in basket traps called 'wylchyns'.[42] The exact configuration of these traps is difficult to determine although the accounts describe fish caught from 'the weirs' (plural). Fish weirs additional to the main weir may thus have existed, not spanning the whole river and probably comprising a bank of fish traps, such as wheels, with or without fences to guide the migrating fish into them. Such weirs were still used on the Severn Estuary until the 1970s.[43]

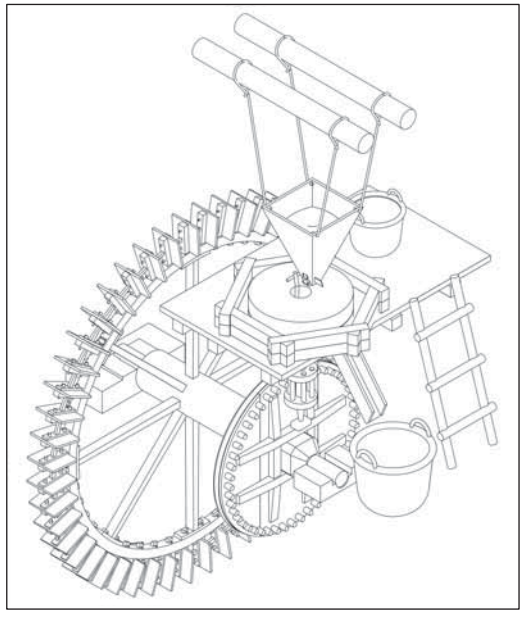
The number of traps purchased suggests a fishery of some scale. Normally such an operation had a fish house, where eels were smoked or salted for preservation. They could also be stored live as fresh fish are far nicer to eat.[44] Since the accounts mention a fishpond, but not a fish house or purchase of salt, it must be assumed that most catches were fresh and taken directly to the cathedral kitchens to feed the staff and the many pilgrims visiting the tomb of St Thomas Cantilupe, canonised in 1320. The accounts record only a small quantity sold to canons for their private use and make no mention of the quantity consumed by the Dean & Chapter itself.

Corn Mill

The mill ground mainly wheat but also small quantities of muncorn (mixed grain), hokeman (oatmeal), oat flour, and malted grains, including wheat, oats, and barley. Payment in kind,

known as multure, is described as being taken for grinding; a rate of 1/16th was most common in the Midlands.[45] There are two references to multure in 1403 when forty seams were milled 'from the lord kings bakery' at 2d./seam, a toll of 1/20th; this is low and probably the reason why it was noted. In 1395, the miller and carrier combined received a third of the minor tolls.

Much of the corn would have come from the estates of the Dean & Chapter, who commonly received rents and tithes, paid in bushels of wheat, from mills and arable land they let out; for example, the miller at Sugwas Mills on the Wye paid five bushels of rye and half a bushel of wheat per week to the bishop.[46] To prevent underpayment, the Dean & Chapter's leases often insisted that, when corn was paid as rent, 'the bushels should be well shaken and every fifth one heaped'.[47] The Hereford bushel was large, equivalent to ten gallons.[48]



From the description of repairs in the accounts and observations on the ground, a picture can be developed of the building and machinery. The wooden building had a thatched roof and was enclosed with lockable doors to prevent theft. The wooden waterwheel was undershot, with iron fittings and brass cup bearings. Attached to the wheel shaft was a large pit wheel, which engaged the vertical rotating spindle by way of a lantern and pinion gear. The spindle turned the top runner stone, and the bed stone was fixed to a wooden hurst frame, which supported the mill stones.[49] This arrangement is shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Sketch of Medieval vertical wheel and mill machinery. Drawing by John Brandrick

Fulling Mill

The fulling mill was an enclosed wooden building with a thatched roof. As with the corn mill, the waterwheel was undershot but had a longer wheel shaft. There were no gears, but cams on the wheel shaft raised a pair of oak stocks which swung alternately into the beating box like pendulums. The box contained water, fuller's earth, urine, and the woven cloth. The beating process kneaded and turned the woven cloth to tighten and felt it (see Figure 7). The fulled cloth would be cleaned, then stretched and dried on the tentering rack.

The accounts show that the fuller paid a toll to the Dean & Chapter for each 'operation' of the mill, whilst the Dean & Chapter paid for its repair. The toll was 6d. for each operation, which took several days to complete. The lowest number of operations was 48.5 in 1395 and the highest 96 in 1415. The fuller presumably bought fuller's earth himself since there are no references to purchasing it.

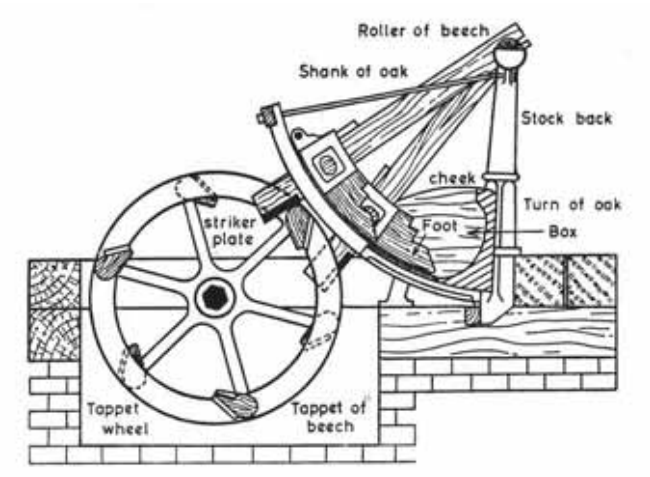


Figure 7. Diagram of fulling 'driving' stocks showing the principal parts (after E. Kilburn Scott)

Security

Theft was a constant problem in medieval mills.[50] The accounts show that locks and keys were purchased every year. The multure box—'le Tollewiche'—was a prime target.

Farming

The surrounding meadows and leasows were farmed or let for grazing, generating on average 15% of sales recorded, mainly from hay, grazing, and wheat. Twigs were sold for tanning and nettles for twine and rope making, in much the same way as hemp and flax. Le Byfield was planted to grow withies, presumably for weir repair or basket making.

Access & the Ferry

The river crossing opposite the mills was accessed by a path across the Bartonsham meadows, owned by the Prebendary of Bartonsham, to whom the mills paid a wayleave of 8s. per annum. The pathway still exists as a straight extension from Green Street down to the river. A livestock ferry, operated by the keeper of the mills, Hugo Glaseby, crossed the river to the mills. The accounts record repairs and maintenance to the barge, its rudder, and its hull. The path and ferry offered a shorter route to the mills from the city than crossing the bridge over the Wye.

CONTEXT: THE MILLS AND THE MEDIEVAL WOOL & CLOTH INDUSTRY

However unfamiliar it may seem today, from the 12th to the 19th centuries England's main industry was wool and cloth production. It percolated into nearly every county, dictated the nation's prosperity and the revenue available to the exchequer, funded wars, and was subject to much political interference in the Tudor period. In the 1550s it accounted for a third of the economy and employed a quarter of a million people.[51]

From the end of the 14th century to the end of the 16th, national cloth production rose, both for local and foreign consumption, while wool exports dwindled.[52] These changes were caused by two major shocks. Firstly, to fund the 100 Years War, in the decade to 1347 customs duty on wool was increased to 33% but that on cloth remained at 2%, causing cloth production

for export to grow and wool exports to collapse, except for high-quality wool.[53] Secondly, after the Black Death of 1348-9, farmers switched to sheep farming, which required less labour and provided more wool for exported cloth.[54]

Table 2: National development of cloth and wool sales from the 14th to the 16th centuries[55]

Item	1311-5	1391-5	1441-5	1541-5	1590
Cloth: No. Equivalent Broad Cloths					
Domestic	160,000	120,000	140,000	190,000	314,600
Export	3,900	39,500	56,500	118,100	122,400
Total	163,900	159,500	196,500	308,100	437,000
Wool: No. Sacks					
Domestic	21,978	17,804	23,064	43,879	68,391
Export	35,328	18,514	8,209	4,576	1,000
Total	57,306	36,318	31,273	48,455	69,391

In addition, a new, cheaper method of managing cloth production was developed by country clothiers, which challenged the traditional guild system in towns and cities. Cloth making was a complicated and time-consuming process; in the 1540s it took 978 hours to make a standard broad cloth 1¾ yards wide by 25 yards long. The guild system compartmentalised the seven main trades of yarn preparation, weaving, fulling, cleansing and tentering, shearing and finishing, dyeing, and finally pressing and packing.[56] Each trade was a separate business, purchasing, processing, then selling to the next trade in the chain.

By contrast, country clothiers, as entrepreneurial, independent merchants, coordinated all the processes, purchasing the wool and putting it out to each trade on a piece rate, a model which reduced cost. Many specialised in white, unfinished cloth, which was packed into bales after fulling and exported to the continent for finishing. Herefordshire, a producer of high-quality wool in the early medieval period, took little part in the subsequent growth of cloth-making; it accounted for only 0.5% of national cloth production in 1398-1401 and 1% in 1450.[57] Instead, it had continued to produce the best very fine, long-staple wool in the country from its Ryeland sheep.[58] Merchants in the Low Countries & Italy would pay a premium; in 1499 the price reached £25 per sack compared with £15 for Cotswold wool.[59]

By the time that John Leyland was making his survey of the country between 1535 and 1547, the country clothier was fully established. On his first visit to Hereford in 1536, he did not mention the destruction of the Hereford weir the year before.[60]

THE TUDOR PERIOD

The Destruction of the Hereford Mills in 1535

Sea defences, land drainage, weirs, and floods had posed long-standing problems but had only been tackled piecemeal by Parliament over the previous 300 years, with acts for individual cases that had to be renewed and were largely ineffective. Weirs had always been a source of real

conflict between the self-interest of rich, local landowners and much wider interests focusing on free navigation, free fishing, and preventing flooding of crops. This was no academic debate; famine and public disturbance were real issues at this time.[61]

To address these matters, in 1532 the Statute of Sewers Act was passed, giving the Commission of Sewers sweeping new powers to manage river navigation, inland fisheries, land drainage, and sea defences. Over time this act—only replaced in 1930 by a new Land Drainage Act—contributed substantially to changing the country's landscape to the one we know today. It was also the first act for which Thomas Cromwell acted as a spokesman for the government.[62] Given his preoccupation with other matters over the next two years, not least the Act of Supremacy, the Sewers Act had little initial impact. However, in 1535 the King and Cromwell launched an ambitious nationwide campaign using the Commission of Sewers to destroy weirs throughout lowland England, to improve navigation and reduce flooding.[63]

The Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic of Henry VIII in 1535 include plenty of correspondence on weir destruction throughout the country, often reflecting orders to destroy all weirs in the counties of Somerset, Wiltshire, Devonshire, and Hampshire; and along the rivers Ouse, Humber, Thames, Severn, Wye, and Usk.[64]

The entries largely concern the objections of individual nobles complaining about loss of income; for instance, exchanges about Lord and Lady Lesley's attempt to save their weir at Umberley, on the River Taw in Devon, until a final letter, dated 27 November 1535, terminated correspondence, pointing out that, as part of this campaign, 'The King…has lost more than 500 marks yearly by such weirs and mills as have been pulled down.'[65]

There is sufficient contemporary correspondence to show that the Hereford Mills weir was still standing on the 24 September 1535 but pulled down by 1 October. The chain of correspondence in 1535, between Roland Lee, Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield and President of the Council of the Marches, and Thomas Cromwell, is as follows:[66]

> 19 August. Lee to Cromwell: …Give credence to my servant concerning the destruction of the weirs. I am in a case that I cannot 'beweylde myself' Therefore, I was so bold as to write to you for a physician.
>
> 24 August, Lee to Cromwell: I have recovered from my sickness…Touching the pulling down of weirs no time shall be lost. At this time the Severn is so great that nothing can be done…
>
> 8 September. Lee to Cromwell: I have received by my servant Lewes the Kings letter about pulling down weirs upon the Wye. I have ordered it to be done between this and Friday. I have appointed Mr Holte and Sir Edw. Croft to repair thither on Wednesday next, and would have been there myself, but I have been ill of a fever.
>
> 24 September. Sir E Croft and Others to Cromwell: Have received letters date Bodiam 1 Sept., directing them to allow two mills viz, Hereford mill and Suggewas mill, to stand till further orders, and meanwhile to inquire whether they were hurtful to the commonwealth. Have called before them the mayor of Hereford and others of the city and neighborhood of Eton Bishop and other places adjoining, and declared to them the Kings pleasure, telling them that if the said mills were pulled down it would be to their peril. 24 Sept. Signed E. Croft, Jamys Beskervyle, John Scudamore, Thomas Bodenham, Thomas Monygton, William Clynton, Richard Palmer.

> 1 October. Lee to Cromwell: Has, according to command pulled down the weirs of Severne and Wye; except the bishop of Hereford's weir, where there is restraint, and that at Carlions, on the Usk, and those on the Team and Lugg, with others.

The Bishop of Hereford's weir mentioned was at Sugwas, three miles upstream from Hereford, where three corn mills operated.[67] There could have been several reasons for saving this weir; for example, it would not have impeded navigation to Hereford and would have allowed the city to have working corn mills in dry periods, from June to October, when mills powered by brooks had no water, or during the much colder winters of the period when brooks were frozen.[68] Also, probably more importantly, Edward Fox, who had played a major role in assisting the king in his divorce from Catherine of Aragon, had been appointed Bishop of Hereford in August 1535. The weir at Carlions (Caerleon) was owned by the Marchioness of Pembrokeshire, Anne Boleyn.

So, it appears that the decision not to save the Hereford Weir was made between 24 September and 1 October 1535. The weir at Hereford was owned by the Dean & Chapter of Hereford, and a lot of historical literature has suggested that Hereford's support for Catherine of Aragon and its Catholic leanings, noted in the Letters & Papers the previous year,[69] lay behind the decision to destroy it.

The Dean & Chapter's *Acta* for the period has no mention of the weir's destruction in 1535 but quite a few entries about its re-building in 1555. From the evidence, it is reasonable to conclude that, even if Catholic leanings would not have helped, the Hereford Weir was pulled down as part of the national effort to improve navigation and that the city had had no leverage to prevent it.[70] Also, as noted above, Herefordshire was a very small cloth producer.

This was not a one-off campaign; if Cromwell had lived longer, he might have gone down in history as the 'Hammerer of Weirs'.[71] A letter to him in 1539, about a weir set up on the Lugg in Sir John Bridges's lordship, demonstrates his ongoing interest and vigilance in a local context.[72]

It has also been suggested that the influence of the Coningsby family at Hampton Court, near Leominster, might have played a part in the destruction of the Hereford weir; the loss of the Leominster's Saturday cloth market earlier in the century would have bruised them. However, Sir Humphrey Coningsby, a Justice of the King's Bench in London for twenty-four years and a good friend of Henry VIII, retired in 1533 and died in June 1535, before the campaign of weir destruction commenced in the Marches.[73] Later, in 1557, a patent was granted to Humphrey Coningsby, grandson of Sir Humphrey:

> In consideration of grate losses and charges lately sustained in building two clothing mills otherwise called "Potters" in Hope under Dynmire, co Herefordshire, whereby great number of artificers may be better able to maintain themselves and their families in continued work….A license to keep 'looms' not exceeding 40 in his house or their houses….[74]

So, the dates and evidence suggest that the family hurriedly attempted to take advantage of Hereford's demise but were not the cause of it.

The Period of no Fulling Mills in Hereford: 1535 to 1555

The twenty years until the weir was re-built in 1555 were turbulent, with the dissolution of the monasteries, foreign wars, and swings in religious views during the reigns of three monarchs.

All three pursued foreign wars, largely fought by foreign mercenaries, requiring disproportionate amounts of foreign currency; to fund them, taxes were raised, and large foreign loans were taken to pay for mercenaries and supplies. Progressive coinage debasement also took place. The macroeconomic effects are well known today but were unknown then. These decisions resulted in significant movements in the exchange rate.

The cloth industry, driven by these currency fluctuations, experienced a boom until 1550, followed by a dramatic bust in 1551. The boom was centered on Antwerp, the sole outlet for exported English cloth from the late 1540s as war closed other markets; progressive devaluation of Sterling made cloth cheaper for merchants there although, at the same time, inflation increased manufacturing costs in England. The great boom reached its peak in 1550 when signs of saturation were being seen in the Antwerp market. Then, in mid-1551, a drastic deflationary measure, of halving the face value of the coinage to stabilise the English economy, led to a dramatic bust, with exports of broad cloths slumping from a peak of 132,000 to 85,000 in 1552.[75] Quality also deteriorated in the boom years through over-stretching on tentering racks, adding sub-standard yarn into the weave, and a variety of sharp practices.[76]

At this point, government intervention, through regulation and efforts to revive the industry in corporate towns, opened a window for the revival of Hereford Mills and a cloth industry in Hereford. Between 1552 and 1555, several acts of Parliament sought to reduce the swollen cloth industry. The first, in 1552, laid down regulations to maintain standards, and a second forbade anyone to weave broadcloth who had not served an apprenticeship or been engaged in the trade for seven years. These regulations applied to town and country alike. In 1553, towns became exempt from the seven-year rule under Queen Mary. In 1555, the guild system in corporate towns was strengthened when the Weavers Act prevented country clothiers from having more than one loom in their house and weavers from having more than two.[77]

Many later comments by historians have suggested, with hindsight, that Hereford's cloth industry had been ruined by the destruction of the weir in 1535; the reality was rather that Hereford's small industry missed out on the subsequent cloth boom in the 1540s.

The Hereford Mills Act of 1555

In 1555, apart from passing the Weavers Act, the Queen received numerous pleas and complaints from impoverished towns. Help was offered where it could assist urban recovery, thus assuring local loyalty and stability, often through charters of incorporation; Mary granted more than double the number of charters per annum than her predecessors.[78]

In this context of supporting local interests, Thomas Kerry, MP for Leominster, championed the rebuilding of the Hereford Mills, clearly deploying his knowledge of the political system to get the mills rebuilt. He was almost certainly related to John Kerry, Mayor of Hereford 1555-6, and a member of the Kerry family that lived at Putson, close to the Hereford Mills. He would thus have been familiar with the site's history and business opportunity it might offer.[79]

During this period, Queen Mary instructed her council to plan the government's programme prior to each session to assure an orderly presentation to Parliament. Shortly afterwards, Parliament was prorogued, leaving little or no opportunity for private members' bills. Nonetheless, along with the nationally important Weavers Act, three other cloth-related acts were passed supporting local interests, one of which was the Hereford Mills Act.[80]

During 1554-5, Kerry piloted the course of the Act with considerable political skill. On 11 March 1554, he had become the deputy of Edmond Clerke, a clerk of the Privy Seal,[81] before

he himself became one of the four clerks in December, a position he held until 1599.[82] In 1555, he became the Member of Parliament for Leominster for a single year and on 24 July obtained a lease on the derelict Hereford Mills from the Dean & Chapter,[83] as confirmed in their *Acta* of 19 August.[84]

On 28 September, only twenty-three days before the session commenced,[85] Kerry sent a letter to the Hereford Council requesting them to write and support the bill. Between 21 October and 9 December, Parliament passed the Act as the fourteenth of twenty-three government-sponsored bills. A later lease in 1562, from the Dean & Chapter to Thomas Kerry, praised him for '…the hard work and expense in obtaining an Act of Parliament concerning the rebuilding of the said mills'. 'Expense' may well have included bribing parliamentary officials to get his bill on the order paper, quite normal practice at that time.[86]

The wording of the preamble of the Act is loaded with inaccuracies to suit the atmosphere and politics of a Catholic monarchy in 1555. It deliberately 'miss leads' the members of Parliament about what actually happened when the weir was destroyed in 1535:

> … the said City was well occupied, & the inhabitants thereof then very Wealthy & Rich, and so continued until the said 19th year of the said late King Henry [1527/28]; at which time by wrongful suggestion made to the said late King, upon malice borne to the said Dean and Chapter, and by a private letter from the said late King by sinister means obtained; all the four said mills were thrown down and destroyed. By reason where of the Cloth making of the said City utterly ceased…[87]

As discussed above, the weirs on which the mills depended were destroyed in 1535, not in 1527/8, to improve navigation and reduce flooding on the Wye. It is hard to believe that this is a simple mistake, since, with other aspects of the text, the date seems designed to misrepresent the background; it might have helped divert other members of Parliament from objecting or initiating similar bills, especially if the Commission of Sewers had destroyed weirs in their constituencies in 1535. The incorrect date has caused much confusion and is quoted in nearly all the historical literature, whether about the City of Hereford or in publications about transport or the wool and cloth industry nationally.[88] The phrase '...malice borne to the Dean and Chapter...' has generally been thought to refer to their Catholic leanings and supporting Catherine of Aragon during her divorce form Henry VIII.[89] That occurred six years later in 1534 and certainly wouldn't have helped the City's attempt to save the weir, described above, in the weeks before its destruction in September 1535.

The word 'destruction' is also inflammatory. The fact that the weirs on the whole of the Wye below Hereford were pulled down in only six days at the end of September 1535 shows that only a breach was made in them to allow boats to pass. The mills were almost certainly not destroyed immediately but dismantled later and parts reused. To destroy them in those six fateful days, it would have been necessary to torch them, but there is no mention across England of any mills being burnt down during this campaign. Finally, the description of the city as 'Wealthy and Rich' before the weir's destruction is probably a back-handed remark to prevent objections from other cloth towns who had become ever wealthier in the cloth boom of the 1540s, a boom in which Hereford had not participated.

Re-Building of the Mills

Thomas Kerry set about rebuilding the weir and buildings. The Dean & Chapter helped by

providing twenty oak trees from their Canon Wood, a significant contribution.[90] For context, a house in Fownhope that had burned down was given four oaks from the 'le Rigge' wood in Woolhope in 1529.[91]

In 1562, some years after the initial re-building, the Dean & Chapter issued a new lease; the original still exists.[92] By this time, the number of mills had increased to two corn mills and three English fulling mills; a 'mill' would now have a waterwheel driving a single pair of stones or one pair of fulling stocks. Farmland was added to the lease too; although the field names no longer exist, some can be located from their description in a later survey in 1649.[93] At the weir head was the Byfield, presumably today's King George V playing fields. The little Byfield and a meadow called Ryemeadow, with one house and dovecote, were located close to the mills.[94] Pastures were called Horse leasow, Mare's leasow and Walker's leasow. The grant was 'for ever' at a rent of £10-6s-8d. This same rent was still paid for the land in the mid-1700s, long after the mill ceased working.[95] The house with the dovecote was probably Panson Cottage, overlooking the Wye halfway down the leat in Lower Bullingham as described earlier—note the dovecote pictured in Plate 3.2.[96]

Thomas Kerry appears not to have been popular with the locals, using his position as a Clerk of the Privy Seal to make a submission to the Star Chamber in London in 1590, for what sounds like a local court matter, when one of his subjects, named Burhope, was attacked by a mob. Richard Barrow, the leader, with nine other men:

> ... in a forcible and war like manner armed with javelins, bills, gleyues, daggers, piklebilles and other weapons entered Rye Meadow (12 acres adjoining) Thomas Kerye mills. They beat and hurt a subject named Burhope and took one load of hay made by him in a vicious wrongful and forcible manor carried it away to Richard Barrow's house. And carried a further five loads of hay to some other place to avoid paying tithes.[97]

By 1599, Thomas Kerry was old and sick and asked permission to appoint a deputy for the Privy Seal.[98] He was living at Sutton Courtney in Berkshire and decided to sell the Hereford Mills to Roger Bodenham of Rotherwas for £400, a significant sum. By now, the mills had increased in number to two corn and four fulling mills;[99] the numbers continued to change over time.

Table 3: Change in Number of Mills at the Hereford Mills Site

Date	Proprietor	Corn Mills	Fulling Mills
Pre 1355	Hereford Dean & Chapter (D&C) & Wormesleye Priory	1	1
1355	Hereford D&C	1	1
1385	Hereford D&C	1	1
1535	Hereford D&C	2	2
1535	Hereford D&C	2 (derelict)	2 (derelict)
1555	Hereford D&C	2	2
1562	Thomas Kerry	2	3
1559	Thomas Kerry	2	4
1604	Roger Bodenham	2	3
1696	John Bodenham	3	3

THE HEREFORD MILLS IN THE 17th CENTURY

The Weir and Lock

Over the next century, the mills were owned by the Bodenham family of Rotherwas. During this time, in the 1660s, the Sandys brothers made improvements to the navigation of the Wye.

The weir crossed the river diagonally, from Bartonsham dairy on the left-hand side to what is now the King George V playing fields (then Byfield) on the right-hand side.[100] Its total length was approximately 118m.[101] It also had a set of flood gates, with staging along the top in order to operate them, to reduce the damage to the weir in times of flooding and also for use as fish traps.[102] A survey of the Wye in 1651 notes: 'Site for a lock where the flood gates are 30 ton barges at a cost of £50'.[103] This would have been a flash lock, needing a capstan winch on the bank to haul boats up against the current, meaning that the flood gates would have been on the right-hand bank, adjoining the Byfield.

The 1696 survey describes there 'having been a lock upon it (the weir) for passage of vessels, and is a good place for a lock there'.[104] So, a flash lock had been built sometime after 1651, but had fallen out of use by 1696. This is one of the periods when the weir might have been rebuilt in stone, since the demolition of Hereford Castle in 1660 provided a ready supply of suitable material immediately upstream.[105] But the question remains, who did actually build it?

In 1662, following the passing of the first Wye and Lugg Navigation Act, Sir William Sandys *et al.* were contracted to make the river navigable from Chepstow to within three miles of Hereford, with a target completion date of 29 September 1665.[106] The contract included building flash locks on existing weirs. In the event, the Sandys were paid off eleven months earlier, as described in a long, detailed indenture, in the sum of £1,500.[107] In view of the size of this payment and the cost analysis below, they would have had ample funds to build the large Hereford Weir in stone and an associated lock. They could have made the Wye navigable all the way up to Hereford.

A survey in 1651, prior to the Act, assessed the total cost to make the Wye navigable from Hereford to Monmouth Bridge at £365, including a lock in the Hereford Weir.[108] On the basis of these costings and the description of all the weirs in the survey of 1696, an additional £160 would have been needed to make the six weirs from Monmouth Bridge to Chepstow navigable, including two locks at Monmouth and Ash weirs. Since the combined total of these estimates, at £525, is so far short of the £1500 paid, Sandys *et al.* are strong candidates as the builders of the stone weir.

The Mill Buildings

Information on the layout of the mills is sparse other than a description in an indenture in 1604, shortly after Sir Roger Bodenham had purchased them, and a few useful snippets in other agreements.[109] There are no maps of the buildings while they were in use, but the five mills were described as grouped closely together around the mill house shown on later maps in 1779 and 1885.[110]

Examination of the benchmark levels on the 1885 OS map indicate there was only sufficient fall in the leat, from the weir to the mills, to operate undershot waterwheels. A lease on the fulling mills in 1691 stipulated that they must not interfere with the supply of water to the corn mills further down the leat.[111] This indicates that none of the waterwheels were 'stacked', that is arranged so that one waterwheel fed the next mill downstream. Instead, the mills were

lined up along the riverbank, each with a separate tailrace, with the leat running along the landward side. The description of the mills, starting with the building furthest upstream, was as follows:

- First building: two fulling mills with a chamber in the middle containing two waterwheels and one pair of fulling stocks on either side of the chamber. This was next to a barn belonging to Sir Roger Bodenham, near the Bullinghope common fields.

- Second building: a fulling mill, known as the 'middle chamber', with one waterwheel and one pair of fulling stocks. This was close to the mill house.

- Third building: containing the mill house and a 'water corn' mill. The leat passed through the middle of the building with the mill on the river side.

- Last building: a 'water grist' mill, with three adjoining flood gates that would control the level of water in the leat and catch any eels that avoided the traps on the weir. Free fishing on the Wye was also included.[112]

Another agreement of 1633 instructs the tenant to build and maintain a stone wall, four feet high, to safeguard the foundations of the house from flood; the length of the wall is mentioned but the distance is lost in a hole in the document.[113]

Theft continued to be a problem. In 1658, a cloth worker, Roger Thomas, had a green broad-cloth carpet, three yards long, stolen. However, the owner managed to track down part of it forty miles away in Glasbury.[114]

Tenants

During the ninety-six-year ownership of the Bodenham family, the corn mills were initially let to John Ballard and Thomas Beal and the fulling mills to Edmond Prichard of Leatherhead and Henry Manfield of Taplow. The latter most likely were country clothiers, with connections to the continental trade, living in the same area as Thomas Kerry at Sutton Courtney in Berkshire.[115]

In 1633, Thomas Barnett leased 'all those walk or fulling mills' for twenty-one years at £26 3s. 4d. per year. In addition, he had to supply 'three couples of chickens and one couple of capons on All Saints Day, and three stone of flock good and pure [lose wool used for bedding] on St Stephen's feast day'.[116]

In 1681, four cloth workers—Thomas Barrow, Charles Carwoardine, Walter Gladwyn, and Richard Crow—leased 'The Walk Mills' for £20 per year, paying rent directly to Francis VanAcker of London, with a reduction when timber was supplied from the Bodenham Estate for repair of the mills.[117] Francis VanAcker was the Bodenham's principal creditor following the ruinous fines, of 40% of the value of the family's estate, imposed by the Committee for Compounding after the Civil War. [118]

In 1691, Thomas Barrow, Charles Carwoardine, Richard Crow, and Philip Gladwyn, all Hereford-city cloth workers, leased the walk mills and messauge for five years at a rent of £20 per year. The lease stipulated that Thomas Bodenham must provide timber for the repair of the mills and messuage, and that the tenants were responsible to 'keep, maintain and defend' the watercourse to the mills.[119]

Finally, the survey of the Wye Navigation in 1696 says that there were 'three corn mills and three stocks or tucking mills belonging to Mr Boddingham. The corn mills were let to one Jones, for £44 p.a., and the tucking mills to Farradine, Crow, and Gladewing, all of Hereford, for £40 p.a.'[120]

The St Owens Parish Boundary and the Tentering Rack

The mill buildings were located on the Lower Bullingham side of the river and were originally in the parish of Nether or Lower Bullinghope. However, at some point the St Owens boundary was extended across the river to include the buildings and land in a finger-shaped strip, 200m long and 30m wide, as shown in the map of Figure 2. After that change, the land and mills fell within the city limits, but the question of why and who made this change is analysed below.[121] The strip extending into Lower Bullingham also appears on Duncumb's map of 1804,[122] but, as demonstrated below, the boundary had been moved by the first half of the 17th century.

It was common for town guilds in the cloth industry to extend their jurisdiction,[123] by court order, or through bolder power grabs by Act of Parliament. The largest was by Worcester clothiers, who exercised their strength by forcing all Worcestershire's cloth to be fulled and finished in Worcester or one of the five surrounding towns.[124] In that context, documentary evidence makes it almost certain that the change of the St Owens boundary was driven by the wish of the Hereford City Guild of clothmakers to control, within the city limits, all aspects of cloth finishing, including fulling, tentering, shearing, dyeing, and pressing. All cloths within the city would have been fulled at Hereford Mills and could have been inspected during stretching and drying on the tentering rack, thus enabling the guild to maintain quality standards for the city's brand, to collect the algned fee, and to fasten a seal to each cloth.

An indenture of 1633, between the 'Hereford Committee of Hereford Cloth workers' on one part and the owner and tenant of the fulling mills, T. Bodenham and T. Barnett collectively on the other part, supports this interpretation. Whereas earlier leases had referred to the mills in Lower Bullingham, this agreement stated that the weir, leat, and mills were located in the Township of Nether Bullingham and the City limits of Hereford.[125] Apart from describing the terms and rent, the agreement also gave maintenance instructions, including a specific one about a 'Rack'. They agreed '…to use one Rack for the drying of cloths in such place as a Rack did here to for stand and which is now used by the said Thomas Barnett…and repair and maintain the rack'. The 'Rack' was a tentering rack for drying cloth. Clearly the Committee wanted the rack to stay where it was, presumably because it would then remain within the city limits where the guild could control the finishing processes. The boundary change seems to have happened before 1633; an inquisition on the death of Sir Roger Bodenham in 1623 refers to the Hereford Mills in the 'suburbs of Hereford'.[126]

Tentering racks were made of two parallel rails, five feet apart at waist height, with tenter hooks to attach and stretch the cloth while drying it over a length of several hundred feet. Since a fulled broad cloth measured 1.75 yd wide by 24 to 30 yd long, a rack on this finger of land could have accommodated around eight broad cloths as well as a garden for the mill house. This size of rack seems reasonable for three mills, given that about thirty hours were required to full and dry a single cloth. Field names associated with tentering, found in documents about the Hereford Mills, are 'racke close',[127] 'walkers lasowe',[128] and 'walkers pleck'.[129]

The Second Wye & Lugg Navigation Act 1695

By the end of the 17th century, it was clear that navigation of the Wye was not working, and that

action was required. For fourteen years, there was passionate debate about removing the weirs on the lines of vested interests; town merchants seeking increased trade and farmers wishing to prevent flooding and crop failure wanted the weirs removed, whilst fishery and mill owners were opposed since removal would result in loss of lucrative business.[130] Finally, the second Wye and Lugg Navigation Act, passed in 1695, included provision to remove the weirs.[131] Subsequently, large compensation payments to weir and mill owners, many of whom were trustees of the Navigation, left little money to improve navigation of the river. [132]

The survey carried out in 1696 concluded that the work performed by William Sandys was inadequate; the flash locks had fallen into disuse, including the lock on the Hereford Weir. Also, some weirs had been built up and were impassable except during floods, most notably Monmouth Weir.[133] Although noting that the flash lock at Hereford Weir was out of service, the 1696 survey nonetheless described the site as a 'good place for a lock'. This almost certainly refers to a pound lock, the type built by this time at New Weir near Symonds Yat and used for three locks on the lower Lugg. Building such a lock at the weir would have saved the Hereford Mills from destruction. However, the Bodenham family, who were devout Catholics, had been reeling with debt since the Civil War; they were seeking to repay substantial borrowings to buy back their lands confiscated in 1651.[134] As a result they didn't hesitate to take the generous compensation of sixteen times the annual rent of £84.

So it is that the story of the Hereford Mills ends with a one-line entry in the Wye & Lugg Navigation accounts of 1700: 'Enlarging the broach in Hereford weir, being 6 yards in breath £7-15-0'.[135]

ACKNOWLEGMENTS

My thanks to David Whitehead, for drawing my attention to the mills; Frank Barton, for his insights into weir construction; David Lovelace, for providing National Archive sources and maps; and Sue Hubbard, for translating the Medieval Latin documents. Also, to Hereford Cathedral Archive archivists, for assisting me in tracking down documents, and the staff of HARC, for finding leases and indentures.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] British Library (henceforth BL), Add MS 21567, collection area Western Manuscripts, 'Survey of the weirs, bridges, fords and shallows in reference to "portation" and fishing upon the rivers Wye and Lugg', Paper XVIIIcent. Folio – Attributed to Daniel Denell 1697. H. W. Paar,'Wye Navigation in 1696', *Severn & Wye Review, Autumn 1971,* available in Hereford Library R942-2, provides the best transcription of the original (BL Add MS 21567).

[2] Act of Parliament, The Hereford Mills Act 1555.

[3] Herefordshire Archive and Records Centre ((henceforth HARC), Pilley Collection—John Lloyd, *Papers relating to the History and Navigation of the Rivers Wye & Lugg* (1871), printed by the Hereford Times, 27 Jan. 1871.

[4] V. R. Stockinger, *The Rivers Wye and Lugg Navigation, a Documentary History 1555-1951* (Eyre & Strathan in association with Logaston Press, 1996). Frank Barton made a very large contribution to finding relevant documents, originally to support a court case about mooring his barge at Hereford, for which Stockinger was his barrister. In the book's acknowledgements, Stockinger says that 'This work would not have become a reality but for the many hundreds of hours spent by Frank Barton, Tony Gardiner and John Harden B.Sc., in the Hereford branch of the Hereford and Worcester Record Office'.

[5] Online Herefordshire Image Collection, identifier Li1241 & Li1243, title Bartonsham Ford, (Collection holder: Hereford Libraries). The stone was also a mark stone in one of Watkins's ley lines, from Orcop Hill to Aylestone Hill, described in A. Watkins, 'Two Hereford Trackways', *Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club* (henceforth *TWNFC*) 1923, pp. 174-5.

[6] HARC, AD2/II/47, bundle of deeds relating to corn and fulling mills in Lower Bullingham, known as Hereford Mills,

1604 Indenture.
[7] HARC, PAM405.
[8] HARC, Q/RWn2.
[9] Hereford Cathedral Archive (henceforth HCA), Isaac Taylor, 'A Survey of the River Wye from the City of Hereford to Bixwear'(1763).
[10] 1911 Census for England and Wales—Mill House, Bullingham, St Owens, Herefordshire, England (information sourced from the *FindmyPast website*). The occupiers were James and Mary Price and their five children, but after this no more records have been found. It became unoccupied sometime in the first half of the 20th century, floods damaged it further, and it collapsed in the 1960s. Tracy Godwin, a farmer and previous owner of the land, remembers the house in a ruined state when he was a boy in the 1950s.
[11] Ordnance Survey (henceforth OS) Herefordshire XXXIII.16, Revised:1903, Published 1904 P.
[12] HCA, C135/243/3 inquisition postmortem recording a mill on the Wye at Fownhope having no value having being destroyed by flooding.
[13] HCA. This painting, entitled 'Water colour of Panson Cottage, Rev C. F. Bird, by Mr J Wathen', Bishop of Hereford private collection.
[14] The author has seen a photo of the Panson Cottage watercolor but is unable to publish it due to copyright, as the owner of the painting remains uncertain. In addition, an engraving of this watercolour was reported to be published in Peacock's Polite Repository. The engraver was John Peltro, who died in 1808, after which Repton stopped providing paintings to the Polite Repository. The tracking down of a copy of this engraving was still in progress at the time of publication.
[15] Historic England, britainfromabove.org.uk, image EAW046836, Hereford sewage works at the bottom of Bartonsham meadows.
[16] Information has been taken from the summary table on Herefordshire and the entries for Lower Bullinghope in *Mills in the Domesday Book,* as accessed online at http://www.windmillworld.com/watermills/domesday.htm. At the time of writing, the lists were last updated on 3 March 2017.
[17] J. Morris, Domesday Book of Herefordshire (Phillimore, Chichester, 1983), 10,19; 21,6; 25,2, all referring to Bullinghope. This Domesday description led to a debate on what the mills were worth. The first entry says that Roger de Lacy owned 'the third part of two mills which is worth 14s. 8d', and the second that Ansfrid of Cormeilles owned 'the third part of two mills which pays 14s. 8d'. The third entry says that Gilbert, son of Thorold, owns 'the third part of a mill that pays 14s. 8d'. It is not clear whether the mills were in one or two buildings. However, two likely values emerged of 14s. 8d. or 44s. for the two mills. There is an order of magnitude difference between them, but examination of other evidence gives a clearer picture. The discussion in the body of the text concludes that the Hereford Weir was most likely constructed after 1138, so that the Bullinghope mills were powered by brooks, unlike the later Hereford Mills, powered by the Hereford Weir. A data base of all the Domesday mills in the county, constructed by the author, shows brook mill values to be less than 10s. per mill. The higher value of 44s. is quoted as a 'suggestive sum', indicating uncertainty, in the *Victoria County History of Herefordshire*, p. 293, making them the third most valuable mills in the county. All high-value mills are on rivers such as the Lugg, Frome, Arrow, and Teme, which have sufficient water to allow milling all year round. Brook mills have much lower values because they dry up in summer (end note 104). This is also the experience at Mordiford Mill, 4 miles from the Hereford Mills and owned by the author for 38 years. The first definitive value of the Hereford Mills was in 1355, when the two mills were worth 20s. in all revenues (end note 25), that is under half of the higher alternative of 44s. In conclusion, the best fit value is 14s 8d for two mills.
[18] OS Map 1:10,560, Herefs. XXXIX. NE. Surveyed 1886. Portion of the map at Lower Bullingham, Hereford, showing the confluence of the Withy Brook with the Wye.
[19] The National Archive (henceforth TNA), C 143/319/18,
[20] J. Morris, *Domesday Book Herefordshire* (Phillimore, Chichester 1983), p. 29, 2.
[21] Calculated using Taylor's Wye survey map of 1763 and the weir height of 5ft (Taylor, 'Survey of the River Wye'), HCA. Also, a document in 1649 on the instructions for inspection of weirs on the Wye states that 'if the weir belonging to Hereford Mills were downed, there would be very small show of water at Hereford'. Add MSS 11041-59, Scudamore family, Viscounts Scudamore, Holme Lacy (document 11052).
[22] D. Whitehead, *The Castle Green at Hereford*: *a Landscape of Ritual, Royalty and Recreation* (Logaston, 2007), p. 32.
[23] There are royal documents which describe in some detail building and repairs to the castle, using stone, in the late 12th and first half of the 13th century, in the reigns of King John and Henry III. Near the end of this period, in 1254, a stone quay was built on the river side of the castle to prevent the castle wall from slipping into the river; the stone came from a quarry at Hayward, 2.5 miles east of the city. This is one of the possible times that the building of the Hereford Weir could have occurred, since a rise in water levels, created by a weir in front of the castle, would have caused the bank to erode. See Whitehead, *Castle Green at Hereford,* p. 40; *Close Rolls 1247-51*, p. 436; R. Shoesmith, *Castles and Moated Sites of Herefordshire* (Logaston 2010)*,* pp. 128-9.
[24] In 1264, during the second Barons' War, the castle was attacked by Roger Mortimer, and this time it was successfully

defended. D. Whitehead, *The Castle Green,* pp, 40-1. In 1645, the Scots Army besieged the city for over a month but failed to take it. R. Shoesmith, *The Civil War in Hereford* (Logaston, 1995), pp. 87-108.

[25] TNA C 143/319/18. King Edward III requested two of his legal clerks: 'to assign to the Dean & Chapter of the church of St Ethelbert in Hereford two mills with appurtenances in the suburbs of Hereford and Lower Bullinghope; to have and to hold to the same dean and chapter and their successors in part satisfaction of twenty librates of land tenements and annual rent which by our letters patent formerly made to the dean and chapter there we granted them permission to acquire, excepting land and tenements which are held of us in chief.' The 'appurtenances in the suburbs of Hereford' refer to the weir and leat leading to the mills in Lower Bullinghope. The mills were worth 20 shillings a year in all revenues.

[26]HCA, Ref 735, date 1354, D&C, Quitclaim, 'a certain watermill and two fulling mills at Hereford which are called Hereford Mills with all land, stanks, weirs, meadows, feeding grounds, and pastures', by St Guthlac at Hereford. This document was only recently discovered and has led to further earlier documents listed in a Cartulary of St Guthlac's Priory that have not yet been translated, located at Balliol College, Oxford, Ref MS 271.73v Molendina (mills in Hereford).

[27] R.A. Pelham, *Fulling Mills: a Study in the Application of Water Power to the Woollen Industry (no.5),* Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings (henceforth SPAB) (1958), p.2.

[28] J. Langdon, *Mills in the Medieval Economy: England 1300-1540* (Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 47.

[29] J. Oldland, *The English Woollen Industry c.1200-c.1560* (Routledge, 2019) p. 138.

[30] HCA, A2393, 14th-century mill accounts of the Hereford canons.

[31] BL Add MS 21567, p. 6.

[32] Langdon, *Mills in the Medieval Economy*, pp. 80-4.

[33] M. Aston, *Medieval Fish, Fisheries and Fishponds in England* (BAR British Series 182(ii) 1988), p. 376.

[34] Today, many weirs on the lower Thames, such as Shepperton Weir, feature flood gates right across the river.

[35] Diagonal weirs can be seen today on the Severn in Shrewsbury, with more spectacular versions, using elliptical weirs, at Ludlow on the Teme and Bath on the Avon.

[36] Aconbury Priory, only four miles away from Herford, purchased salted fish from Pembrokeshire for Lent in 1315. E. Taylor, *Kings Caple in Archenfield* (Logaston, 1997), p. 59.

[37] Llanthony Priory owned the mill at Mordiford near Hereford, fifty-two miles away from the Priory. In 1247 they extended the mill pond to create a fish pond to store fish, caught on their fish weir at a second mill, half a mile up the Pentaloe Brook, called Ree Weir Mill. The pond and weir still exist today to operate the waterwheel. A. C. Tatchell, 'The Restoration of Mordiford Mill', *Mills News, February 2024*, pp.10-19.

[38] J. Geraint Jenkins, *Nets and Coracles* (David and Charles 1974), ch. 3.

[39] H. G. Hutchinson, *Fishing, Country Life Library of Sport, Volume 2* (1904), ch. XXII, 'Eel Trapping'.

[40] HARC, AD2/II/47, 1604 Indenture, line 14.

[41] HCA, 2393.

[42] L Wright, *Sources of London English: Medieval Thames Vocabulary* (Clarendon Press, 1996), p. 81.

[43] Jenkins, *Nets and Coracles*, p. 64.

[44] Aston, *Medieval Fish, Fisheries and Fishponds*, pp. 418-9.

[45] Normal multure rates in medieval times varied from 1/13th to 1/24th. The most common rate was 1/16th; see Langdon, *Mills in the Medieval Economy,* p. 279.

[46] Paar, 'Wye Navigation in 1696', p. 201.

[47] HCA, 3890.

[48] A bushel is a volume measure which varied regionally and with time. The Hereford bushel was ten gallons. National standardisation only occurred in 1826 when the eight-gallon Winchester bushel was adopted. A seam or quarter was eight bushels, and four quarters approximated to one ton.

[49] Langdon, *Mills in the Medieval Economy*, Ch. 3.

[50] *Ibid.*, p. 97.

[51] Oldland, *The English Woollen Industry,* Ch. 1.

[52] *Ibid.*, pp. 2-5.

[53] Harland W. Taylor, 'The English Cloth Economy 1550-1564' (M. A. Thesis, McGill University, 1951), Ch. 1.

[54] *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

[55] Oldland, *The English Woollen Industry,* p. 11.

[56] J. Oldland, *Medieval Merchants and Money: Essays in Honor of James L. Bolton* (University of London Press, 2016), Ch. 12, p. 236.

[57] Oldland, *The English Woollen Industry,* Table 14.1, p. 288.

[58] The combination of the Ryland sheep, pasture, and methods of husbandry achieved these results. The finest wool came from the area immediately around Leominster Priory.

[59] The price for Leominster Ryland wool reached an astonishing £25 per sack in 1499 compared with £15 for Cotswold wool. Coarser wools from hilly areas of Cumbria and Wales fetched only £7. D. Hurst, *Sheep in the Cotswolds, The Medieval Wool Trade* (The History Press, 2005), p. 122 and Oldland, *,The English Woollen Industry,* p. 61.
[60] Leyland did make two observations that Worcester made more cloth than any other county, much of it for export. At Leominster, cloth making was in decline after it was forced to move its market from Saturday to Friday, following complaints by Hereford and Worcester that they were losing trade. L. Toulmin Smith, *The Itinerary of John Leland 1535-1543* (Tudor Society, 1906), pp. 78 and 103.
[61] D. MacCulloch, *Thomas Cromwell: A Life* (Yale University Press, 2018), p. 183.
[62] Cromwell took a personal interest in the implementation of the Sewers Act and immediately appointed himself to the Commission of Sewers for Surrey. *Ibid.*, p. 183.
[63] *Ibid.,* pp. 182-8.
[64] *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII*, Volume 9, August – December 1535 (henceforth LPFD 1535). Nos.140, 166, 302, 364, 384, 488, 498, 510, 519, 571, 652, 908.
[65] *LPFD* 1535, Volume 9, Nos. 850, 946.
[66] *LPFD* 1535, Volume 9, Nos. 126, 166, 320, 428, 510.
[67] BL, Add MS 21567, p. 6.
[68] BL, Add MS 11052, Scudamore Papers, City of Hereford Bridges, Iron Works, and River Wye, No. 44, 'Instructions Inspecting Weares on the Wye about 1649', p. 2 line 20-21.
[69] *LPFD* 1534, 802.
[70] *LPFD* 1534, 802. In the words of the Royal Commission, which spelled out the social ills it sought to combat: 'All weirs noisome to the passage of ships or boats, to the hurt of passage or ways and causeways shall be pulled down; and those that be occasion of drowning of any lands of pastures…and also those that are the destruction of the increase of fish.' MacCulloch, *Thomas Cromwell,* p. 186.
[71] MacCulloch , *Thomas Cromwell*, p. 187.
[72] *LPFD* 1539, 72. '..,the Commission of Sewers have viewed the mill and weir lately set up on the Lugg in Sir John Bridges lordship of Lugwardine, which caused the river to overflow and deepened the ford so much so that hay for Hereford, had to be sent round to a bridge, two or three miles about and cost 6d or one groat more a load. Part of the weir was pulled down in their presence, but little more done after their departure, and now John Graunthamand one Heyward, with Bridges consent have repaired it and threatened those who pull it up with actions. Unless Cromwell writes, the nuisance is likely to continue. Hereford 21 Aug. signed.'
[73] P. Rogers, *The Life and Times of Thomas, Lord Coningsby: The Whig Hangman and his Victims* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2011), p. 18.
[74] TNA, E150/450/4.
[75] S. T. Bindoff, *Tudor England* (1950), pp. 140-2; Odland, *The English Woollen Industry*, pp. 310-11.
[76] Other sharp practices included local magistrates with vested interest appointing pliable viewers; bribery; and clothiers buying seals in their thousands and sealing their own cloth. There were many other tricks. See Taylor, 'The English Cloth Economy', Ch. 3.
[77] A leading country clothier, Jack of Newbury, had 100 looms in one factory. S.T. Bindoff, *Tudor England*. p. 141.
[78] R. Tittler, *The Reign of Mary I* (2nd edition, Longman, 1991), p. 55.
[79] W. R. Williams, *Parliamentary Members of the County of Hereford* (1896), pp. 120-1.
[80] Acts of Parliament of England, 2&3 PHIL. & MAR. 1555.
[81] TNA, SP 46/8/fo 14.
[82] History of Parliament online: Kerry, Thomas, 1533-1561. See URL below:
https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/kerry-%28cary%29-thomas-1533-1607
[83] HCA, Chapter Act Book transcription, 7031/1a, item 939, p. 111.
[84] *Ibid*.
[85] Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, 31 (13th Rep., app. iv), The manuscripts of Rye and Hereford corporations, (1892), pp. 322–3.
[86] HCA, Grant 22 December 5 Eliz [1562] lease on Hereford Mills to Thomas Kerry (no catalogue number).
[87] Act of Parliament, The Hereford Mills Act 1555, introduction. 2&3 PHIL. & MAR.
[88] Interestingly, the Hereford mills have never been described in any depth in the milling literature.
[89] *LPFD* 1534, 802.
[90] HCA, D&C Acta 1521-1557, item 939, p. 111.
[91] *Ibid.,* item 336, p. 40.
[92] HCA, 5095, Lease to Thomas Kerry 1562.
[93] HCA, 5096.
[94] TNA STAC 5/K2/10.

[95] HCA, 7100/1, D&C Accounts, 1735, p. 216.
[96] Bishop of Hereford's private collection. This land was sold to the Wye Navigation in 1809 by the Dean & Chapter and included a ferry crossing for horses, as the tow path switched banks at this point to the Bartonsham side. HCA D196-98.
[97] TNA STAC 5/K2/10.
[98] historyofparliamentonline/volume/1509-1558/member/Kerry.
[99] HARC, AD2/II/47.
[100] HCA, 5096, p. 2.
[101] Author's field survey, summer 2017.
[102] HCA, 5096, p. 2.
[103] BL, Add MS 11052, Scudamore papers, Survey of Wye Weirs April 1651 from Hereford to Ross.
[104] BL Add MS 21567, p. 6.
[105] *Calendar of State Papers, Charles II*, vol XVIII, p.316.
[106] Act of Parliament, 14 Charles II Chapter 14, Rivers Wye and Lug Navigation Act 1662.
[107] HARC, S33/6, Croft Castle estate records.
[108] BL, Add MS 11052, Scudamore papers, Instructions Inspecting Weirs on the Wye.
[109] HARC, AD2/II/47, 1604.
[110] HARC, QWRn 1&2, 1799 Whitworth Navagation Plan. Also, Ordnance Survey Map of 1885, 6 inches to a mile.
[111] HARC, QWRn 1&2, 1779 Whitworth Navigation Plan of Levels. And OS Map 1:10,560, Herefs. XXXIX. NE. Surveyed 1886.
[112] HARC, AD2/II/47, line 14, 1604.
[113] HARC, W70/4/5.
[114] HARC, Hereford Sacks Vol 23, 23.xxii.xii, p. 397.
[115] HARC, AD2/II/47, Hereford Mills Indenture 1604.
[116] HARC, W70/4/5, Lease on Fulling Mills Lower Bullingham 1633.
[117] HARC, AD2/II/47, The Articles for the Walke Mills 1681.
[118] P. Gladwish, 'The sale of royalist lands after the English civil war: two case studies from the West Midlands', *Midland History* Vol XXIX (2004), pp. 25-60.
[119] HARC, AD2/II/47, Lower Bullingham lease 1691.
[120] H. W. Paar, 'Wye Navigation in1692', p. 102.
[121] OS maps (Herefordshire XXXIII.16 25 in to a mile surveyed 1885, & Herefordshire XXXIX.4 25 inch to a mile revised 1903) marked boundary stones which delineated the finger of land. The city limits would be walked annually by the mayor and an accompanying entourage. A souvenir pamphlet on beating the bounds, published in 1933 by Hereford Council, describes the contingent walking the Bartonsham bend section. It notes that 'on arriving at the Bartonsham bathing station where boats will be hired', participants could proceed down river, thus enabling them to disembark and walk around the boundary stones on the opposite bank where the mill house was located. The bounds were last beaten in 1992 by Mayor Charles Davis. The author has spoken to a woman who was in the entourage tasked with locating these boundary stones.
[122] John Duncumb, *Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford*, Vol 1., map of the Liberties of the City, between pp. 370 and 371.
[123] Taylor, 'The English Cloth Economy', p. 23.
[124] The country cloth workers hated this. As a result, towns close to the county border, such as Ledbury, were able to thrive over time, drawing in skilled workers and cloth from Worcestershire. Act of Parliament 25 Henry VIII chapter 18, Act for Clothiers within the Shire of Worcester.
[125] HARC, W70/4/5, 1633.
[126] HARC, E12/F/IIH/2.
[127] HARC, AD2/II/47, 1599, line11.
[128] HCA, 5096, p. 2.
[129] HCA, D&C Acta 1521-1557 item 579, 1538.
[130] J. Lloyd (Ed.), *Papers relating to the history and navigation of the rivers Wye and Lug*, pp.13-19
[131] Act of Parliament, 7 & 8 Will III chapter 14, Rivers Wye and Lugg Navigation Act 1695.
[132] Lloyd (Ed.), *Papers relating to the rivers Wye and Lug*, Ch. 6 & 10.
[133]It notes that 'Grate quantities of corn, bought mostly in Hereford market are brought to Monmouth on horses' backs, where shipped 100 yards below the bridge for Bristol.' BL Add MS 21567.
[134] Gladwish, *Midland History*, pp. 25-60.
[135] I. Cohen, 'The non-tidal Wye and its Navigation', *TWNFC* 1955, pp. 83-101.

A Medieval Stone Carving from Much Birch and the Historic Palm Crosses in Herefordshire Churchyards

By Tim Hoverd, Herefordshire Council
and Keith Ray, Cardiff University

The one hundred or so surviving stone churchyard crosses of Herefordshire (including those today represented only by stepped bases) are a fragile, but vivid, material trace of an interesting aspect of the late medieval ecclesiastical past. This featured some popular religious practices that did not survive the Reformation. While the resource of crosses still standing today is clearly finite, buried remains may yet come to light from time to time through chance discoveries, thus throwing new light on the symbolism and role of such crosses with reference to their 'host' churches and congregations. This short article describes one such case. In 2004, during mechanical gravedigging operations in the churchyard at Much Birch, a large fragment of an elaborate, 'architectural' head of a former cross was unearthed. While other such heads are known (that at Hentland church nearby is still in situ on its shaft for example), this is the only piece so far recorded from the county that was carved in a high-quality type of stone (in this case Cotswold oolitic limestone) that could take durable, fine-carved detail. Although some of the carvings on the four faces of the stone are now somewhat weathered and others battered, close inspection reveals not only the likely direction in which the cross had originally faced, but also possible reasons for the choice of each of the four figures that are represented in the carvings. The implications for the wider study of such crosses in Herefordshire and beyond are briefly explored.

INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 2004, one of the churchwardens of the parish church of St Mary and St Thomas Becket, at Much Birch, south of Hereford, contacted the county archaeology service (Herefordshire Archaeology) to request a visit from an archaeologist to inspect 'a curious architectural fragment'. This stone had been brought to the surface of the graveyard in the bucket of a mechanical mini digger when a new grave was being dug to the south of the church and within the original churchyard. The churchwarden queried whether the piece might have come from a tomb-chest or a stone screen from within the church itself when the latter had been restored. A visit was therefore organised and carried out, and the cross fragment was then taken to Hereford for recording and for safety.[1]

The church, although undoubtedly medieval in origin, was entirely rebuilt and remodelled in 1836-7 under the guidance of the architect, Thomas Foster of Bristol.[2] In consequence, the amount of medieval fabric reincorporated is likely to be minimal. It is certainly not prominently visible, either internally or externally.

The authors of this article immediately recognised the carved stone fragment (Figure 1) as part of an elaborate head of a stone churchyard cross. The fragment represents only the upper half of the crosshead and had been damaged when the cross was cast down long ago, presumably in the 16th or 17th century as an act of iconoclasm, common to most churches in the Diocese of Hereford as elsewhere. It was also damaged by mechanical scraping when dug out of the churchyard in 2004.

A check of the photograph in Alfred Watkins's excellent inventory volume, *The Old Standing Crosses of Herefordshire*, published by the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club in 1930, soon revealed that the churchyard cross here had survived into the early 20th century, though missing part of its shaft and the head that would have topped that shaft.[3] The cross had stood in the south-east corner of the churchyard, to the south of the chancel of the medieval church.[4] It was situated directly west of a stone chest-tomb (still present, but minus its iron railings) that itself stands at right-angles to a stone barn. The barn is oriented north to south, on the south side of an access lane beyond the churchyard wall. It was formerly an outbuilding of Much Birch House but has now been converted to residential use.



Figure 1. One side of the Much Birch crosshead fragment. 10 cm ruler. Photo: Keith Ray

The original placing of the churchyard cross, south of the church, would have directly overlooked what is thought to be the former course of the main road from Ross-on-Wye to Hereford, today followed by a pair of access-lanes to buildings to the south-west and south-east of the church, respectively (Plate 4.1 shows the site today). However, in the 20th century, after Watkins took his photograph, the cross was dismantled and the surviving stonework transferred to the *north* side of the church, facing the modern highway between Hereford and Ross-on-Wye, now the A49 (Plate 4.2). The motive for its removal to the north side may have been the switchover of the road to the north side of the church in the mid-19th century. This change would also have taken an increasingly busy thoroughfare further away from the House and its associated outbuildings.

CHURCHYARD CROSSES AND MEDIEVAL, VERNACULAR, RELIGIOUS RITUAL

There remains some popular confusion as to the purpose of such crosses. Accordingly, some explanation may be helpful here to facilitate understanding of their advent and the reasons for their former, widespread presence in the graveyards of medieval England and in parts of Wales. To begin with, one needs to appreciate that worship and ritual in the medieval period were not confined to the interior of churches. Processions on special occasions, such as the annual Saint's Day of the dedicatee (or, as in this case, dedicatees), were led by clergy and could involve perambulating through the churchyard. Such processions and their associated rituals could be both lengthy and elaborate when held at cathedrals, but in rural settings they were inevitably much simpler. As Nicholas Orme has noted of these churchyard crosses:

> They are sometimes assumed to be preaching crosses, but they were ill-adapted for that purpose and unnecessary in view of the pulpit in the church. The true name for them was 'palm crosses' and their principal function, apart from signifying the holiness of the area,

> was to provide the venue for the procession of clergy and parishioners on Palm Sunday when the gospel was read at the cross.[5]

The churchyard cross, which had become a common feature of churchyards in England and in some parts of Wales (see below) by the early 13th century, was placed in prominent view largely to remind the populace of the sacred character of the churchyard enclosure. More specifically, crosses were usually raised up to facilitate this prominence visually. As such, they 'had a stepped plinth holding an upright shaft with a cross or statuary at the top'.[6] In this light, it is not surprising that such stepped bases provide the principal physical and visual record of the presence of crosses within Herefordshire churchyards, almost everywhere where they survive within the county.

THE FORM OF CHURCHYARD CROSSES AS ORIGINALLY BUILT

The elements of the built structure of these crosses were largely invariable. First, there was a (usually) square, basal plinth, made up of a series of stone steps of varying size and number.[7] The steps normally extended all the way round the base. The uppermost step provided the platform onto which the cross base or 'socket-stone' (also mostly square in plan) could be placed, before the cross-shaft was inserted into it. Several examples of cross-shafts in Herefordshire featured a (usually simple) niche on one of the faces. The plain form of some of these niches suggests that they were either settings for less durable statuary or, perhaps more likely, that they had once been painted with scenes that mirrored the elaborately carved crossheads.

A stone shaft was then present, fixed into the socket-stone. This shaft itself was usually slender, tall, and multifaceted. Surmounting the whole was a stone crosshead, the more elaborate examples of which were ornate, often with canopies. In the case of later 15th-century examples, these canopies could feature ornate, cusped tracery, although those in the local red sandstone in Herefordshire were often quite crudely executed. The crosshead that is the principal subject of this article is the first known example in the county of the use, for such a feature, of cream-coloured oolitic limestone from the Cotswold Hills in Gloucestershire.

THE ELABORATELY CARVED CROSSHEAD FROM MUCH BIRCH

The fragment that was retrieved in 2004 represents, as already noted, the upper part (probably just over half) of the original crosshead (these latter were termed 'tabernacle' in some descriptions of such carved stones). Despite the damage caused both long ago and very recently to this Much Birch crosshead, the overall design, as a four-sided and elaborately carved stone, is immediately evident.

The crosshead in question was a regular quadrilateral without being an equal-sided cube. Rather, it has an elongated, upright box-shape with two broader sides and two narrower ones. The fragment measures 54 centimetres (21 inches) in height. It is 32 cm (12.5 inches) wide across the broader side and 22cm (9 inches) on the narrower sides. Its original height is estimated at no less than 80cm (31.5 inches) and no more than one metre (39.5 inches).

The unfortunate loss of the lower one third to a half of the crosshead (even if the fragment potentially exists in the fill of one or other grave nearby) means that only the upper parts of the carving on each side are present in the fragment recovered in 2004. For the same reason, we cannot be certain how the crosshead was attached to the shaft, nor about the original character of the medieval shaft itself.

Nonetheless, enough remains to consider the whole as a rendering, in miniature, of a structure that might be found in a church as a canopied tomb or shrine. Its architectural style and

decoration accord with some versions of the 'Decorated Style', the overall currency of which spanned the period from approximately 1240 to 1360 (although as with all such styles, some parts of the country—often the west and north—could lag a decade or more behind innovations in structures and architectural embellishments).

Towards the top, each face featured a carved representation of an architectural structure, narrowing to a pinnacle. On the corners, the structure featured miniature buttresses set either side of a rounded cone, approximating to the shape of a church spire. Below this pinnacle structure, each face featured an ogee-shaped, cusped recess. On at least the broader two sides, this recess was framed upwards by an elegant, elongated, and cusped upper canopy, the outer tracery of which was profusely embellished with carved crockets (i.e., three-dimensional, scrolled carvings, in bud, flower and leaf designs, set at intervals to decorate the outer sides of canopies, gables, gablets, hood-moulds, pinnacles, and spires). This decorative scheme clearly indicates that it is a work belonging to the apogee of the Decorated Style, probably dateable to the mid/late 14th century.[8] The figures which appear within each recess, and the iconography arising are carefully discussed below.

Despite the absence of the lower part of the crosshead, two further features of the fragment merit close attention. The first is the cylindrical pierced opening that passes entirely though the width of the crosshead at the upper centre of the broader sides of the lantern/tabernacle (see below, regarding terminology). This opening is decoratively located, in a central position between two of the cusps, directly above the figure represented on each of the two broader sides of the crosshead. However, it will also have served a function structurally by allowing air to pass through the broadest side of the structure, so preventing the crosshead as a whole from being brought down by gusts of wind or during storms.

The second feature has been revealed by natural erosion of, or damage to, the crucified figure on one of the broader sides. This has exposed the inner side of the upper part of the stone, showing that it is hollow and had potentially contained a metal attachment rod. That this hole is set vertically and clearly penetrates only a few centimetres down from the top of the crosshead reveals that it must have held a further fixture, set above the crosshead. Realistically, this can only have been a metal crucifix that was removed when the crosshead was initially cast down.

ICONOGRAPHY: THE FOUR FIGURES ON THE FOUR CROSSHEAD FACES

The contrasting weathering patterns on the fragment from Much Birch serve to reveal exactly how the crosshead (when complete) was set upon its former shaft and, specifically, in what direction each side faced when the cross was standing in its original location. It seems most likely that the broader two sides faced west and east respectively, while the narrower two sides faced north and south. In fact, to reflect the layout of the church, the orientation may have been a little offset so that the direction faced by the western side was somewhat towards the south-west and so on; as re-built in the 19th century, the alignment of the church was not quite due east-west and probably never was.

That the arrangement of the sides was not random but linked to key aspects of the affiliations of this particular church soon became apparent from our interpretation of the symbolism of at least some of the four different, carved, figural representations. Close inspection also suggests that the figures were deliberately chosen to convey differing ecclesiastical primacies. While pride of place went to the crucified Christ figure, the other three figures represent important connections with, and beyond, the parish of Much Birch itself.

Coincidentally, this iconographic scheme may also indicate both the date at which this specific cross was built and the significance of its creation, at that time, in this particular place. Meanwhile, it might be added here that the fine carving on the smooth, worked-stone surfaces could have facilitated painting of the crosshead with bright colours, to make it stand out from the (presumably plain) shaft and stepped base.

The most prominent of the carved figures and, in religious and iconographical terms, the most important, is to be found on one of the broad sides of the crosshead (Figure 2, bottom left). It is a representation of the crucified Christ, suspended on the cross in conventional manner with arms outstretched to each side. None of the fine detail survives due to the weathering it has suffered (see Figure 1). Given that this is the side in worst condition, it seems reasonable to suppose that it had faced west (or somewhat towards the south-west), into the prevailing wind.

On the opposite face (in other words, the other 'broad' side), there is clearly a depiction of an individual in fine robes and 'expensive' clerical headgear (Figure 2, upper left, and Plate 4.4). Its good state of preservation, with much fine, carved detail still evident, reinforces the idea that this face would have been relatively sheltered. As to its identity, there is scope for debate, as discussed below.

The first of the narrower faces features a draped, apparently female figure. A small locating hole can be seen where the head should have been (Figure 2, bottom right). The hole is set on the shoulders of the figure in such a way as to suggest that the head had been rendered in a material distinctly different to the limestone of the rest of the crosshead. The latter could have taken fine and elaborate carved detailing, so that the contrasting material must have been chosen deliberately to make the head and the facial features conspicuous.

Where such fine rendering was executed *within* churches, it would have been in one of three principal substances: wood, ivory, or alabaster. The latter stone featured especially in medieval English representations of the Virgin Mary and could have been used here.[9] This may further encourage the natural interpretation that the figure represented the Virgin Mary, the primary dedicatee of the church. The body of the figure that survives is relatively heavily weathered, and so it seems reasonable to suppose that it faced south.

The face opposite this latter one (in other words, the one that faced north) had suffered the most damage from the scoop-bucket of the mechanical mini-digger in 2004 (Figure 2, upper right, and Plate 4.3). The face of the carving had been entirely erased. Were it not for the fact that the apparel of the figure included a distinctive outline, it would not have been possible to say what the figure, when complete, might have depicted.

As it is, the clear shape of a bishop's mitre is detectable. While it might be supposed that this was a depiction of the Bishop of Hereford, the identity of the other dedicatee of the church at Much Birch may provide a clue as to the identification of the important, clerical personage represented here. Plate 4.5 is a modern photograph of a wall painting, a one-third sized, polychrome rendering of the 15th century, that has recently been uncovered beneath limewash at the parish church dedicated to St Thomas Becket at South Cadbury, Somerset. In 1175, Becket, then Archbishop of Canterbury, was murdered by four knights at the high altar of his cathedral, an act instigated by King Henry II. Such late medieval 'portraits' of St Thomas Becket, in churches dedicated to him, conventionally depicted him wearing a bishop's mitre, presumably to prevent any doubt as to his identity. Since he was the second dedicatee of the church at Much Birch, his depiction on one of the narrow sides of crosshead would have 'balanced' the depiction of the Virgin Mary on its opposite face. It may indicate that the crosshead was also intended to serve, to a degree, as a visual cue serving to 'signpost' the dedication.

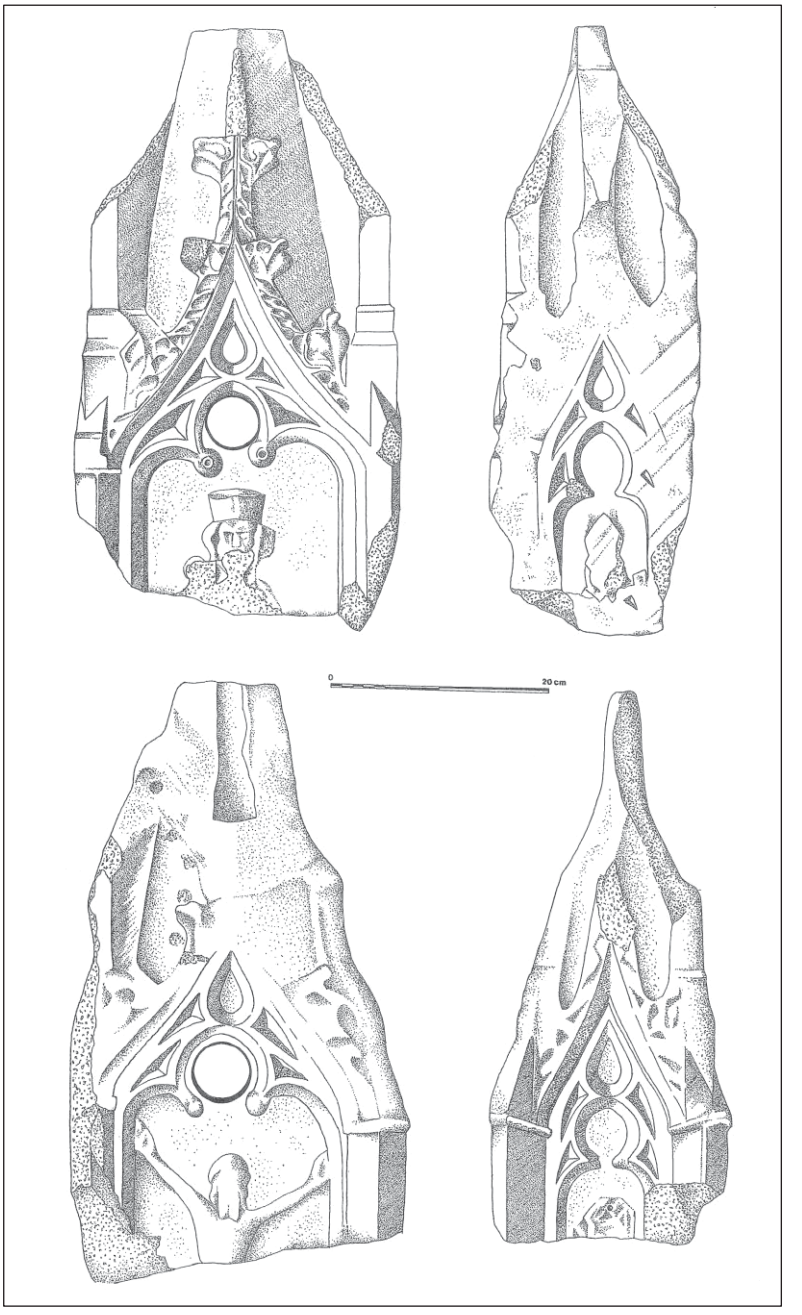


Figure 2. The fragment of the stone crosshead from Much Birch churchyard. Scale drawing: Tim Hoverd

This still leaves in question the identity of the fourth figure, on the broad side opposite to the Virgin Mary. Here, a potentially important clue is the headgear shown as worn by the individual depicted. This is a medieval version of the *almucium,* the four-cornered priestly headgear known today in the Anglican Church as the 'Canterbury Cap'. The question therefore becomes whether this was a representation of a particular priest or a depiction of a *class* of individual.[10] The idea that this could be a generic representation of a priest is appealing, but perhaps unlikely. What this depiction may do, however, is to link the cross back to Hereford Cathedral. As noted above, the Decorated Style of carving deployed on the crosshead strongly suggests that it was commissioned in the mid to late 14th century, a time that offered opportunity for the Cathedral and Diocese of Hereford. In 1320, the Pope sanctioned the elevation of the former Bishop, Thomas Cantilupe (d. 1282, and renowned for his devout character in life) to sainthood. Although the Much Birch crosshead was carved and set up perhaps as much as eighty years after this event, there can be little doubt (perhaps especially in the wake of the Black Death) that this was a time of promotion of his cult in Hereford Cathedral (with appropriate architectural embellishments, including his saintly shrine) and probably more widely in the diocese too.[11] Towards the end of the article, we shall return to these significances and how far it is reasonable to interpret the figure as representing Cantilupe.

MUCH BIRCH IN CONTEXT: SURVIVING MEDIEVAL CHURCHYARD CROSSES IN HEREFORDSHIRE

Alfred Watkins's comprehensive survey of standing crosses in Herefordshire was compiled between 1916 and 1928, includes a photographic record, and was published in 1930. It offers the best starting point in seeking to place the crosshead at Much Birch within the context of both the county's medieval churchyard crosses and the distribution of standing crosses generally, in Herefordshire and beyond.

Watkins identified a small number of market crosses, alongside a slightly larger group of wayside crosses. In contrast, he listed a much larger group of 109 churchyard crosses, within the larger total of 237 church graveyards that belonged to the medieval parish churches in Herefordshire. There are now about 245 such churches in total, most of which have medieval origins. Although there is some indication that there were always more churchyard crosses in the south of Herefordshire than the north, there are no strong patterns in either their presence /absence or their destruction. One must thus suppose that, during and after the Reformation in the 16th century, some parishes chose to remove the crosses, together with their cross-bases, more enthusiastically than others (see below, for a fuller discussion about distributions and their potential significance beyond the county). It should be added in parenthesis that we are rapidly approaching the centenary of the publication of Watkins's survey, and it will be appropriate to conduct a study specifically designed to update his superlative effort from the 1920s.[12] An important starting point for any such survey will be his collection of photographs, held in the county archives (HARC).[13]

By 1930, most of the 109 recorded churchyard crosses were represented by bases, with or without shafts. The majority featured either socket stones (86) or steps (84), whilst 62 featured both. In cases where multiple circuits of steps rose up towards the socket stones that surmounted them, a considerable majority were set in a square, although Watkins also described several octagonal plinths. Of the 86 socket stones, as many as 37 possessed recessed niches, thought to have held the pyx during ceremonies, or candles.[14]

Surviving original shafts, even a hundred years ago, were very much rarer. Only 52 were thought by Watkins to feature their exact medieval form, in part or as a whole. Very many fewer crossheads (8) were found to have survived in whole or in part, and these were sometimes re-set on new shafts and bases. Of particular interest remain those that feature carved figures, set architecturally within niches and/or under canopies. Watkins referred to such represented structures, in accord with the antiquarian traditions of the 18th and 19th centuries, as 'tabernacle' crossheads.[15]

Only seven crosshead structures survived at the time of Watkins's survey: at Hentland, King's Caple, Knill, Madley, Putley, Tedstone Delamere, and Tyberton. Among these seven, the one at King's Caple was replaced by a modern 'simplified' version sometime after 1930.[16] That at Tedstone Delamere was first removed in 1629 and was found embedded in the external wall of the chancel. It was then, in a very damaged state, re-set into a wall bedside the main lych-gate.[17] If these seven are at all representative of the former number of such crosses, most would have been quite simple, box-like constructions (so, more like portable tabernacles, or 'pyx').[18] These carved crossheads sometimes had roof-like canopies, but none of them shared the characteristics of the Much Birch crosshead in having figures represented within an elaborate, traceried canopy. Nor is the workmanship of the carvings of the figures in the niches anywhere near as accomplished as that in the example at Much Birch.

Thematically however, there are similarities. In various ways, the character and 'themes' of these other carvings replicate the Much Birch crosshead forms and themes. So, full-figure carvings feature in most of them, although that at Knill, where the church is dedicated to St Michael, is interesting for the fact that its panels are flat and featureless (Plates 4.6 and 4.7). This may lend support to the idea that some at least were originally painted, since these plain panels would clearly have been a useful 'canvas' for painted figures.

Crucifixion scenes are represented (at St Dubricius, Hentland; St Mary's parish church, Madley; St John the Baptist, King's Caple; and St James, Tedstone Delamere) as are figures of the Virgin (with or without child), at Hentland, King's Caple, Putley (Plate 4.8, showing the crucifixion image there), Tedstone Delamere, and Tyberton.[19] The canopies are often simple apex frames, although an elaboration at both Madley (Plate 4.9) and Tyberton (Plate 4.10) is the representation of a stone column set horizontally, linking the two 'eaves' of the apex at the base. This not only strengthen an otherwise 'exposed' carving but also provided a further architectural feature.

CHURCHYARD CROSSES IN WALES, THE MARCHES AND GLOUCESTERSHIRE

A series of four regional surveys of the survival and character of medieval standing crosses in Wales was sponsored by the national heritage agency, Cadw, and was carried out in 2010-11 by the (then) four regional archaeological Trusts.[20] This study revealed that, within the 940 or so churchyards that exist in Wales, traces are to be found of only 194 crosses. In most cases, as also in Herefordshire, it is only the stepped cross-base and/or socket-stone that survives, while 'only nine appear to be complete and entirely of pre-Reformation date'.[21]

In 2013, Bob Silvester drew upon other studies of medieval ecclesiastical traditions and practices (such as that by Eamonn Duffy, published in 1992) to point out that it may only have been late in the medieval period that churchyard processions, connected to the freestanding crosses, had attained such importance that 'they had become the most elaborate procession in the church calendar, to a degree where the churchyard cross became known as the 'palm cross'.[22] This later medieval popularity might explain the apparent rarity of churchyard crosses dateable

to before 1400, although other explanations for this are possible.

Before the Welsh Trusts' survey was carried out, it had been popularly supposed (and probably still widely is) that all Welsh churchyards had once possessed them. Yet one of the most interesting and important findings of Silvester's work was that the distribution of crosses was far from even across the country, and that 'churchyard crosses are almost entirely absent from vast tracts of central and north-west Wales'. With the densest distributions being found in Monmouthshire, along the Glamorgan coastal plain, and continuing into south Carmarthenshire and south Pembrokeshire, the inevitable conclusion was that they were to be found mostly in areas of strongest English influence.[23] This may be underlined in reference to the presence of a strong scatter in north-central Flintshire and a few examples in the upper Usk valley and in eastern Radnorshire.

Perhaps most relevant to the present discussion is that the greatest densities in Wales are in Monmouthshire. Here, they are as common as they are in adjoining south Herefordshire, which itself features a higher density than in the north of the county. Looking eastwards, while the densities in adjoining parts of Gloucestershire and Worcestershire approach those of Herefordshire, there is a marked decline east of the Severn. So, in this area, we could just be seeing something slightly more complex, to some extent harking back to pre-Norman history. Perhaps the distribution could reflect an attachment to traditional church practices common to those areas that were once within the orbit of an 'original' British church, centred upon the kingdoms of Ergyng and adjacent Gwent. Although we know little about the distinct liturgical and other practices of these churches in medieval times, it seems at least possible that there was a continuing influence, along with the Welsh language, of practices developed, and then inherited, over as many as eight centuries between the end of the Romano-British period and the end of the 14th century.

We think it possible too that, at some point, a regional architectural and sculptural tradition for crosses *may* have come into being, featuring two contrasting forms. The evidence is slim, inevitably given that there are few complete crosses anywhere in the West Midlands, and it relates only to a few examples in central and southern Herefordshire and in Gloucestershire, eastwards and southwards.

One form comprises crosses with tall, slender shafts and open sculptures, primarily featuring crucifixion figures, set back-to-back with figures of the Virgin Mary or Virgin and child. These are routinely capped off with simple, stylised canopies and could be denoted 'Calvary-types.' An example is to be found at St. Mary's parish church, Prestbury, Gloucestershire (on the north-east margins of Cheltenham) and finds its closest equivalent in Herefordshire at Tyberton. The other form reflects the 'tabernacle' type, reviewed above for Herefordshire, where figures are architecturally set in niches or under canopies. Shafts can be slender, or sometimes shorter and slightly thicker. In Gloucestershire, the 'tabernacle' sometimes crowns a tall shaft, as at the church of the Holy Rood, Ampney Crucis.[24] Similar forms on shorter shafts exist at St Michael's, Duntisbourne Rouse, St. Mary's, Charlton Kings (also near Cheltenham), and at Ashleworth, north of Gloucester, where the cross appears to have been moved in its entirety from the flood-prone churchyard of St Andrew and St Bartholomew, close to the right bank of the River Severn, up to the green at the top of the village. The crosshead of the Ashleworth cross is remarkably well-preserved and closely echoes the design and iconography of the tabernacle forms in Herefordshire discussed above.

THE KEY FIGURAL REPRESENTATION AT MUCH BIRCH?

The three figures depicted on the Much Birch crosshead that can be identified with confidence are conventional and unsurprising: the Christ crucified; the Madonna; and even St Thomas of Canterbury, given the joint dedication of the church, even if the date of inception at this site is unknown.

The one that could be deemed unusual is the most elaborate, the figure that may be a representation of St Thomas Cantilupe. We ended the section where we explored that identification by noting an interesting coincidence; that the 'stylistic' dating of the crosshead placed it in exactly that period when St Thomas Cantilupe became accepted into the company of saints of the Catholic church. That event both formalised and gave an additional boost to the practice of pilgrimage and the inevitable gift-presentation at the end of a 'Cantilupe and Hereford' pilgrimage; and with that, additional income to the Hereford clergy.

The depiction of the personage with the four-cornered cap could, as we noted, be the archetypal clergyman whose outfit seamlessly blends with the supposed date of the carving, although his vestments appear to belong to a person of great status. Although beyond certainty or final proof, for reasons outlined below, the identification of the figure with Cantilupe seems likely.

PIETY IN THE LANDSCAPE: CANTILUPE AND THE PILGRIM JOURNEY

The landscapes of 'high medieval' Britain were permeated by physical references to Catholic Christian belief and worship. These memorials took the form not only of standing crosses but also of chapels, holy wells (with accompanying structures of varying elaboration), wayside shrines and chapels, and (possibly) also calvaries at the roadside or at cross-roads. In other words, as medieval people made their way through the landscape, there were constant reminders of the articles of their faith and of the saints and other holy personages who personified aspects of (Christian Catholic) religious tenets and practices. Within the churchyard itself, there were a few grave-markers and, in some cases, ancillary chapels. However, that said, we have no clear evidence for either at Much Birch.

One question that we have not so far posed is why this elaborate, figural crosshead, carved in Cotswold stone, should be found in the apparently modest location of Much Birch. No local source of patronage is known that might neatly explain why this church, in this place, was deemed worthy to possess such a prominent and well-worked monument. Nonetheless, rich patrons must have intervened in view of the choice of stone, which involved importation from the Cotswold Hills of Gloucestershire,[25] and because a highly skilled stonemason must have been commissioned to achieve finely carved work of this quality.

Whoever the patrons were, perhaps the geographical position of Much Birch influenced the decision to erect such a cross here. In the past, as now, Much Birch lay on the principal route northwards from Gloucester and Ross-on-Wye to Hereford. For those following, from the south, the then newly established pilgrimage route to the tomb of St Thomas Cantilupe, this place, near where the vista over the Wye Valley and towards the Black Mountains opens up, northwards and westwards, and within seven miles of Hereford Cathedral, could have served as a pausing-place before the last leg of the journey. What location could have been more appropriate for such a fine, open-air reminder of St Thomas Cantilupe and indeed of St Thomas Becket? In the early 13th century, the cathedral's exquisite reliquary of Becket had been made in Limoges.[26] The cross, with images of both saints, might indeed have held special significance to pilgrims, as they neared journey's end, as well as to parishioners.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE MUCH BIRCH CROSS

The demise of the crosshead will undoubtedly have been at the hands of iconoclasts. Duffy and Silvester both discussed the various waves of iconoclasm. Silvester noted that the figural depictions on the more elaborate among the crossheads would inevitably have attracted most 'attention' from destructive efforts and that they would thus have been brought down most readily. Several among those crossheads that survive in Herefordshire have been re-attached to their shafts, presumably after having either been recovered from the ground or re-used elsewhere within church fabric or churchyard walling.[27]

The physical evidence shows that the crosshead at Much Birch had been weathered, but perhaps not badly enough to attract the response of repair. If so, that evidence would be consistent with destruction in the first flush of iconoclasm in Henry VIII's reign, meaning that it had stood proudly for perhaps 150 years after having been carved in the Decorated Style in the mid to late 14th century. Many kinds of disruption to what were hitherto regarded as normal activities were brought about by the bubonic plague visitations to Herefordshire of 1349, 1361-2, 1369 and 1375.[28] Perhaps that, as well as pilgrimage, formed the context in which the Much Birch crosshead was sponsored, in atonement for the sins that had, to the medieval mind, brought about such pestilential calamities.

Whatever the case, the breakage of the crosshead into at least two pieces may indicate the fervour of those who sought to remove all vestiges of a medieval past, dominated by the Church in Rome, that was perceived as idolatrous and would have remained publicly accessible, had such a cross—with its elaborately figure-carved heads—remained intact and in place.

CLOSING REMARKS

We may have to wait many a decade before another fragment of this crosshead re-emerges from the soil of the graveyard—if it ever does. However, what we do now have, in the form of this elaborate, carved, crosshead fragment, is a special record of piety, of ostentatious representation of ceremony, and of rich patronage, even if the patrons remain to be identified. The fragment reiterates the importance of ritual in the occasionally performative space of the churchyard, whatever questions we might have about the nature of such ritual.

This article has focused on the detail of the crosshead at Much Birch and an iconography so appropriate to its location but has looked outwards too: first, to the group of surviving examples of medieval crosses and crossheads within the county; and then to wider connections and comparisons. To some extent at least, the context of the cross at Much Birch has thus been brought back into focus, with reference to the distribution of churchyard crosses into Gwent and south Wales and the apparent connections with structural forms and carving traditions that are also represented in west and central Gloucestershire.

Overall, the discovery of the fragment at Much Birch helps tie together threads in the history of parochial Christian ritual, close to the end of the medieval period, both in Herefordshire and elsewhere. Sadly, it also represents yet a further reminder of how much rich artistic heritage was lost with the Reformation. And it reminds us too of the importance of conserving—and drawing to public attention—those minor treasures that have survived.

A question to end with is this: how do we celebrate so remarkable an achievement and memorial today? The piece certainly needs to be kept in safety and removed from the threat of theft or vandalism. And yet, ideally, it should also be returned close to where it stood during the last pre-Reformation centuries. Secure 'residency', back in Much Birch but within the parish church itself, is surely the best destination for this remarkable relic of a bygone age.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It may seem strange to make a formal acknowledgement to someone long-deceased, but it seems appropriate here to note with gratitude the indefatigable, pioneering work of Alfred Watkins, FRPS (27 January 1855 to 15 April 1935) in recording aspects of Herefordshire's material heritage, including via his remarkable series of hundreds of photographs. The debt we owe him in respect to the recording, nearly one hundred years ago, of the standing stone crosses of Herefordshire should be very evident from the content of this article. Our thanks also to Mary Chisholm for kindly granting permission for the reproduction of her excellent photograph of the Becket wall-painting from South Cadbury parish church. And to the current Editor of these *Transactions* for his assiduous attention to detail in guiding the article successfully into print.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] The stone crosshead fragment was transferred for safekeeping to the secure (and climate-controlled) archaeology store at the Herefordshire Archives and Records Centre (HARC) at Rotherwas, where it remains stored today. It is hoped that at some point it may be possible to return it to the interior of the parish church for permanent and secure display.
[2] Brooks and Pevsner, *The Buildings of England, Herefordshire* (Yale University Press, 2012), pp. 521-3.
[3] Alfred Watkins, *The Old Standing Crosses of Herefordshire* (London: Simpkin Marshall Ltd, 1930, 83pp). Issued by the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club, Hereford.
[4] *Ibid*, Plate 8, top left.
[5] Nicholas Orme*, Going to Church in Medieval England* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2021) p. 133. Palm Sunday commemorates Christ's entry into Jerusalem, when palm fronds were laid in his path. This was before his arrest on Holy Thursday and his crucifixion on Good Friday. Palm Sunday marks the start of Holy Week, which is the final week of Lent. The most detailed account of a version of the medieval Palm Sunday ritual is, according to Orme, that recorded for Salisbury Cathedral. This specified that the sermon at the churchyard cross focused upon Christ's entry into Jerusalem and was read in Latin from the Gospel of St Luke (Orme, *Ibid.,* p. 274). At Salisbury, the procession had started in the choir and involved carrying a cross, candles, incense burners, a casket of relics, the holy sacrament in a pyx, and clerks with willow branches (in place of palm fronds; in Herefordshire more commonly, yew branches from the yew trees conventionally planted in the churchyard itself). The procession was made up of the officiating clergy, and any lay people who chose to accompany them. The procession left the church and circled it three times clockwise, halting at the churchyard cross (situated there on the north-east side of the church) on the first circuit, then the south side of the church on the second, then the west door on the third (circuit), before proceeding to the rood cross above the screen between the nave and chancel to conclude the ceremony. This was clearly an elaborate episcopal event, but elsewhere in Salisbury diocese (in the parishes) simplified versions were performed. These were recorded by Thomas Becon in 1542 and included the carriage of a cross and of branches. It was led by 'ministers' of the church and 'boy singers dressed in wigs and beards to represent prophets and who sang the antiphon, *En rex venit*' ('Behold, your king comes to you, meek and sitting on beasts'). Behind them came the church's relics in a casket and the sacrament in a box, as at Salisbury' (I*bid*, p. 275). For other aspects of the use of medieval churchyards, see Roberta Gilchrist, *Medieval Life: Archaeology and the Life Course* (Woodbridge, Boydell, 2012), Chapter 5, 'The Medieval Church and Cemetery: The Quick and the Dead'(pp.169-215).
[6] Orme*, Going to Church,* p. 133.
[7] Some were more elaborate in being octagonal.
[8] See Nicola Coldstream, *The Decorated Style: Architecture and Ornament 1240-1360* (London. British Museum Press, 1994). Also, Nigel Saul, *Decorated in Glory: Church Building in Herefordshire in the Fourteenth Century* (Almeley. Logaston Press, 2020).
[9] See W.D. Hildburgh, 'Medieval English Alabaster Figures of the Virgin and Child – I: Our Lady Standing', *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* **88**, 515 (February 1946), 30-35.
[10] The medieval version of the cap would have been a so-called 'Venetian Hat' that would have been made in a stiffened, red damask-type, imported velvet fabric.
[11] See R. K. Morris, 'The Architectural History of the Medieval Cathedral Church, in Gerald Aylmer and John Tiller (eds), *Hereford Cathedral: A History* (London: The Hambledon Press, 2000), 203-240.
[12] One of the authors of this article (KR) has begun that rather major task, that will continue across the years 2024-2028

and will hopefully be published in these *Transactions* at a later date.
[13] In the study of 1930, Watkins reproduced a considerable number of his photos of specifically churchyard crosses, publishing 124 images in all.
[14] An article in these *Transactions*, by B. J. Marples, entitled 'The Niche in Medieval Churchyard Crosses' (Volume 40, Part III, 1972, 321-332) observed (p. 324-5) that the niche was usually situated on the western face of the socket-stone. Marples noted that some commentators (including Watkins) had proposed that the niche was designed to hold the pyx during the Palm Sunday ceremonies held at the churchyard cross but thought the niches too small to be practicable for these purposes. Instead, he suggested, they could have been intended to hold small, portable carved figures or to have acted as the 'canvas' for painted figures.
[15] The tabernacle in a medieval church could be either a cupboard built into an altar, in which the consecrated Host was placed, or a canopied tomb or shrine, or a canopied niche containing an image (James Stevens Curl and Susan Wilson, *Oxford Dictionary of Architecture*, Third edition, 2016, p. 749). For the liturgical significance of the tabernacle in reference to the use of spaces within the church building, before and after the 16th-century Council of Trent, see Duncan G. Stroik, *The Church Building as a Sacred Place: Beauty, Transcendence and the Eternal* (Chicago, Hillenbrand Books, 2012).
[16] It has not yet been possible to locate the original crosshead, so comments in this article relate to the photos taken by Watkins (1930, Plates 25 and 41).
[17] This became so eroded that it was set within glass in that location and is now difficult to inspect properly. So again, comments in this article are based upon the published Watkins photographs (1930, Plate 42).
[18] A 'pyx' was a box, casket, or other container, or a shrine or a tabernacle (*q.v.*), used to contain the consecrated Host (usually a wafer of bread, and a phial of blessed water symbolising the flesh and blood of the crucified Christ, or the Last Supper—or both). The pyx had an acknowledged resting-place and was often locked away in a cupboard—although a practice widely followed in English medieval churches was to hang 'one consecrated wafer of bread from a rod above the high altar, so that worshippers might venerate the body and blood. This wafer was housed in a pyx: a small lantern-like vessel with a lock to secure it, the pyx itself being covered by a veil' (Orme, *op. cit*., 97).
[19] A theme common in other forms of representation, of course, as with the delightful stained-glass representation at St Michael's, Eaton Bishop.
[20] These regional units have since been brought together into a single organisation, titled *Heneb*. An article summarising the results of the surveys at a national level was published by Bob Silvester in 2013 (Robert J. Silvester, 'Welsh medieval freestanding crosses', *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 16, (2013, pp. 309-37).
[21] Socket-stones alone were found in only 34 churchyards. *Ibid*., p. 320.
[22] *Ibid.,* p. 313, quoting Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional religion in England 1400-1580* (London, 1992), p. 32. Silvester went on to say that: 'Its fundamental significance in the ceremony has engendered the belief that the latter specifically occasioned the erection of many churchyard crosses. As far as the writer has been able to establish, canon law did not require a cross to be set up in a graveyard, but there is evidence that the Church, particularly through archdeacons' visitations, encouraged their erection. And some credence is given to the causal link between the ceremony and the cross by one thirteenth-century bishop of Worcester who by statute in 1229 required the presence of a cross in every churchyard in his diocese, in order that it could be integrated into the Palm Sunday procession.'
[23] Or, as Silvester put it, 'the pattern is unmistakably reminiscent of the maps that depict the more anglicised regions of Wales in the period after the initial Norman Conquest. The simplest interpretation is that the concept of the churchyard cross was imported into Wales from England, like many significant facets of secular life, and had little impact on those regions that remained under Welsh control. In the less anglicised regions of Wales, the requirement for a churchyard cross was almost comprehensively ignored.' (Welsh medieval freestanding crosses, pp. 320, 322).
[24] This crosshead was saved from destruction (see below, on the destruction of crosses in the Reformation and subsequently) by being hidden in the rood loft staircase, whence it was recovered and re-set on the tall shaft and base in the churchyard in the 1860s. For this and other Gloucestershire examples, see Marion Freeman, *Ancient Crosses of the Three Choirs Counties* Stroud: The History Press, 2009).
[25] A minor yet interesting question that merits consideration is whether the 'blank' stone was brought to Hereford and then carved locally, or whether it was 'commissioned' from a Cotswold (or indeed for instance Gloucester) workshop and then transported as a finished piece. An attempt to establish which would require an extensive survey of similarly styled works, for instance across Gloucestershire.
[26] Joan Williams, in her article, 'The Ornaments: The Plate' (Chapter 27 in G. Aylmer and J. Tiller (eds) *Hereford Cathedral: A History*) mentions this beautiful and complex enamelled reliquary casket, (and a fine example of the products of the Limoges reliquary workshop), as having held pride of place among the treasures of the later medieval cathedral at Hereford (p.504-5, illustrated in Plate XIIIb therein).
[27] This was also the case at St Michael's, Duntisbourne Rouse, in Gloucestershire where, as at Putley in Herefordshire, the mutilated crosshead was retrieved and re-set on the shaft.

[28] The popular conception of the 'Black Death' plague was that it was a singular event of the years 1348-9. The reality was that the considerable depopulation of the county resulted from these multiple visitations, wreaking havoc on a community already reeling from the effects of drought, and then inundation upon crops and the impact of successive waves of livestock disease. For the specifically Herefordshire context, see Katherine Lack's book reporting the discoveries arising from excavations by Herefordshire Archaeology staff and volunteers, in partnership with the mental Health charity, *Mind*, at Studmarsh deserted medieval village on Bromyard Downs in 2012-13: *Past in Mind: A Heritage Project and Mental Health Recovery* (published in 2014 by the author and printed at Orphan's Press, Leominster, Herefordshire, ISBN 978-0-9546212-4-7), pp. 46-8.

Home Defence in Herefordshire in the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars: Part 2, 1803-1815

By JOHN C. EISEL

In the first part of this paper, published in the Transactions for 2022,[1] the rise of the volunteer movement during the French Revolutionary Wars was discussed, and it was shown that this was aimed more at possible internal problems than at an invasion, although the latter was also a factor. In Herefordshire, volunteer infantry units formed between 1797 and 1798 were disbanded in 1802 following the Peace of Amiens, although the volunteer forces of the Herefordshire Yeomanry Cavalry remained in place, albeit in a re-organised form. A second phase of the movement, this time driven by the extreme likelihood of invasion from over the Channel, developed rapidly from 1803 when war broke out against Napoleonic France. Internal dissension faded into the background, with the population—or, at least, most of it—uniting against a common foe. This sense of solidarity was exemplified by the success of the volunteer movement in an hour of need, as described below. As with the first part of the paper, this second part focuses on the volunteer movement. It also touches on the local militia, but the militia was not a volunteer force as such, being under full military discipline, and will only be discussed where relevant to the story. Here it should be pointed out that there were many Acts of Parliament which affected the volunteer movements and the regular militia, but these are discussed only in relation to the effect they had on the organisation of these units; a full analysis would be much longer and is outside the scope of the paper.

INTRODUCTION

Because of the success of the French forces against the Continental powers, the Treaty of Lunéville was signed in 1801, ending the continental war. This led to the signing of the Treaty of Amiens in the following year, between Britain, France, Spain, and the Batavian Republic (the Netherlands). An uneasy peace then settled over Europe, while both sides regrouped. It seems clear that both major signatories of the Treaty of Amiens acted in bad faith, and not all provisions were implemented: so, for instance, the British Government did not withdraw the Royal Navy from Malta, as had been agreed. Nor did the French abide by the provisions of the Treaty of Lunéville (to which Britain was not a signatory); they also continued to reorganise matters on the continent to the detriment of British interests. With hindsight, a resumption of hostilities was inevitable, and after a series of negotiations, seemingly carried out in bad faith by both parties, Britain declared war on France on 18 May 1803.

PREPARATIONS FOR WAR

Before that declaration, it was already clear from the political situation that hostilities were likely to be resumed, and that the immediate threat was that of invasion. In anticipation, preparations were made by a general embodiment of the regular militia, for which orders were issued during the late spring of 1803.[2] As far as Hereford was concerned, the militia men were ordered to assemble at the Shirehall on 20 April, ready to march.[3] Meanwhile, George Cornewall, Esq., son

of Sir George Cornewall, the second baronet, had been appointed as Lieutenant-Colonel of the regiment in the place of [Thomas] Smith, resigned. Cornewall's commission was signed by the Lord Lieutenant on 30 March 1803.[4, 5] Plates 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3 illustrate the uniform of the militia.

After embodiment, the first posting of the regiment was to Gosport, Hampshire, for which destination the troops set off on 20 and 21 May 1803. It was evident that the number of regular militia needed to be increased, and as part of this the height standard for the Supplementary Militia, the feeder for the regular militia, which had been disembodied prior to the Peace of Amiens, was reduced to five feet two inches.[6] However, only a few such units were raised in the summer of 1803, and even they were disembodied in 1805; so far no evidence has been found of relevant units raised in Herefordshire. It was also anticipated that there would be a need for local volunteer corps, and on 30 March 1803, even before the declaration of war, Lord Hobart, Secretary of State for War, sent a circular letter to the Lords Lieutenant of the various counties, stating the conditions of service for such corps, the first of which was that each corps would receive pay to serve in the military district in which it was raised. For Herefordshire, this was the Severn District.[7] The proportion of officers to other ranks was specified, as was the allowance for clothing, and it was also specified that if the various corps were called out in the event of an actual invasion, the men were to be paid and disciplined as regular infantry.[8]

THE HEREFORDSHIRE YEOMANRY CAVALRY

The departure of the regular militia left the volunteers of the Yeomanry Cavalry, with Major Sir George Cornewall in command, as the only force in the county, since the volunteer infantry units had been disbanded after the Peace of Amiens in 1802. At the time of the Peace of Amiens, the Herefordshire Yeomanry Cavalry consisted of two troops, but later references indicate that when hostilities resumed these had been combined into a single troop, based as before in Hereford.[9] As far as can be ascertained, the unit had continued in existence during the period of the Peace of Amiens, and nothing has been currently found which indicates any re-establishment at this period.[10] There is evidence that the troop of Leominster Loyal Association Cavalry was disbanded in 1802, and that the troop that was raised in Leominster in July 1803 was not a direct successor. It was first mentioned in an advert that appeared in the *Hereford Journal* on 13 July 1803, when those interested in serving in the second troop of the Herefordshire Yeomanry Cavalry were asked to meet Abraham Whittaker Esq. at Leominster on 21 July 1803.[11] No rank was given for Whittaker, implying that he had not then received his commission as a captain, which was not announced by the War Office until 13 October 1803.[12] The Leominster troop was established at this later period, and those yeomen who had engaged themselves to serve in Captain Whittaker's troop were asked to meet in Leominster on 21 October 1803, 'and those Yeomen who have any of the appointments of the former Troop, are requested to appear with them, in order to ascertain what Articles are necessary for their complete equipment'.[13]

Meanwhile, on 20 June 1803, Sir George Cornewall's troop assembled in Hereford and remained embodied for exercises until 24 June; a laudatory report of their conduct and manoeuvres appeared in the *Hereford Journal* on 29 June 1803. A fortnight later, it was announced that any troops of the yeomanry corps of the county were to be completed to the full establishment of sixty men to a troop, and that it was in contemplation to raise a third troop.[14] According to G. Archer Parfitt, the troop was raised on 8 September 1803, and an advert relating to this troop appeared in the *Hereford Journal* on 14 September 1803.[15] A week later the *Hereford Journal* reported as follows:

> His Majesty has been gratefully pleased to accept the offer of service of another troop to be

> added to the Yeomanry Corps of this county, under the command of Major Sir G. Cornewall, Bart. Benjamin Biddulph, Esq. our present High Sheriff, to be Captain.

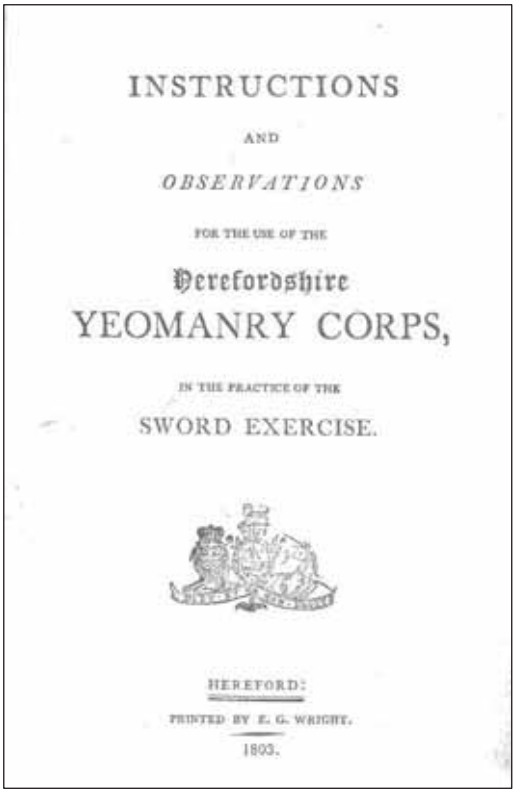
However, it was not until 13 October 1803 that the War Office announced that Benjamin Biddulph had been appointed a captain in the Herefordshire Gentleman and Yeomanry Cavalry; no doubt this was merely confirming a commission already signed by the Lord Lieutenant of the county.[16] An increase in the establishment of these three troops of yeomanry cavalry was notified in the *Hereford Journal* on 4 January 1804, which reported:

> By a later regulation, every Troop of Yeomanry Cavalry, that augments its numbers to 70 rank and file, will be entitled to two Lieutenants; the first Troop of Herefordshire Yeomanry has already completed its number to 70, and the other two Troops want very few. We doubt not, from the spirit manifested by all ranks, but that this truly respectable Corps will complete their numbers, to the new establishment, in a very short time.

The first troop was that which was captained by Sir George Cornewall, in overall charge of the unit as a brevet major, but he was promoted to Major Commandant in January 1804, when Lieutenant William Greenly was promoted to captain in his place.[17] Thus there were now two companies of yeomanry based on Hereford, captained by Greenly and Biddulph and usually meeting at [Stretton] Sugwas and Stoke Edith respectively, and a third captained by Whittaker, meeting at Leominster.[18]



Figure 1. This copper engraving of the front aspect of Stoke Edith House, taken from a drawing by James Wathen, was published on 1 November 1810. If the Yeomanry Cavalry exercised on the slopes below the house, this would be a natural grandstand


INSTRUCTIONS

AND

OBSERVATIONS

FOR THE USE OF THE

Herefordshire

YEOMANRY CORPS,

IN THE PRACTICE OF THE

SWORD EXERCISE.

HEREFORD:

PRINTED BY E. G. WRIGHT.

1803.

At this time Williams Allen, long-serving adjutant of the unit, was promoted to captain by brevet.[19] In 1798 Williams Allen had published a booklet (*A Few Minutes and Observations…Herefordshire Gentlemen and Yeomanry)* and it is possible that he put together a booklet on the use of the sword, the primary cavalry weapon, published in 1803 (Figure 2); if so, the technical content must have been provided by someone else.[20]

No image of a trooper of the Herefordshire Yeomanry Cavalry is known to have survived. However, it is recorded that the uniform was blue, with red facings and gold lace, and blue breeches.[21]

Figure 2. The title page of a manual of sword exercise, written for the Herefordshire Yeomanry Cavalry. The author may have been Williams Allen, adjutant of the regiment

1803 to 1805: RE-FORMATION OF THE VOLUNTEER INFANTRY ON A NEW SCALE

The imminent threat of invasion lent real urgency and brought about more than the simple re-formation of the volunteer infantry that had been disbanded after the Peace of Amiens in 1802, as described in part one of this paper. Such was the surge of patriotism that by December 1803 there were about 380,000 volunteer infantrymen across the country.[22] Between 1803 and 1805, the number of units and the number of volunteers across Herefordshire was on a much larger scale than previously; the purpose of the volunteers was not to supplement front-line troops but to help delay any invading forces by using local knowledge. It has proved possible to reconstruct a good deal about the units formed in the county, their leadership, and conditions of service, along with some insight into the logistical efforts necessary to provide clothing and equipment for the enlarged volunteer forces.

Under what were known as the June Allowances, volunteers were to be paid for eighty-five days training per year, and to be prepared to serve anywhere in the military district in which the volunteer force was located.[23] Subsequently an amended version, known as the August Allowances, was agreed for volunteer forces formed after 3 August 1803.[24] The main difference was that volunteers under these later allowances were to be paid for twenty days training per year. Clearly those enrolling under the August Allowances did not have to commit so much time to this amateur soldiering, and this, together with exemption from the ballot for the regular

militia, previously clarified in 1799, provided a boost to recruitment.[25]

In view of what was perceived to be an imminent threat of invasion, it is not surprising that meetings to raise forces of volunteers were held in most of the towns of the county, and on 3 August 1803 the *Hereford Journal* reported:

> We understand that meetings have been held at Leominster, Ludlow, Kington, Ross, and many of the neighbouring towns in this county, to take into account the propriety of raising Volunteer corps.

As a consequence of these meetings, three regiments came into being, namely the First Regiment of Herefordshire Volunteers, often known as the Hereford Volunteers, based on Hereford and its vicinity; the Herefordshire Volunteers, covering most of the remainder of the county; and the Archenfield Volunteers, covering the Hundreds of Greytree and Wormelow. The story of how this came about can be told using reports and adverts in the local press.

THE FIRST HEREFORDSHIRE REGIMENT OF VOLUNTEER INFANTRY

The Mayor of Hereford called a meeting of the inhabitants of Hereford to take place on 6 August 1803 so that an 'Address' could be sent to his Majesty, and an advert over the name of Dr John Matthews, 'Late Major Commandant of the Corps of the Hereford Volunteers', that appeared in the *Hereford Journal* on 3 August 1803, stated that this was an opportunity to take the sense of the meeting about the best means of establishing a corps of volunteers.[26] After voting the address, in the space of less than an hour 100 'respectable persons' entered their names as volunteers. Other enrolment sessions took place at Preece's Coffee House (Plate 5.4) on 19 and 21 August 1803, while those who had already enrolled were requested to attend on the latter date, at the town hall at 'three o'clock in the Evening, for the purpose of commencing a Drill.'[27]

The services of this body, which was given as the 'Loyal Hereford Volunteers', was accepted by His Majesty. To complete the corps, anyone interested was invited to make contact with Mr John Coren, who became the adjutant of the regiment: the advert in the *Hereford Journal* of 31 August also asked those residents of Madley who wished to enter as volunteers to apply to the Rev. Henry Davis at Madley. Subsequently there were two companies based in Madley.

It is not surprising that a corps of volunteers was also raised in Ledbury, and an advert appeared in the *Hereford Journal* on 21 September 1803, put in by the committee for managing the affairs of the Ledbury Volunteers, asking parish representatives to meet to form a plan. This seems to suggest that, once the corps had been formed, there was no idea about what to do next! At the time that recruitment was taking place, a subscription list to support the Ledbury Volunteers had been opened, and on 5 October 1803 it was reported that £555 9s. 6d. had been raised. In the same issue of the *Hereford Journal,* a welcome addition to the Ledbury Volunteers was reported:

> We hear that the Volunteers of Little Marcle, and of other small parishes adjoining to Ledbury, propose to join the Ledbury Corps; …

It was not until November 1803 that the officers of the regiment were gazetted, with Dr Matthews as Lieutenant-Colonel-Commandant.[28] By that time, the regiment was sufficiently well drilled to be inspected by Colonel Stewart, Field-Officer for the Hereford District, a division of the much larger Severn District, and a field day was held on Widemarsh on 25 November 1803, when the

two troops of Yeomanry Cavalry went through various manoeuvres, and then the Hereford Volunteers, mustering over 500 men, demonstrated their drill.[29] Colonel Stewart complimented them 'on the perfection they had already attained, and recommended the same degree of perseverance, which would speedily render them capable of any description of service'.[30] At about this time ammunition arrived for the troops, reported on 7 December 1803:

> The following supplies of warlike stores arrived in this city, during last week, for the Volunteer corps of the county—viz. for Col. Matthews's Regiment, 567 Pikes, 6800 Ball Cartridges, 20,400 Blank Cartridges, and 1360 Flints. For Col. Cotterell's first Battalion of Herefordshire Volunteers, 600 carabines, with bayonets, complete (Plate 5.5). [31]

The report went on to describe the pikes, which must have been designed to boost morale rather than for any practical use, having been obsolete for the best part of 100 years.

After drill, the next necessity was to be able to fire at the enemy, and the necessary ammunition having now been supplied, this was practised by Colonel Matthews's regiment at a field-day held on Castle Green on Boxing Day 1803, of which it was reported:

> They went through the different manoeuvres very correctly; and the firing, considering that it was the first time they had attempted it, was generally close, and some vollies were remarkably correct and steady.[32]

Initially, Colonel Matthews's regiment was organised in eight companies, but for the financial year 25 December 1804 to 24 December 1805 ten companies were listed for the first time, eight ordinary companies, a light company, and a grenadier company.[33] Six companies met in Hereford, one of which was the grenadier company, two in Ledbury (the seventh and eighth companies, see Plate 5.6), and two at Madley, the latter being the light and fourth companies.[34] The six companies based on Hereford include what was occasionally termed the 'Stoke Division', consisting at most of two companies, and met variously at Widemarsh, Lugg Meadows, and Castle Green.[35]

On 31 May 1804, prior to setting out for Gloucester, where it had been ordered to spend ten days on permanent duty, the regiment was presented with a set of the King's Colours, made and presented by the ladies of the city, and the regimental colours, the same colours that had been presented to its predecessor in 1798.[36] There was also a regimental band, established at Ledbury by Mr Joseph Dicker, a German gentleman, and there was a regimental depot in Hereford, where the arms were stored securely between exercises and inspections.[37]

HEREFORDSHIRE VOLUNTEERS

On 3 August 1803, it was reported in the *Hereford Journal* that meetings had been held in Leominster and Kington, with a view to forming companies of volunteers. Progress made at Kington was noted in the issue of 24 August, when the proposed corps of volunteers then consisted of about 260 effective men, composed of the inhabitants of the town and places adjacent; it was reported that a 'subscription is opened at Kington, for clothing its own Volunteers, and we doubt not, as soon as the sum necessary is known, the subscription will be instantly filled'.

There was no follow-up report about the meeting at Leominster, but it was evidently successful since three companies were subsequently formed. A company was formed at Colwall,

as reported in the *Hereford Journal* on 5 October 1803, which stated that

> Sir Henry Tempest, Bart. in conjunction with Lowbridge Richard Bright, Esq. propose furnishing a company of Volunteers at Colwall, in this county, at their own expense. The spirit of volunteering is progressive throughout the whole hundred of Radlow.[38]

Other companies were formed in the county, the formation of which was not publicised. When things settled down, a regiment of Herefordshire Volunteers was formed, commanded by J. G. Cotterell Esq., with sufficient recruits to form two battalions; this was a new regiment, additional to the previously described First Regiment of Herefordshire Volunteers, commanded by Colonel John Matthews.[39] Volunteers for the first battalion of the Herefordshire Volunteers were accepted at meetings on 21 August 1803 and 8 September 1803, and a MS list of numbers of recruits shows that, at the time of recruitment, there were three companies at Leominster (280 privates in total), three at Kington (275), and single companies at Staunton (116), Credenhill (80), Bromyard (100), Aymestrey (75), Eye (100), and Ploughfields (70). In addition, the names of the proposed officers were listed, predating when they were gazetted.[40] A full listing of the companies was given in the returns to the War Office for the period ending 24 December 1803, and although they are not properly divided into battalions, using the information above we can deduce the following breakdown.[41]

Table 1. Herefordshire Volunteers: Breakdown of Battalions in 1803

First Battalion	Second Battalion
Aymestrey	Bishop's Frome
Berrington (Eye)	Bredwardine
Bromyard	Clifford
Credenhill	Colwall, Coddington and Bosbury
Kington	Cradley and Evesbatch
Leominster	Eardisley and Winforton
Preston-on-Wye (Ploughfields)	Kinsham
	Michaelchurch (Escley)

THE ARCHENFIELD VOLUNTEERS

A proposal to form a similar corps of volunteer cavalry and infantry for the Ross District was advertised in the *Hereford Journal* on 3 August, at a meeting to be held at the King's Head Inn, Ross (Plate 5.7), on 11 August 1803. This advert was headed 'INVASION', showing clearly that this raising of volunteers was due to the external threat, rather than internal dissensions as was the case with the earlier phase of volunteer forces. It emphasised national unity by stating that 'every man must, ere long, become a soldier….' This meeting was successful, and on 17 August 1803, the *Hereford Journal* reported that 'A Corps of Volunteers is now nearly completed at Ross; to be annexed to the Corps here, and the whole is expected to be placed under the command of J. Matthews, Esq.'

This, however, was not to be so, and those who came forward were formed into what became the Archenfield Volunteers but were initially called the Wormelow and Greytree Volunteers. On 24 August, the *Hereford Journal* reported that a corps of volunteers was nearly

completed in Ross, 'to be raised under the command of John Nourse, Esq. and the Subscription in aid of their equipment amounts to the sum of 531*l.* 7s.'.[42] The officers for this unit were gazetted in the issue of the *London Gazette* for 15 to 17 November 1803.[43] John Nourse Esq. was Lieutenant-Colonel-Commandant and Sir Hungerford Hoskyns was Lieutenant-Colonel.[44] Six names were gazetted as captains, implying six companies at that time, but returns sent to the War Office, covering the period up to 24 December 1803, list eight.[45] When more officers were gazetted in the issue of 7 to 11 February 1804, the name had been changed to the Archenfield Volunteers 'before Gazetted as the Worm[e]low and Greytree'. Three persons were gazetted as captains, two in place of others who had resigned.[46] This unit had members drawn from the two hundreds, but reports do not generally associate companies with particular locations. However, one unusual report was published in the *Gloucester Journal* on 30 January 1804:

> On Wednesday se'nnight the Much Marcle Association, forming part of Colonel Cotterell's Herefordshire Volunteers, were drawn up in Hom-House demesne, where they were exercised for several hours; after which Capt. Money, and the other officers, entertained the whole corps at the public-house of the village, in the true Old English style of hospitality, where the remainder of the day was spent in a manner worthy of a people who had assembled in their country's defence.[47]

This is incorrect in detail, as Captain [George] Money was gazetted in the second tranche when he was promoted to Major in the Archenfield Volunteers, to which the Much Marcle Association must have belonged (and not to the Herefordshire Volunteers as stated). Surprisingly, Money's name was omitted from the first tranche of names quoted. The Archenfield Volunteers had a headquarters in Ross, but there is nothing to identify where that was, unless it was at the King's Head, where the initial meeting was held.[48]

CLOTHING THE VOLUNTEERS

In the latter part of 1803, with the sudden increase in the number of volunteers, there was the problem of equipping and clothing them. There were local subscriptions as well as a committee with a wider remit, set up to raise money for this object under the chairmanship of Sir George Cornewall. A general subscription was raised, accounts for which were published in the *Hereford Journal* on 4 January 1804, and further additional subscriptions were published in the two succeeding issues. On 25 January 1804, there was listed a total of £738 1s. in donations for clothing for the volunteers for the hundreds of Wormelow and Greytree (soon to become the Archenfield Volunteers). In the same issue, there was a large advert, placed by the committee for equipping the volunteers, regarding the distribution of some of the money subscribed. The government was giving an allowance of 20s. per man towards clothing, and another 30s. per man above that was necessary. Subscriptions had been raised towards the clothing, but there was a shortfall, presented in the table below. While the numbers are clearly rounded off, it gives a good idea of the approximate size of the different units at that period.[49]

Commandant	*No of Men*	*Expence*	*Subscribed*	*Deficiency*
Colonel Cotterell	2,000	£3,000	£760	£2,240
Colonel Matthews	600 [*sic*]	£930	£540	£390
Colonel Nourse	700	£1,050	£750	£300

It was noted that the total for Colonel Matthews's regiment excluded 120 men at Ledbury, where a subscription had raised £580 to equip that company. From the general subscription there remained the sum of £1,205, and it was decided to divide this into contributions of £900, £150, and £120 to reduce these deficits, with the remaining £35 to be earmarked for expenses, including adverts. Although this reduced the deficits, it is not clear how they were finally cleared.

At the time of writing, no illustration of any of these bodies of infantry has yet been found. However, as with the Yeomanry Cavalry, the uniforms that were worn are known: the First Herefordshire Volunteers, commanded by Colonel Matthews, had a red coat with green facings and silver lace for the officers, with white breeches; Colonel J. G. Cotterell's regiment of Herefordshire Volunteer Infantry wore a red coat with red facings and no lace, with white breeches; and the Archenfield Volunteers had a red coat with green facings and no lace, with white breeches.[50]

WAGONS[51]

The recruitment of more than 3,000 volunteers in a matter of a few months was clearly an indication of how serious the danger of invasion was deemed to be. However, if these troops were to be used in home defence, they needed to be moved around the area to where they were needed. At a meeting of the deputy lieutenants, magistrates, clergy, and gentlemen of Herefordshire, held in the Green Dragon on 25 February 1804, it was decided to place an advert in the *Hereford Journal*, asking for voluntary offers of wagons and carts to be used in conveying the volunteers in case of an emergency.[52] Another meeting was held on 25 August 1804 and reported on four days later, when it was decided that officers of the different units could make application to farmers who could make carts etc. available for the transport of troops. There was a gratifying response, as a week after that the *Hereford Journal* published a long list of persons who had offered horses and carriages, with drivers, to convey volunteers if they were ordered to march in the defence of the realm. It was also reported that meetings were beginning to be held in different parts of the county to ascertain the number of wagons and carriages of every description which could be used in the event of an invasion. An updated list of those with wagons fitted up for transporting troops was published on 14 November 1804, when it was stated that there was compensation of 12s. for loss of time, but most had declined, and asked that it be added to the regimental fund. Meanwhile, it was advertised that the first regiment was to be inspected near the city (probably at Widemarsh or on Lugg Meadows) on 16 October 1804, when the wagons that had been fitted up for the conveyance of the regiment would be in attendance.[53]

FIELD DAYS AND INSPECTIONS

Once formed, the volunteer units would meet regularly for exercise, including spells of permanent duty, and there would be periodic inspections by field officers for the military district in which the units were located. Because of the scattered nature of the various elements of the volunteer force, they could not all be inspected at the same time, and inspections were carried out over a period of about a week.

It was in the national interest that the volunteer forces should become efficient as soon as possible, and we may infer that training began immediately the units were formed. As noted above, the first inspection of which a record has been found took place on Widemarsh on 25 November 1803, involving the two troops of Yeomanry, captained by Major Sir George Cornewall, together with the first regiment of Hereford Volunteers, commanded by Colonel Matthews. Subsequently, Major Sir George Cornewall's troop of yeomanry was taken over by

Captain Greenly and then by Captain William Parry in 1806.

Because of the large area of the Severn District, which included Herefordshire, it was decided that more than one Field Officer was needed, and it was announced in the *Hereford Journal* on 4 January 1804 that a Colonel Ward would succeed Colonel Stewart for the counties of Hereford, Worcestershire, Monmouth, and Gloucestershire. However, nothing further was heard of Colonel Ward and, in February 1804, it was announced that Lieutenant-Colonel Sladden was appointed Field Officer for the part of the military district which included Hereford and that he resided in Hereford.[54]

The whole of the voluntary corps in Herefordshire was inspected by Colonel Sladden in April 1804. Firstly, the Archenfield Volunteers were inspected in a field near Ross on 7 April 1804, reported in the *Gloucester Journal* two days later:

> On Saturday the Archenfield Volunteers were inspected, in a field near Ross, by Lieut.-Col. Slad[d]en, who was much pleased with the appearance of the corps, which is composed of fine, active young men. After the inspection, the whole corps signed Articles, binding themselves to a perseverance in the glorious cause in which they have engaged, till the happy termination of a struggle which is fraught with every thing that is dear to Britons.

This indicates the attitude at the time. On Sunday 8 April 1804, the Madley and Ledbury companies marched to Hereford, where they joined the Hereford companies for the first time, being then about 700 strong, and on the following day were inspected by Colonel Sladden, as were the three companies of yeomanry cavalry. Later that week, Colonel Cotterell's two battalions were inspected, but no details were reported.[55] After returning from the ground after inspection, the Leominster troop authorised Captain Whittaker to signify to Major Sir George Cornewall 'their readiness to go on permanent duty, whenever his Majesty shall be graciously pleased to order them, for the purpose of acquiring a greater degree of Military proficiency'.[56] This wish was soon granted, as on 16 June 1804 the *Hereford Journal* reported that the Herefordshire Yeomanry Cavalry had returned from Worcester the previous day, having spent the previous sixteen days on permanent duty at Worcester.

Another round of inspections took place at Hereford on 16 June 1804, beginning with the inspection of Colonel Matthews's regiment, together with the two troops of yeomanry based on Hereford, then the various groupings of companies of Colonel Cotterell's regiment, concluding with a large muster at Leominster on 20 June, where the Leominster, Bromyard, Aymestrey, Berrington, and Kinsham companies were inspected, together with Captain Whittaker's troop of yeomanry.[57] While the Archenfield Volunteers were no doubt inspected as well, no report has yet been found.

Colonel Sladden was superseded as a field officer later in the year. In August there is a single mention of a Colonel Powlet as the Inspecting Field Officer for the Hereford District, but there is nothing to indicate that he ever made any inspections of the volunteers.[58] Then, in September 1804, it was announced that three Brigade Generals had been appointed for the Severn District: Brigadier-General Bingham now had responsibility for Herefordshire and Worcestershire, with Lieutenant-Colonels Houston and Bromley as inspecting field officers.[59] Brigadier-General Bingham was evidently keen to judge the standard of the various volunteer corps under his command and soon carried out inspections in conjunction with his field officers. On 16 October 1804, he inspected the first regiment of Herefordshire Volunteers on Lugg Meadows, as well as two troops of the yeomanry cavalry. Also inspected were the wagons, fitted

up for the conveyance of the regiment in the event of invasion.[60]

This regime of inspection continued until April 1806, but later in the year, due to cuts, inspections were put on hold, and it was not until 20 May 1807 that it was reported in the *Hereford Journal* that inspecting field officers were again to be appointed for the various districts. A list of appointees had been issued by the War Office on 19 May 1807, which included Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Molyneux, late of the 104th Foot and on half pay, to an unspecified district.[61] Subsequent reports of inspection show that Colonel Molyneux was assigned to the Severn district, including Herefordshire. Inspections began again on 8 July 1807, when, over a period of a few days, Colonel Molyneux inspected various elements of the volunteer corps of Herefordshire, concluding with the inspection of the Archenfield Volunteers.[62] Inspections by Colonel Molyneux continued to be reported through the autumn of 1807 and into the autumn of 1808.

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

During the period of interest, there were a number of Acts of Parliament which related to the Yeomanry and Volunteer Infantry. In an effort tidy up the legislation, an Act was enacted, dated 5 June 1804, which amended three Acts which had been passed in the previous two years.[63] This new Act covered administration and also conditions of service, and while this paper is not intended to deal with the minutiae of the paperwork, it is worth considering some of the important points.

The Act was at pains to point out that the service of members of the Yeomanry Cavalry or Volunteer Infantry, who had been accepted prior to the passing of the Act, would be counted as continuous. It was emphasised that serving members were exempt from being entered in the lottery for service in the militia or for providing a substitute if chosen. This was dependent on members serving the full number of days for which they had signed up when they enrolled in the volunteer force; when that had been completed, a certificate of exemption would be provided. When volunteers were travelling on horseback to and from a muster of the volunteer forces, no tolls were to be charged on the toll-roads, provided that the volunteer was dressed in uniform and fully armed and accoutred. Clearly this would only apply to officers or to members of the yeomanry cavalry.

Included in the administrative element was the requirement that returns of the volunteers were to be made on 1 July, 1 August and 1 December in the year after the passing of the Act, and then on the first days of April, August and December of each succeeding year. However, it is not certain whether this was implemented, as only annual returns survive for the volunteer infantry units in Herefordshire.[64]

Most of the volunteer force were paid only for attendance on parade, the rank and file at 1s. per day. There were, however, permanent staff, which included adjutants, serjeant-majors, drill serjeants and serjeants, trumpeters, buglemen, and drummers, who received constant pay irrespective of the number of days on duty; they were subject to the Mutiny Act, and the Articles of War.[65] In the case of invasion, the volunteers were to march as directed, and were then also subject to these two Acts: if orders were not obeyed, they were to be treated as deserters.

1806-7 REDUCTION IN COSTS FOLLOWING TRAFALGAR

Although victory at the Battle of Trafalgar in October 1805 had much diminished the threat of invasion, central Government still felt it necessary to maintain the numbers of the volunteer forces. For Herefordshire, James Willson's *A View at Britain in the year 1806* listed the numbers

enrolled in the various units as follows:

Herefordshire Cavalry	243
Herefordshire 1st Regiment	806
Herefordshire 2nd Regiment of two battalions	2088
Archenfield Infantry	605

However, it was also felt that the annual cost to the country of about £1,500,000 for supporting the volunteers was unsustainable, and a programme of cuts was proposed by Mr. Windham, who took office as Secretary of State for War on 5 February 1806. This created major changes in the operation of volunteer units. The main savings were to be made by putting those who were serving under the June Allowances onto the August Allowances, which meant that the volunteers would be paid for twenty-six drills, including inspections, instead of eighty-five. While these days would be paid for as previously, the officers would no longer be paid. Permanent duty was to be done away with, the number of inspecting field officers was to be reduced, and the pay of drill serjeants was to be reduced from 10s. 6d. to 3s. 6d. per week. Anyone who enlisted in the volunteers in the future would have to serve without pay. As part of these economies, the number of inspections by field officers was to be reduced too, and we have seen above that there were no reports of any such in Herefordshire between the summer of 1806 and summer of 1807.[66]

The new regulations were laid out in a series of copy letters, sent to the Lord Lieutenant of the county, the Earl of Essex, and subsequently published in the *Hereford Journal* on 6 August 1806. They took effect on 25 July 1806 and included the specification that the volunteer corps would be allowed pay for thirteen days exercise for the half year ending 24 December 1806. This was acted upon; so, for instance, six companies of Colonel Matthews's first regiment of Herefordshire Volunteer Infantry were ordered to assemble in Hereford on 8 September 'for the purpose of completing the days of exercise, according to Act of Parliament'. The advert was careful to point out that absentees who did not submit a medical certificate would not only have their enrolment fines levied, but they would also lose their exemptions from the Militia and Training Bills.[67] This exercise lasted several days, during which musketry practice took place on Monday 15 September 1806, as reported in the *Hereford Journal* two days later:

> On Monday, the Six Companies of the First Herefordshire Regiment, now on permanent duty in this city, marched to Lugg Meadow, for the purpose of firing ball. The target was completely shattered to pieces by the balls, and the steadiness and correctness of aim with which the firings were made, reflected the highest credit on every one present.

Further target practice took place on 19 September, and the term of duty was completed the following day. It was also reported that the Madley and Ledbury companies had completed their duties too, and that the following year the regiment would be furnished with white belts.[68] It seems that for some of the volunteers the full quota of days had not been completed, and there were further musters in December.[69]

Some indication of the cost of maintaining the volunteers can be obtained from an estimate relating to the Herefordshire Volunteer Regiment for the six months ending 24 December 1807, which was prepared on 29 January 1807. This anticipated a permanent staff of an adjutant (6s. *per diem* plus forage allowance of the same amount), and two serjeant-majors (1s. 6d. *per diem* plus an additional 2s. 6d. per week), and 100 serjeants, 40 drummers, and 1750

privates, all of whom would be paid for fourteen days service (1s. *per diem*). In addition, there was a contingent allowance in lieu of pay to drill serjeants at 6d. per day per company. The total estimated cost was £1,504 13s. 6d. [70]

CHANGE TO LOCAL MILITIA IN 1808

In the summer of 1808, after much discussion, it was decided by Parliament that local defence and military training would be best served by using local militia, who would receive twenty-eight days of training each year, with better pay, and who would come under military discipline and be enrolled for a four-year term.[71] The Act thus represented a major change of policy, away from the volunteer system as previously operated; it was intended to create a pool of trained soldiers through a rolling programme, whilst also addressing costs. Units of volunteer infantry were encouraged to convert to the new (and better) conditions of service under this Act, and meetings were held to ascertain the feelings of the volunteers. Units that were judged efficient, but did not wish to convert, could carry on as before but without the improved terms, while those judged inefficient could either disband or lose the Government funding. As discussed below, the same changes did not apply to the Herefordshire Yeomanry Cavalry, and they carried on as before.

As far as Herefordshire was concerned, all the volunteer infantry units converted to Local Militia. The procedure was that a meeting would be held, when the assembled unit would be informed of the new conditions which they could then accept or reject. When the majority accepted, as was always the case in Herefordshire, an offer to become local militia was sent to the central Government, which invariably agreed to it. Perhaps because it was based on Hereford, the procedure for Colonel Matthews's regiment was particularly well reported in the *Hereford Journal*. On 13 July 1808, at a dinner at the New Inn, the officers of the First Herefordshire Regiment presented Colonel Matthews with an inscribed silver vase. The opportunity was taken to discuss the Local Militia Act, 'and every one testified his readiness to change the nature of the service, as equally advantageous to the Officers and Men'.[72] On 24 July 1808, the Hereford division of the First Herefordshire Regiment assembled on Widemarsh, where Colonel Matthews explained the provisions of the relevant Act: a majority of those present enrolled for the Local Militia.[73] A week later, at a similar assembly of all but three of the rank and file of the Madley companies, a total of 136 men expressed their willingness to enter into the provisions of the Act. At the same time, several recruits volunteered to join them, a decision no doubt helped by the two-guinea bounty on offer![74] Then, on 7 August 1808, about 100 of the Ledbury division also signified their willingness to become Local Militia. In the same issue of the *Hereford Journal* that reported this meeting (10 August 1808), it was also reported that the Archenfield Volunteers had made the same resolution. As for Colonel Sir J. G. Cotterell's regiment of volunteers, on 5 October 1808 it was reported in the *Hereford Journal* that a considerable number of the three companies that met at Leominster had also decided to become local militia. Other meetings were no doubt held, but no other reports have so far been located.

Once acceptances of the offers to become units of Local Militia had been received, the change of status was enacted, from 24 September 1808, for both the First Herefordshire Regiment and Archenfield Volunteers and, from 24 November 1808, for Colonel Cotterell's regiment.[75] The acceptance for the latter indicated that the regiment of volunteers of two battalions would be formed into two regiments, each commanded by Colonel Sir J. G. Cotterell.

Meanwhile, the usual activities continued. Inspections were carried out in June, and more were scheduled for August, but these were cancelled in case they interfered with the harvest.[76]

On 24 August 1808, it was reported in the *Hereford Journal* that the various divisions of the First Herefordshire Regiment would meet, in the week beginning 7 September, to settle the accounts for the year and to receive any arrears of pay, that it would be the last time of meeting as a corps of volunteers, and that they would be called together as Local Militia the following spring. However, because of the delay, orders were issued that the volunteers would be inspected, and this was arranged for the period 3 to 8 October 1808, when all the units were inspected by Colonel Molyneux.[77]

In order to complete the formalities, it was necessary for those who had agreed to change to being members of the Local Militia to be sworn in, on which occasion they would be given the bounty. These formalities began with the Archenfield Volunteers, who met at 'Harewood's' [*sic*] End on 28 October 1808 and Ross on 29 October 1808, when nearly 400 men were sworn in. However, not all could be present on that occasion, so a further meeting was arranged to take place at Harewood's End on 6 November 1808.[78] For Colonel Matthews's regiment, the Hereford and Madley contingents had to attend at the New Inn, Widemarsh Street, on 5 November 1808, and the Ledbury division at the Feathers, Ledbury, on 8 November 1808. Because of the delay in offering to transfer to Local Militia, enrolment of Colonel Cotterell's regiment did not begin until 20 December 1808 and was completed on 27 December. During that time, upwards of 1400 men were sworn in and enrolled, all from the two battalions under his command.[79] In all these meetings it was expected that men attending should bring their arms and accoutrements, and those who were not enrolling were expected to give them up in good order. Failure to do so would result in a penalty of £10.

From the publicity about the swearing-in of Colonel Cotterell's regiment at that time, the breakdown of the various companies was as listed below.

First Battalion

- The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Leominster Companies, meeting at Leominster.
- Berrington, Aymestrey, and Kinsham Companies, meeting at Leominster
- The 1st and 2nd Bromyard Companies, meeting at or near Bromyard
- Colwall, Cradley, 'Bishopsfroome', and Stretton Companies, meeting at or near Bromyard.[80]

Second Battalion

- The Staunton, Credenhill, and Preston Companies, meeting at the Portway.
- The Clifford, Michaelchurch, Bredwardine, and Eardisley Companies, meeting at Bredwardine.
- The 1st and 2nd Kington Companies, meeting at Kington.[81]

The distribution of companies is slightly different to that of the initial arrangement. It shows that the two battalions had been re-organised and also that the initial three companies at Kington had been reduced to two. There was also an earlier mention of a 'Bosbury division', which is probably a shorthand way of describing the four companies from that area that met at Bromyard with the Bromyard companies.[82]

Returning to the theme of the transition from Volunteers to Local Militia, the officers were transferred as well as the men and were gazetted for the new units. Thus, Colonel Matthews became the Lieutenant-Colonel commanding the First Herefordshire Regiment of Local Militia,

while Colonel Sir J. G. Cotterell became Lieutenant-Colonel commanding both the First and Second North Herefordshire Regiments of Local Militia.[83] Surviving coatees and buttons worn by the North Herefordshire Regiment are shown in Plates 5.8, 5.9, and 5.10.

In the summer of 1808, on the death of John Nourse, Esq., Sir Hungerford Hoskyns took over as Lieutenant-Colonel-Commandant of the Archenfield Volunteers, and so he was gazetted as Lieutenant-Colonel-Commandant of the Archenfield Local Militia.[84] The official change to Local Militia was initiated by a meeting of the Lieutenancy, held at the Green Dragon in Hereford on 4 February 1809, which led to arrangements for ballots to be held for recruits to make up numbers where there was a shortfall. All these would then be subject to military discipline and would be posted as deserters should they fail to attend.[85]

The detailed story of the local militia is outside the scope of this paper, which deals with the volunteer movement for the period 1803 to 1815, but it needs rounding out for the sake of completeness. Once the initial four-year term was completed in 1812, a new ballot was necessary, and most of those already serving volunteered their services again, which rather negated the object of a rolling programme by which a pool of trained soldiers could be created. The Local Militia undertook a period of training in 1813, but as things were going well on the continent they were not subsequently embodied. In the crisis of 1815, caused by the escape of Napoleon from Elba, Local Militia offered to serve outside their own county, and the acceptance of Parliament for twenty-eight days service was enacted although rendered unnecessary by the result of the Battle of Waterloo.[86] In 1816, circumstances were very different, retrenchment was the name of the game, and it was decided to discharge all serjeants, drummers, and corporals of the Local Militia. The ballot and enrolment for the Local Militia was then suspended.[87] This effectively put the Local Militia in a state of limbo, and the annual suspension, by Order in Council, of the ballot for, and enrolment in, the Local Militia, was regularly reported in the *Hereford Journal* until at least 1828.

LATER HISTORY OF THE YEOMANRY CAVALRY

Although the volunteer infantry had been transformed into local militia, under strong military discipline, there still remained the Yeomanry Cavalry as a voluntary unit. There had been, however, some changes in leadership. Sir George Cornewall resigned as Major-Commandant in the summer of 1808, and Captain Abraham Whittaker was promoted in his place, his commission being signed by the Lord Lieutenant on 17 June 1808. The captaincy of his troop of yeomanry was taken over by Lieutenant Francis Edwards.[88] Under the new leadership, the Yeomanry Cavalry continued to operate as a volunteer unit; so, for instance, on 17 and 18 April 1809 the three troops were inspected as usual by Colonel Molyneux.[89]

Williams Allen, the long-serving adjutant, died on 1 December 1809 at the age of 46. He was interred in the Lady Arbour at the cathedral, with full military honours, attended by the three troops of Yeomanry Cavalry and part of the First Hereford Local Militia, together with its band, and his charger, fully caparisoned.[90]

The usual pattern of routine followed, with exercises and inspections, and at the beginning of 1814 it was decided that corps of yeomanry cavalry with at least three troops would be permitted to assemble, on permanent pay and duty, for twelve days in the course of the year. This was arranged to begin on 30 May 1814, but on 11 May 1814 it was announced in the *Hereford Journal* that the Major-Commandant had received a letter from the Secretary at War 'stating that it is not judged expedient to assemble Corps of Yeomanry Cavalry for permanent duty in the present year'.[91] Then, on 6 October 1814, Captain Poole's troop was ordered to appear

in High Town, Hereford, 'in Parade Order, for the purpose of Exercise, and to receive the Thanks of Parliament for their Services during the War'.[92] In 1816, the number of days of muster was reduced as part of the cuts which included the suspension of the Local Militia.

CONCLUSION

This brings the story to the end of the Napoleonic Wars, but the Yeomanry Cavalry continued to meet and exercise on Widemarsh Common. As with officers of the local volunteer infantry, there was evidently a social cachet associated with being a member of the Yeomanry, even as a trooper, because of the cost involved in having one's own horse, even if not a thoroughbred. Indeed, in 1818, when Leominster races took place at the Volka, near Leominster on 2 and 3 September, there was a cavalry stakes, 'for Horses *bona fide* the Property of the Herefordshire Yeomanry Cavalry, and to be rode by Members of the Corps'.[93] Apart from one possible occasion which has not yet been traced,[94] it was never called out to aid the civil power in times of unrest, and when the yeomanry as a whole was much reduced in numbers late in 1827, it was one of the units that was disbanded, thus ending this phase of volunteer soldiering in Herefordshire. It was not until 1860 that a new phase of volunteer soldiers began in the county, when eight Volunteer Rifle companies were established, the first of which was the Ross or Archenfield company.[95]

Acknowledgments

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NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club (henceforth *TWNFC*), Vol 70 (2022), pp. 88-102.
[2] *Aris's Birmingham Gazette*, 28 March 1803. This report lists the days when the militia of Warwickshire and surrounding counties were to be embodied but does not mention Herefordshire.
[3] *Hereford Journal* (henceforth *HJ*), 30 March 1803, not, of course, the present building, but the upper floor of the Market Hall in High Town. When markets in hops, grain, etc. were confirmed to continue in 1788, it was stated that these would held 'in the Market-house under the Shirehall'. *HJ* 15 May 1788.
[4] *London Gazette*, 5 April 1803. George Cornewall, Esq. had previously been a captain in the Supplementary Militia, for which his commission had been signed by the Lord Lieutenant on 11 February 1797 (*London Gazette*, 18 April 1797). Also, Herefordshire Archive and Records Centre (henceforth HARC) G39 Box 76. Thomas Smith had been promoted to captain of a company in the Herefordshire Militia in 1795 (*London Gazette,* 16 May 1795), his commission as a major was dated 3 July 1797 (*London Gazette*, 16 July 1797, *HJ* 26 July 1797), and his promotion to be Lieutenant-Colonel of the regiment was publicised in the *HJ* on 21 Aug. 1799.
[5] George Cornewall, Esq. succeeded his father, becoming the third baronet in 1819. He died on 27 Dec. 1835, and the report in the *HJ* of 30 Dec. 1835 stated that 'Sir George was Colonel of our county militia more than 30 years, and whilst under his command during the late war the regiment justly ranked very high with respect to discipline and good conduct, the Colonel was equally beloved and respected by officers and men. When the peace took place, Sir George retired to private life…'
[6] *HJ* 30 March 1803, *London Gazette*, 2 April – 5 April 1803, *HJ* 13 April 1803, 25 May 1803, 1 June 1803.

[7] The Severn District consisted of Hereford, Glocester, and the vicinity of Bristol in Somerset, Worcester, Monmouth, and South Wales, and was under the command of Lieutenant-General his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland. (*HJ* 20 July 1803).
[8] A summary of the main regulations was printed in *Aris's Birmingham Gazette* on 11 April 1803. A more detailed list of the regulations was given in the *HJ* on 13 April 1803.
[9] *HJ* 22 June 1803
[10] A report in *HJ,* 9 June 1802, stated that the yeomanry cavalry was to continue embodied, this at a time when the other volunteer troops were to be disbanded. In G. Archer Parfitt (Ed.), *Historical Records of the Herefordshire Light Infantry and its Predecessors* (1962), p. 32, it states that this troop was raised on 27 Sept. 1802, but no evidence is quoted. The Act 42 Geo, 3 c.66 enabled the offers of various yeomanry and volunteer corps to continue their service, to be accepted.
[11] G. Archer Parfitt states that this troop was raised on 4 July 1803, although as can be seen the recruitment came a little later.
[12] *London Gazette*, 11 Oct. - 15 Oct. 1803. In 1797, Abraham Whittaker was appointed as lieutenant-colonel-commandant of the soon-to-be-disbanded Provisional Cavalry, *London Gazette* 15 April – 18 April 1797. This is perhaps not too surprising as he had previously served as an officer in the Queen's Own Dragoons. He was a deputy lieutenant of the county and sheriff of the county in 1797; he lived at Lyston House, Llanwarne, *HJ* 16 May 1798, 7 July 1841; *Hereford Times*, 3 July 1841. He married the daughter of Dr. John Cam, and on the death of Cam in 1809 came into the ownership of the property, although he had already lived there for many years; see Rev. C. J. Robinson, *A History of the Mansions and Manors of Herefordshire* (1872), p. 185.
[13] *HJ* 19 Oct. 1803.
[14] *HJ* 13 July 1803.
[15] G. Archer Parfitt, (1962) p. 32.
[16] *London Gazette*, 11 Oct. – 15 Oct. 1803.
[17] *London Gazette*, 3 Jan. – 7 Jan. 1804. A brevet rank is a promotion, but without the advantage of the pay of that higher rank. William Greenly seems to have been the retired banker of that name who lived at Titley Court, and was then about 66 years old, even though this seems rather old for such an active role. Despite the date of his commission, he was already acting in that capacity in September 1803—see advert in *HJ* 14 Sept. 1803. A little over two years later he resigned his commission on the grounds of ill health. Lieutenant William Parry was promoted to Captain in his place (*HJ* 26 Feb. 1806). He had been a member of the Yeomanry since 1794 (*HJ* 23 July 1794). He owned what is now called the Weir, at Swainshill, but was then called the Wear, and occasionally the Ware. In 1799, William Parry, of Kenchester, had donated £68 for the purpose of providing a pair of colours for the Herefordshire regular Militia, then under the command of his neighbour Colonel J. G. Cotterell, of Garnons (*HJ* 23 Oct. 1799).
[18] Adverts and reports merely say that Captain Biddulph's troop met at 'Stoke Park', but that this refers to Stoke Edith is made clear by the report in *HJ* 10 Oct. 1804, which states that after exercising at Stoke Meadow on 3 Oct. 1804, the members were invited to dine at Stoke House by the Hon. Mrs Foley.
[19] *HJ* 18 Jan. 1804. In 1802 it had been decided to present Williams Allen, adjutant, with a piece of (silver) plate of value at least 20 guineas, but this did not happen until July 1803, when the NCOs 'of the first or Major's troop' of the Herefordshire Yeomanry presented him with a double tankard of 30 guineas value. *HJ* 13 July 1803.
[20] A copy of the 1798 booklet can be found in the Herefordshire Local Collection in Local Tracts, Vol. 11 (Ref. H/AB). The name of Williams Allen has been added to the title page, underneath the statement that the author was the 'Adjutant of the Corps'. The initials W. A. are given at the end of the main text. There is no such indication for the 1803 booklet, and while Williams Allen is likely to have seen it through the press, he is most unlikely to have provided the technical content: he was a solicitor, practising in Hereford, and a member of the corporate body of the city. As far as can be ascertained, his only connection with the armed services was through the yeomanry. He died at the age of 46 on 1 Dec. 1809, much regretted, and was buried with military ceremony in the Lady Arbour at the cathedral. *HJ* 6 & 20 Dec. 1809, *Globe* 26 Dec. 1809. The latter report, which includes a moving story about the charger that Williams Allen used with the Yeomanry, was widely copied.
[21] James Willson, *A View of the Volunteer Army of Great Britain in the year 1806*, (1807). The details of the uniforms of all the volunteer units listed on this large broadsheet are tabulated at the bottom of the broadsheet.
[22],Philip J. Haythornthwaite, 'The Volunteer Forces, 1803-04,' *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, Vol. 64, No. 260 (Winter 1986), p.193.
[23] *Ibid*.
[24] The full versions of the August Allowances, for both Yeoman Cavalry, and for volunteer infantry, were published in the *HJ* on 12 Oct. 1803.
[25] John C. Eisel, 'Home Defence in Herefordshire in the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars: Part 1, 1793-1802,' *TWNFC*, 70 (2022), p. 97.
[26] In this contemporary usage, 'Late' is used in the sense of 'formerly'. The career of Dr Matthews as the commandant

of the Hereford Volunteers, 1797-1802, is discussed in the first part of this paper.
[27] *HJ* 17 Aug. 1803. The town hall was otherwise the market hall in the centre of High Town.
[28] *London Gazette*, Tues. 15 Nov. – Thurs. 17 Nov. 1803.
[29] What is now known as Widemarsh Common, but then was just called Widemarsh, was enclosed as a consequence of the Paving Act of 1774 (14 G. III c.xxxviii). By this Act 150 acres of waste were enclosed, including 'ten acres…set apart for purpose of electing the Knights of the Shire, exercising the Militia, and other public uses,…' Brayley, E. W. and Britton, J. *The Beauties of England and Wales* Vol. VI (1805), p.491. It is assumed that the volunteers exercised on this area of land.
Colonel Stewart was the inspecting officer for the counties of Hereford, Worcester, Monmouth, and Gloucester. a division of the Severn district. (*HJ* 4 Jan. 1804).
[30] *Gloucester Journal*, 5 Dec. 1803.
[31] 'Carabines', or carbines, were shorter versions of the standard musket and usually designed for mounted troops, for use in confined terrain or by non-commissioned officers. That bayonets were supplied indicated that these supplied to Colonel Cotterel's regiment were not for mounted troops. This quantity is rather surprising and suggests a shortage of standard muskets.
[32] *Gloucester Journal*, 2 Jan. 1804.
[33] TNA WO 13/4369.
[34] *HJ* 3 Aug. 1808.
[35] There are two known references to the Stoke Division, *HJ* 18 Nov. 1807 & *HJ* 2 Dec. 1807. This, taken with the troop of the Herefordshire Yeomanry which met for exercise at Stoke Edith, suggests that there had been a strong recruiting drive among the tenants of the Foley estate. See also *HJ* 12 Sept. 1804, *HJ* 5 Dec. 1803 and *HJ* 2 Jan. 1804 for examples of these locations being used.
[36] All volunteer units spent periods of permanent duty, usually in surrounding towns such as Worcester, Gloucester, and Monmouth, as well as closer to home. For the presentation of colours, see *HJ* 6 June 1804. A long description of the return of the regiment from Gloucester to Hereford can be found in *Gloucester Journal*, 11 June 1804.
[37] *Gloucester Journal*, 21 & 28 Oct. 1805, *HJ* 23 Oct. 1805. In the contemporary press reports the first name of Mr Dicker is not given, but it is most likely that he was the Joseph Dicker, musician, whose wedding at Christ Church, Surrey, on 19 Aug.1824, to a lady from Hereford, was reported in *HJ* 22 Sept. 1824.
The matter of a depot is complicated. It was referred to in *HJ* 10 April 1804, when it was inspected by Brigadier-General Bingham. It was also used by the yeomanry cavalry. In July 1809, there was a general meeting of the Lieutenancy of the county of Hereford to take into consideration the erection of secure depot of the arms, equipment etc. of the First Regiment of North Herefordshire Local Militia (*HJ* 12 July 1809). This may have been in Hereford, but it is not clear whether it was ever built. Slightly later, the county treasurer paid £77 11s. $4^1/_2$d. for repairs at the Old Gaol, for the local militia (*HJ* 10 March 1813). The Old Gaol was subsequently demolished, and the present Shirehall built on the site, and in 1816 the local militia had a depot in Bye Street (Commercial Street) (*HJ* 8 May 1816). For a discussion of the various prisons in Hereford, see Shoesmith and Crosskey, 'Go to Gaol … in Hereford', *TWNFC* Vol. XLVIII (1994), pp. 97-139.
[38] Sir Henry Tempest, Bart., was resident at Hope End. He also formed a company in the French Revolutionary Wars. *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 19 May 1798.
[39] The officers of the Herefordshire Volunteers were gazetted in the issue of 15 – 17 Nov. 1803, and G. Archer Parfitt reports that the date of raising was 8 Sept. 1803 for the first battalion and 24 Oct. 1803 for the second. The officers of the First Regiment were gazetted in the issue of the *London Gazette* of 15-18 Oct. 1803, and again in the issue of 15 – 17 Nov. 1803: G. Archer Parfitt reports the date of raising of the regiment as 19 Aug. 1803. John Geers Cotterell was created a baronet on 2 Nov. 1805. *HJ* 13 Nov. 1805.
[40] HARC W69/IV/16. This is part of the Garnons collection.
[41] TNA WO 13/4369.
[42] John Nourse, Esq. was appointed Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant, and Sir Hungerford Hoskyns as Lieutenant-Colonel. *Star*, 21 Nov. 1803. Nourse's commission for this appointment can be found in Gloucester RO C332/F2. The change of name occurred early in 1804, when extra officers were gazetted. See *Star*, 13 Feb. 1804, *London Courier*, 14 Feb. 1804, and *True Briton*, 15 Feb. 1803. Later in the year an eight-page booklet of rules and regulations of the Archenfield Volunteer Infantry was published, but I have been unable to locate a copy, and I only know of it from a listing in John Allen jun.'s *Bibliotheca Herefordensis* (1821).
[43] G. Archer Parfitt states that this unit was raised on 24 Oct. 1803.
[44] John Nourse was the descendant of a family which was resident in Weston-under-Penyard and built Lower Weston Hall *c*.1600. Rev. C. J. Robinson, *The Mansions and Manors of Herefordshire* (1873), p.299. At the time of his death in 1808 he was described as being of Coughton, near Ross, so presumably living on another part of his estate. *HJ* 11 May 1808. Sir Hungerford Hoskyns, of Harewood Park, succeeded to the baronetcy and estate on his father's death in 1802.

[45] TNA WO 13/4370.
[46] Companies consisted of no more than 100 effectives, and the evidence has been quoted that at the time, Colonel Nourse's regiment of volunteers was about 700 strong.
[47] The phrasing indicates that this was then the only public house in the parish. Now known as the Walwyn Arms, in 1791 it was referred to as the Swan (*HJ* 31 Aug. 1791); in 1795 it was referred to as the Ship and Castle (*HJ* 30 Sept. 1795), reverting to the Swan by 1808 (*HJ* 9 March 1808), a name which continued to be used until it became the Walwyn Arms around 1830. (*HJ* 10 May 1837).
[48] *HJ* 16 March 1808.
[49] More accurate figures can be obtained from TNA WO 13/4369. So, for instance, the company returns up to 24 Dec. 1803 for the Hereford Volunteers (for the eight companies) total 715 other ranks, while those of the Herefordshire Volunteers total 2089.
[50] James Willson, *A View of the Volunteer Army of Great Britain in the year 1806*, (1807). In the National Army Museum there is a short coatee of the Archenfield Volunteer Infantry, in 1804 owned by Lieutenant W. Brown. NAM 1958-12-77.
[51] At this period the more general spelling was 'wagon' rather than 'waggon', the former appearing in the pages of the *HJ* roughly four times as often as the latter.
[52] *HJ* Wednesday 29 Feb. 1804.
[53] *HJ* 10 Oct. 1804.
[54] He had been Lieutenant-Colonel of the 86th regiment of foot. This regiment had been raised as a volunteer unit of Shropshire Volunteers in 1793 and was taken into the British Army the following year as the 86th (Shropshire Volunteers). Colonel Sladden retired in 1795, presumably on half pay. This post would have been welcome, as when he was performing his duties as a field officer he was to receive a Lieutenant-Colonel's pay. *HJ* 22 February 1804, *London Courier*, 11 Feb. 1804, *Scots Magazine*, 1 Feb. 1795.
[55] *Gloucester Journal*, 16 April 1804.
[56] *HJ* 11 April 1804.
[57] *HJ* Weds. 13, 20 & 27 June 1804, *Gloucester Journal* Mon. 2 July 1804.
[58] *HJ* 1 Aug 1804.
[59] Oracle and Daily Advertiser, 8 Sept. 1804.
[60] *HJ* 10 & 17 Oct. 1804.
[61] *Star* 20 May 1807, *Kentish Gazette* 22 May 1807. He was also described as being of the 104th Foot when he was promoted to lieutenant-colonel in January 1800. *Hampshire Chronicle*, 13 January 1800. At different times there were regiments of the same number. However, this is enough to identify it as the regiment that was raised in 1794 as the Royal Manchester Volunteers, which was taken onto the establishment of the British Army on 1 April 1794. Shortly after receiving its colours, the regiment was sent to Ireland, where inspections showed that it was in a poor state. In 1795, it was intended to send the regiment to the West Indies, but on hearing of this the regiment rioted and was disbanded late in 1795. This does not appear to have affected the career of Colonel Molyneux, who was a more junior officer at the time.
[62] *HJ* 8, 15, 22 & 29 July 1807, *Gloucester Journal* 13 July 1807.
[63] 44 G.3. c.54. The three that were superseded were 42 G.3. c.66, 43 G.3. c.121, and 44 G.3. c.18. There is a hard copy of this tidying-up Act in the pamphlet boxes in the library of the WNFC, and a copy of 42 G.3. c.121 in a bundle of printed papers in HARC, ref. D52/80/7.
[64] For a full year these returns cover the year 25 December until 24 December the following year. TNA WO 13/4369 & TNA WO 13/4370.
[65] Only one certain example of this has so far come to light, perhaps not surprising because, in army terms, these would be cushy numbers! On 9 March 1808 two such members of the Bredwardine company were posted as deserters in the *Hereford Journa*l; these were Joseph Beavan, drummer, and Richard Pember, fifer. In this case the Articles of War must have been applied. Nothing further was heard of this, but what could have happened is illustrated by the case of a permanent drill serjeant who went absent without leave from the Frome-Selwood volunteers, and on being caught and court-martialled, was sentenced to 100 lashes in front of the corps, and then drummed out of the corps. The severity of the punishment was because he was an old offender. *HJ* 30 Sept. 1807. A reference to a serjeant who deserted in the summer of 1804 implies that he was on the headquarters staff in Hereford, and nothing to do with the volunteers. *HJ* 1 Aug. 1804. The only evidence regarding drill serjeants that can be traced is in a bill, submitted by one William Davies, Militia drill serjeant, to the overseers of Weston-under-Penyard and Hope Mansell for drilling the volunteers 1803-1804. HARC AA33/30. The connection of Colonel Nourse with Weston-under-Penyard has already been noted.
[66] *Lincoln, Rutland, and Stamford Mercury*, 18 April 1806, *HJ* 23 June 1806. The total estimated savings were £878,000.
[67] *HJ* 3 Sept. 1806.
[68] *HJ* 24 Sept. 1806.

[69] *HJ* 26 Nov., 3 & 10 Dec. 1806.
[70] HARC W/68/IV/22.
[71] 48 G. III. c. 111. The main provisions of the Act were listed in *HJ* 20 July 1808.
[72] *HJ* 20 July 1808.
[73] At the same time Lieutenant-Colonel Symonds resigned, having been assaulted by two members of the regiment when on permanent duty at Monmouth. *HJ* 27 July 1808.
[74] *HJ* 3 Aug. 1808.
[75] *HJ* 12 & 19 Oct. 1808, 7 Dec. 1808.
[76] *HJ* 10 Aug. 1808.
[77] *HJ* 14 & 28 Sept. 1808.
[78] *HJ* 2 Nov. 1808, where there is a report and an advert. In the latter it goes on to say 'when men who do not at present belong to the Corps may take the opportunity of escaping the ballot for the Old and the Local Militia.'
[79] *HJ* 14, 21 & 28 Dec. 1808.
[80] From the autumn of 1807 this contingent met at Romney Meadow, near Bromyard. *HJ* 30 Sept. 1807. This was in the parish of Stanford Bishop, about three miles from Bromyard.
[81] *HJ* 14 & 21 Dec. 1808.
[82] The Bromyard and Bosbury divisions were ordered to meet at 'Bishop's Froome' on 24 Aug. 1805. *HJ* 21 Aug. 1805.
[83] *London Gazette*, 21 – 25 March 1809. *London Gazette*, 6 – 9 May 1809; also *HJ* 10 May 1809. *London Gazette*, 9-13 May 1809. These had already been signed by the Lord Lieutenant of Herefordshire on 24 Sept. 1808, 25 Nov. 1808, and 24 Sept. 1808 respectively. While the North Herefordshire Local Militia was described as being of two regiments, it was generally referred to as being of two battalions.
[84] The death of John Nourse, Esq. was reported in *HJ* 11 May 1808. Sir Hungerford Hoskyns's commission was published in *London Gazette* 16 Aug. 1808.
[85] *HJ* 15 Feb. 1809, 12 April 1809. See *HJ* 24 May 1809 for an example of a long list of deserters from what was described as the first and second battalions of the North Herefordshire Local Militia.
[86] *HJ* 14 & 21 June 1815.
[87] *HJ* 10 April, 8 & 22 May 1816. The suspension, which also included that of the regular militia, was regularly notified to the Lord Lieutenant by circular, for an example of which see *HJ* 28 July 1819.
[88] *HJ* 24 August 1808. Francis Edwards, an attorney-at-law of Leominster, died in January 1814 at the age of 53. *HJ* 12 January 1814.
[89] *HJ* 12 & 19 April 1809.
[90] *HJ* 6 & 20 Dec. 1809. The curious circumstances relating to his charger, too long to be discussed here, were reported in *Globe*, 26 Dec. 1809.
[91] *HJ* 9 Feb., 2 March & 11 May 1814.
[92] *HJ* 5 Oct. 1814. Captain Edward Poole took over the third troop from Captain Benjamin Biddulph in 1810, his commission being dated 3 May 1810. *London Gazette*, 3 – 7 July 1810.
[93] *HJ* 5 August 1818
[94] John C. Eisel, 'Home Defence in Herefordshire in the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars: Part 1, 1793-1802.' *TWNFC* (2022), p.90.
[95] *HT* 12 Jan. 1861.

Kington Police 1841-1850: A Brief History

By CHRIS SAVILLE

In 1840, Kington became the first district in Herefordshire to create its own, publicly funded, rural police force, well before the Police Act of 1856 obliged counties to adopt professional policing. The new force's champion was a local magistrate, James Davies of Moor Court, who used his own money to seed fund the construction of a new station and the four (later five) policemen that staffed it. Notwithstanding early opposition from the local community, both peaceful (anti-police petitions) and otherwise (physical assault and violence), the Kington Police lasted until 1850 when it was suddenly closed. To date, researchers have commonly attributed this 'failure' to the police's inefficiency and excessive expenditure,[1] albeit with no substantive evidence. A plaque on the old police station in Kington (Plate 6.1) records straightforwardly that 'By 1850 the force was considered too expensive and was abandoned.' However, recent research suggests that not only were the police of Kington at least as efficient as their urban equivalents during the 1840s but just as economical, if not more so. It is suggested that, in fact, the waning enthusiasm of its greatest supporter and the fading threat, as Davies saw it, of movements such as Rebeccaism and Chartism contributed to the closure, and that the decisive factor was the widespread financial and economic crisis which struck rural parts of Herefordshire at the end of the 1840s. Under those circumstances, many districts failed to pay any rates at all, let alone a specific police rate. This systemic breakdown, rather than the efficiency of the force, left the Kington Police all but bankrupt.

BACKGROUND

It could be said that the emergence of an organised, rural police force in England and Wales had its roots in the 1830s, as an increasing body of the rural élite came to believe that their part of the country, notwithstanding its provincial setting, should be policed to the same effect as cities such as Birmingham, Manchester, and London. This was felt less keenly in Herefordshire where, despite pressure from a variety of quarters, the county's magistrature resisted calls for change. There was pressure from neighbouring Shropshire, for example, where, in December 1838, the Quarter Sessions passed a resolution stating, *inter alia*, that 'in consequence of the present inefficiency of the Constabulary Force…it is the opinion of this court, that a body of constables appointed by the magistrates, paid out of the county rate, and disposable at any point in the shire…would be highly desirable'.[2] Pressure came too from Herefordshire's own Lord Lieutenant, Lord Somers, who, on three occasions in December 1839, wrote to the chairman of the Quarter Sessions—John Barneby MP—to demand that the subject of rural policing be discussed at the next meeting, saying that given the 'disturbed condition of Monmouthshire, and the unprotected state of Herefordshire, it would be desirable to have an efficient constabulary force' such as those found in Worcestershire and Staffordshire.[3] Most significant was the pressure exerted by the Home Secretary, Lord Russell. In 1836, he created a commission on rural policing under the social reformer Edwin Chadwick, with a view to extending the professional methodologies demonstrated by the Metropolitan Police in London; the eventual outcome was the 1839 Rural Police Act.

But John Barneby was not for change, and all such pressures were resisted. The 'Salop Resolution' was discussed by the Herefordshire bench in April 1839 and agreed to—apart from

some minor changes—but Barneby made the views of the county quite clear when he wrote to Russell, stating that 'no fresh power ought to be given to any government in the payment and appointment of such a force'.[4] Somers was dismissed with equal facility when Barneby refused to allow even a discussion of the Lord Lieutenant's letters on a technicality, to wit that the necessary five magistrates had not given prior notice that such a discussion was required. Dismissing the 1839 Rural Police Act was more of a challenge, however.

In simple terms, the Act allowed counties to appoint a police force where it was felt that the existing arrangement of parish constables was inadequate, but at the county ratepayers' expense. Barneby objected most strongly to this, primarily because he believed that, if Herefordshire was to have a police force imposed upon it, then Parliament should foot at least some of the bill as it did for the Metropolitan Police in London. Fortunately for Barneby, there was one significant get-out clause: it was a permissive bill, so that counties were free to adopt it or not as they saw fit. Even so, the Quarter Sessions could hardly just ignore the bill, and so, in August 1840, after much prevarication, the county magistrates finally met to discuss implementing the 'new' Act.

Once the debate started, magistrates on both sides of the argument took the opportunity to state their case.[5] Pro-police solicitor, Tomkyns Dew, claimed to know examples of vagrants preferring to proceed through Herefordshire, rather than Shropshire, because there 'they [the rural police] were established in every corner', and S. Peploe understood that in Gloucestershire 'one [police] man had cleared a district of thieves and vagabonds'. Countering this, the Reverend Mr Coke questioned how twenty-four constables could protect the villages of an entire county—it would be tantamount to 'abandoning the cottages'. Chairman Barneby believed that the Hereford (city) superintendent was 'a very efficient man [who] did his duty extremely well' but his chief objection to the establishment of a rural police for the county was expense, which, he could not deny, would be 'serious'. Eventually, it was Mr Coke who summed up the feelings of the anti-police lobby when he said '[we do] not mean to say that [we] perfectly approve of the present system, for [we do] not; all [we want] to see [is] the expense and how the new plan answered in other places…'. The subsequent vote saw the motion to implement the Act defeated with some ease, by forty-two votes to twelve, but less than four months later the same magistrates were to discuss the issue once more, albeit now in a more localised context as James Davies, magistrate for Kington, took to his feet.

KINGTON IN THE 1840s

It might be tempting to imagine early Victorian Kington as an idyllic, quiet township lost amidst the backwaters of one of England's most rural and thinly populated counties. This would be a mistake. In one sense, Kington was a busy, modernising centre, with some characteristics more commonly seen in larger towns and cities. In another, it was something of a hotchpotch: agricultural with important industrial elements; geographically in England but with a prominent 'Welshness'; and remote but with established transportation links to a number of urban centres.

Commercially, Kington was of great local significance. It held eight fairs every year, and several central Welsh drovers' routes converged there before fanning out to a variety of English markets, including London. Anecdotally, it has been suggested that Welsh was heard as often on the streets as English, leading to claims that the town's loyalties were 'consistently as much Welsh as English'.[6] The town was well connected: by 1842, a coach ran to London every afternoon via Hereford whilst others ran to Worcester and Aberystwyth, albeit the nearest railway station was some forty-six miles away in Worcestershire (the railway was not to arrive

in Kington until 1857). Architecturally, Kington was not without its elegance, as evidenced by a fine terrace of late Regency houses in The Square, nor indeed culture, with the Sun Barn being used for theatrical performances on an *ad hoc* basis from about 1820. Reading rooms, a museum, and a library, the latter taking approved periodicals and the *London Times*, could be found at the Lower Swan Inn. The town boasted a free grammar school (Lady Hawkins' School, established in 1632) and a charity school for boys and girls, as well as a Mechanics' Institute for the further education of working people.[7]

Despite its rurality, Kington did not escape the clutches of the Industrial Revolution. Although a lucrative clothing trade had all but evaporated by 1790 and a glove trade not much later, by the 1840s the town had four corn mills and a weaving and dyeing establishment, as well as tanning and timber works. By 1820, a horse-drawn railway linked the coalfields of South Wales with the villages of Burlingjobb and Dolyhir nearby, whilst Meredith's Iron Foundry and its domestic nail-making enterprise—employing some 120 hands—was established at Sunset, slightly to the east of the town. Goods transported to Kington, on the twelve to fourteen trams that arrived each day from South Wales, included coal, iron, slate, and bricks, whilst those transported from the town included lime and limestone, agricultural produce, malt, flour, timber, and local products.[8]

Although most changes in Kington were organic, some were politically motivated, most influentially those brought about by the Improvement Act of 1829.[9] Writing of the town in 1845, local historian, Richard Parry, claimed that: 'The spirit of improvement has of late years much animated the inhabitants, many new homes having been erected and old projections taken down, and the whole town has assumed a more regular, uniform and respectable appearance.' Indeed, the changes and improvements were clearly quite considerable. Parry claimed that the streets were in good repair and generally macadamized, that sewers were installed to carry away the waste and that, by November 1830, the streets were well illuminated by gas lamps, thanks to the town's new gas works.[10]

JAMES DAVIES

At an adjourned Quarter Session, on Saturday 17 April 1841, Robert Langdon, lately a sub-inspector with the Birmingham Police, rose to swear an oath of allegiance before the Chairman of the county magistrates, John Barneby MP, and James Davies; in doing so he became the first and only superintendent of the Kington Police force.[11] Within six weeks, a further three men did likewise, a sergeant and two constables, so that, by early June 1841, the Kington Police had effectively been born.[12] Langdon and his men will be considered in more depth later, but understanding why they were recruited helps explain how the Kington Police was to fail nine years later. The formation of the force was underpinned by the fears of Davies himself in the face of the threats to order that he perceived from Rebeccaism and Chartism. Whilst the subsequent failure of Kington Police has been traditionally attributed to expense and inefficiency, the weakening of these movements by the late 1840s would also have reduced the concerns that had driven his support earlier. At the same time, as described below, the economic crisis that struck rural Herefordshire towards the end of the decade wholly undermined funding from ratepayers and was decisive.

On Monday 4 January 1841, James Davies addressed the county magistrates, seeking approval to appoint constables for the Kington Special Sessions District. He did so in accordance with the provisions of section 19 of the 1840 County Police Act which, by amending the 1839 Act, now allowed districts within counties to form discrete, self-funded police forces.[13] Since

Davies was to be a key element in the formation of the Kington Police, providing not just impetus but vocal and financial support, it is important to understand more about him, a man who figured 'so prominently in the affairs of Kington in the first half of the nineteenth century'.[14]

Davies was born in 1777, most probably in Breconshire, and was surely destined to be a man of consequence (and wealth) from his early years. At the age of sixteen, he was articled to the Kington lawyers, Harris and Cheese, and seemingly set for a lucrative career. In 1808, he joined Messrs Cheese and Crummer in establishing the Kington and Radnorshire Bank whilst developing an interest in public duties. By the mid-1820s, he had become Clerk of the Peace and Steward of the Crown Manors in Radnorshire and in 1836 became Chairman of the Kington Poor Relief Union. Whilst the next two decades saw Davies concentrate on banking, his local influence grew even further. He became a proprietor of the Kington Tramroad Company and led a campaign in 1845 to start a railway through Kington to Aberystwyth (albeit it came to nothing). He was also heavily involved 'through [his] unceasing exertions and financial backing' in Royal Mail coaches from London, which finally reached Kington in 1836.[15] Davies was rich, local, with a legal background, and an affinity for an ordered population, but since much of that applied to other men of the time, such characteristics, of themselves, give no real indication as to why he would wish to initiate a new police force. However, whilst only a limited supply of Davies's personal correspondence remains, those letters that do exist (and are accessible) enable reasonable suppositions about his motivation to be drawn.

An uncatalogued letter in the private Hergest Trust archives, written by Davies to a Major General Whinyates in late November 1843, reveals a man highly sensitive to disturbances and law-breaking. He apologises to Whinyates for his 'long silence' by referring to his heavy workload. More importantly, he says that:

> We have been for some weeks thrown into a state of disturbance and alarm, by the threats first and then the vile attacks of the Rebeccaites…A misguided and cowardly set…carrying on a system of terror and outrage for many months…Assembling by night in hundreds and sometimes thousands…armed with guns, swords, scythes etc…The Lord Lieutenant applied for…a military force and a strong party of London police.

This letter reveals a man of wealth, with considerable civic and commercial responsibilities, aware of, and frightened by, regional and local uprisings and familiar with the potential role of a trained police force.

But Davies was more than frightened. He was profoundly disenchanted about the state of the nation, as this section from his letter indicates:

> There seems to be something unaccountable in our State. Everything seems out of joint… The English sorely divided by the new lights of the Tractarians. Cobden, Bright etc. going about from one end of this island to the other holding meetings and spreading all manner of Discontent and false Doctrines about Corn Laws, tythes, Poor Laws etc… To crown all this most wicked and annoying warfare carried on in South Wales against good order and peace, by a set of miscreants who have managed to carry on their Proceedings without affording much chance of detection….Enough of all this.[16]

At first glance, it may appear curious that Davies should have been so concerned about the Rebeccaites, a distant, agricultural protest group of south and west Wales, characterised 'by farmers on horseback in outlandish female dress…[rioting] against the imposition of toll

charges'.[17] But Davies was clearly a man with a heightened sense of public order, with a lot to lose as holder of a host of responsibilities and civic roles, as local bank manager and as Treasurer and key stakeholder (to the tune of £1000) of the Kington Tramway Company. It is tempting to imagine that the tramway, which formed such a large part of his life and which effectively brought the town into 'contact not only with the coal mines but also the iron works of south Wales', acted as much as a conduit for news, information, and gossip—for which read fear—as it did for coal and iron.[18] And these fears were not necessarily groundless. Just five weeks before Davies wrote his letter to General Whinyates, the *Hereford Journal* reported 'outrages… near Presteign [*sic*] pulling down Turnpike Gates…and threatening letters having been received by post respecting the Kington gates'.[19] But it may be that this was not Davies's first taste of 'wicked and annoying warfare' brought to his doorstep. It is quite feasible that Davies had been equally fearful four years earlier, in 1839, when the *Hereford Times*, in an article repeated in the *Northern Liberator*, a noted Chartist publication, claimed that 'a large number of persons supposed to be Chartists, a part of a mob who assembled at Newport, have recently passed through Kington…many of them armed with pistols and amunition [*sic*]'.[20] In the face of such real (and perceived) threats, it is no surprise that Davies had indeed, as he wrote to Gen Whinyates, had 'Enough of all this'.

So, Davies was well prepared when, in January 1841, he presented his case to the bench for a Kington police force. He clearly remembered how discussions about the 1839 Act had been put off by the tactics of the chairman of the Quarter Sessions, and so easily deflected opportunities for prevarication, saying that 'the notice was in proper form and had been duly advertised in the Hereford papers'. He was highly confident that the application would be successful and 'could not anticipate the slightest objection' since the expenses were to be 'restricted to the district'.[21] Davies had sketched out the working structure of the Kington Police: a superintendent, a sergeant, and three constables, to be variously posted at Kington, Pembridge, Eardisley, and Stansbach; and even their salaries. Ultimately, the county magistrates had little option but to accede to the proposal, partly because it would be paid for by the inhabitants of Kington and not those of Herefordshire generally, but perhaps also because it met Mr Coke's previous desire to see the idea of a rural police tested, in effect 'somewhere else'. So, just as Westminster had been happy to see counties such as Shropshire experiment with a rural police force—at no centralised cost—now the Herefordshire magistrature was happy to see Kington do likewise at no cost to the county. Davies's motion to appoint a Superintendent at £75 per annum, a Sergeant at £52 per annum, and three constables at 15 shillings per week, paid for from 'an equal police rate for the district', was passed by eighteen votes to six.[22]

POLICING IN KINGTON BEFORE THE 'NEW' POLICE

Prior to 1841, policing in Kington followed a pattern typical of the time for the rural west of England whereby, every October, constables were 'appointed at the Court-leet'.[23] It is difficult to ascertain how effective this form of policing was for Kington, although the creation of an Association for the Prosecution of Felons in 1821-22 suggests that there was room for improvement. Equally, since the Association had existed 'but a few years',[24] the parish-constable method may have been working well enough.[25] In any event, Kington's parish policing was surely improved, or at least strengthened, when Miles Scull was installed as the town's first patrol and night watchman in 1831. His salary was ten shillings per week, and his duties were listed as 'preventing fires, murders, burglaries and robberies'. Further enhancements were made seven years later, when the authorities, presumably still feeling that the town had insufficient

protection, appointed, in addition to Scull (who was constable for the Upper Ward), William Lloyd for the Middle Ward and James Parker for the Lower. All were equipped with 'dark lanterns, staffs, and glazed hats with a mettle ring round the crown'.[26] It has been claimed that, by December 1840, complaints were received concerning the negligence of these watchmen, and they were sacked. However, it has not been possible to verify this, although the *Hereford Journal* was reporting by October 1840 that 'sheep-stealing is becoming prevalent in the neighbourhood of Kington'.[27]

KINGTON'S 'NEW' POLICE OFFICERS

The new superintendent for Kington Police was Robert Langdon. Born in about 1819, in Nettlecombe, Somerset, he worked as an agricultural labourer before, at some point, moving to Birmingham, where he joined the police. He rose rapidly to the rank of sub-inspector before being appointed superintendent of Kington on 14 June 1841, aged about twenty-two, a transfer facilitated by a personal recommendation to James Davies from the chief of Birmingham Police, Captain Burgess.

The Index of Police Orders at West Midlands Police Museum indicates that, at one point in his Birmingham service, Langdon was given a gift of £5 by a grateful member of the public, but in March 1841 he was severely admonished and fined £1 for absenting himself when required at court. The last Index entry is his resignation dated 19 April 1841.[28] Langdon's rapid promotion, followed by resignation, was not uncommon for police recruits at the time, and Birmingham Police had a particular reputation for high turnover and the 'inefficiencies and incompetence of many of the men'.[29] As such, Burgess's recommendation to Davies should perhaps be taken with a pinch of salt (indeed, only a few months later, a George Bakewell was dismissed from the Birmingham service for being drunk and disorderly yet 'still given a certificate of good conduct on departure').[30] Whether Langdon was a poor officer, and James Davies was misled by Burgess, is a moot point; Davies clearly had no qualms in recommending the selection of Langdon to his fellow magistrates, stating he 'did not believe Captain Burgess would have recommended Langdon, unless he had considered him fully competent for the situation'.[31] Equally, Davies was keen to impress his fellow magistrates that Langdon was, according to Burgess, a mature, experienced man of between 'thirty and forty years of age', [32] when he was in fact some ten to twenty years younger. Possibly this hints at a readiness in Burgess to see Langdon go.

Langdon's sergeant was Charles Rice Wilson from Derby, a tailor by profession and aged twenty-six at appointment in April 1841. How Wilson made such a dramatic change in personal circumstances is a mystery, but he was clearly destined to spend the rest of his days in the force since he was promoted to superintendent for Kington itself in 1850, as a post-closure, interim measure, and then to the Whitney district of Herefordshire when the new county force was created in June 1857. He spent subsequent periods at the Birmingham and Burnley Police before retiring in 1874 on medical grounds, with a reference from his Chief Constable citing his 'very good' conduct.[33]

Initially, there were two constables, Henry Derry and James (aka John) Gregg. Both were aged in their early to mid-twenties when appointed, and both were local. Derry lived in and policed Eardisley—marrying Jane Luntley of Kington in 1842—and Gregg likewise policed Pembridge.[34] Unlike their superior officers, there is no indication that either man continued with a career in the police; by 1851, Derry had moved to Birmingham and was working as a ironmonger's assistant, and Gregg had reverted to his previous employment as a farmer.

The new Kington Police featured a balance of diverse attributes, and it is interesting to

ponder whether this was intended. Although Langdon would not have come with the maturity that Davies was presumably expecting, he would surely have come with a reputation as the important policeman from the big city, and he, like his sergeant, would have arrived as an unknown from afar, presumably with no axes to grind or favours to repay. On the other hand, as locals, PCs Derry and Gregg would have understood the district and the people thereof and maybe known where and when to apply common sense, summary justice, or a blind eye.

HOW WERE THE NEW POLICE RECEIVED?

Violence against the 'new' police of the 1840s was common. They were 'often attacked with sticks, stones, fists, boots and clogs as [they] sought to enforce licensing hours, for example, or break up street brawls' and 'often assaults on the police were, on the surface at least, completely unprovoked'.[35] Remarkably, Matthew Powell was convicted of assaulting Superintendent Langdon within just four weeks of the latter's appointment, although a much more serious incident occurred in July 1842. On this occasion, seven farmers from Radnorshire, found guilty of assaulting all members of the Kington Police (bar Langdon) at Huntingdon Fair, were collectively fined nearly £30.[36] In subsequent years, the local newspapers recorded an endless litany of assaults against the Kington police such that, by 1850, the *Hereford Times* was moved to observe that, after another assailant escaped with what they determined to be a nominal fine:

> It has been remarked that policemen's heads in Hereford are of less value than in any other place…since any man who has spite against a policeman may thrash him…for two and six or a five shilling fine…it appears a policeman's head is worth little more than a sheep's.[37]

The local newspapers published items of praise and complaint in equal measure during the lifetime of the Kington Police, but, perhaps surprisingly, it has been very difficult to find examples of letters written by ratepayers, whether for ill or good. 'N.H.' did complain however. He wrote to the *Hereford Times* about the 'considerable sum [paid] as a police-rate' by his village of Eardisley but complained that, when wanted, 'one of the force…is very seldom to be met with', despite the parish being 'notorious for drunkenness and brawls'.[38] Nonetheless, Thomas Ball of Almeley, in a general rant about the state of agriculture, was far more impressed:

> Have we not…that most efficient body called rural police, to protect our lives and properties both night and day? Have we not a county constabulary ready, at a moment's notice, to pounce on any wicked wight…Let but one of these be caught, by one of our excellent constables.[39]

The tentative conclusion is that ratepayers were, by and large, satisfied with the police service they were receiving or at least prepared to see it given a go.

Other comments in the local press about the performance of the Kington Police were mainly found within general news articles about the district, and often the (paid) correspondents were quite positive. In 1845, the *Hereford Journal* carried a report on the Kington May Fair, in which it noted that: 'The 'light fingered gentry' were numerous, and…some of these commenced operations, but were soon checked by our police force. Several were taken into custody, and have been remanded for further examination.'[40] That same year, the *Hereford Times*, in a report about sheep stealing in Pembridge, was pleased to lavish praise on PC James Gregg, 'an active officer of the force…quickly on the alert…[who] after a diligent search…succeeded in finding the

greater portion of a sheep artfully concealed', noting that they had 'before had occasion to allude to the activity of Gregg as a police officer, and his exertions on this occasion fully corroborate the same'. Ironically, however, four years later, in an article exclaiming about the 'repeated acts of house-breaking…within the circle of a few miles [of Pembridge]' the 'Correspondent' was moved to ask, 'for what do we pay a rural police?'[41]

In addition to writing to the newspapers, ratepayers could vent their spleen via petition, and eleven anti-Kington police petitions were submitted to the Quarter Sessions of January 1844 (see Table 1). But, in a move that repeated the tactics he had previously employed with respect to the rural police, Barneby, as chairman, refused to permit any discussion of them since at least five magistrates had not previously submitted a written request to do so. Only Sir Robert Price is recorded as making any comment, namely that he did not agree with the petitions that he had been asked to submit because, in his view, a rural police was as necessary as a town force, albeit Mr Coke, long-time opponent of the Kington police, in presenting the Eardisley petition 'patently wished the document to be read'.[42] The residents of 'several' Kington parishes were moved to publish an advertisement in the *Hereford Times,* thanking magistrates Price, Coke, and King King [*sic*] for 'presenting the petitions for them after two of the County members, Messrs Hoskins and Bailey, [who] were present at the Sessions, had refused to do so'. [43] Unfortunately, it would appear that the notice was prematurely placed, for after the magistrates had declined to debate the petitions when submitted at the January Sessions, there is no evidence that they discussed them at the next or indeed any subsequent Session.

Given the well-stated antipathy of Herefordshire magistrates to the concept of a rural constabulary, it seems surprising that they did not use the petitions to further public debate and potentially to weaken the tenuous support which the Kington Police enjoyed. There are various possible explanations; at the simplest level, the matter could have been overlooked in a busy schedule, or the five necessary magistrates might have forgotten to submit a request to discuss them. Arguably, however, the most convincing reason harks back to Mr Coke's comments, when the question of a rural constabulary was first discussed at the adjourned Sessions of August 1840. On this occasion he had said 'all [I] wanted was to see the expense and how the new plan answered in other places'.[44] In short, Kington was an experiment, and the best way of demonstrating that the 1839 Constabulary Act was unsuitable for Herefordshire was to allow the experiment to demonstrably fail.

All the Kington petitions were handwritten, and most signatories are identifiable.[45] For the most part, they are male farmers and agricultural labourers with an estimated average age in the fifties, but a selection of more skilled professions appears: one or two blacksmiths; a schoolteacher; and a selection of people of independent means. The petitions for Stapleton and Eardisley are headed by the signatures of the local clergy, a common way of vouchsafing 'genuineness and respectability'.[46] The apparent absence of publicans or owners of beer/cider shops seems surprising. Whilst relevant names may have yet to be identified, the fact that not one has been found amongst the 355 signatories could reflect the approach of a group of people unwilling to antagonise the 'new' police unnecessarily.

The women of Kington district are represented by very few signatories. It has been possible thus far to firmly identify only seventeen (4.8%) of the 355 signatories as women (although there may be more amongst the illegible scrawls and 'Xs'). Many petitions appear almost certainly to contain no women. Those women that did sign were generally in the fifty to seventy age range and farmers, or people of independent means. The highest profile signatory heads the list of names for Titley, namely the Fifth Earl of Oxford and Mortimer. His signature

may simply have resulted from the venting of a tiff between the Earl and Davies—police based or otherwise—but may also reflect a greater social range to anti-police signatories (indeed to participation in petitioning in general) than has previously been considered.

TABLE 1: The Eleven Petitions Against the County Police Act 1839 Received by Herefordshire Magistrates (1843-44)[47]

Parish	**Location**	**Parish Population**		**Signatories (People 18 Years +)**	
	Km from Kington[48]	Total	18 Years +	Number	%
Brilley	9.2	587	333	50	15.0%
Eardisley	8.2	703	428	39	9.1%
Titley	5.5	393	243	60	24.7%
Knill†	9.3	75	42	8	19.0%
Rodd, Nash and Little Brampton†	9.6	295	161	21	13.0%
Stapleton†	12.8	310	165	20	12.1%
Lower Harpton	5.8	n/a*	n/a*	8	n/a*
Pembridge	10.7	1989	761	61	8.0%
Huntington	6.5	n/a*	n/a*	32	n/a*
Stanton upon Arrow[49]	9.7	377	227	44	19.4%
Upper and Lower Kinsham	13.5	152	70	12	17.1%
Kington	0.0	-	-	No petition	-
Lyonshall	4.6	-	-	No petition	-
Winforton	12.2	-	-	No petition	-
Total		**4881**	**2430**	**355**	**14.6%**

Notes to Table 1:
Population statistics have been compiled using the 1841 census. Where numbers are marked *, populations cannot be accurately determined because the relevant parishes formed unidentified subsets within Kington at the census. For parishes marked †, boundaries at this stage were somewhat unclear. Officially, Rodd, Nash and Little Hampton, Knill, and Stapleton had become part of Presteigne (Wales) Registration district in 1839, but it appears they were still considered part of Kington district as far as the Herefordshire magistrates were concerned.

WHAT DID THE 'NEW' POLICE DO?

The pages of the *Hereford Times* and *Hereford Journal* contain endless accounts of the activities of the Kington Police. Assault, damage, theft, and trespass represented the day-to-day offences experienced by police nationwide, but two less typical, Kington-based crimes may help illustrate

what Langdon and his men faced.

The first is based on two tiny, badly written scraps of paper held at the Herefordshire Archive and Records Centre (HARC). Both are claims for expenses, very similar to each other in wording, and date from late 1841. One reads as follows:

> James Parker local constable = £0.6.0, employed by order of superintendent of police…on duty 11 nights in the town of Kington by special order of the Magistrates to aid and assist the police officers to apprehend parties who had committed [deviant] depredations in breaking the church windows, pulling down railings and gates erected before private houses and other malicious damage to private property.[50]

This paints quite an alarming picture of Kington, one almost of anarchy, but it has not been possible to build on this brief description because no other such records exist (other than a similar expense claim from a William Lloyd). Astonishingly, no reports seem to have appeared in the local press. One deduction might be that it was a situation so common as to be not worth reporting, and whilst this seems highly unlikely there may nonetheless be a grain of truth to it. Kington was a town with at least thirty-one inns (amongst countless beer and cider houses) and, given that it was on a drovers' route, where Welsh and English people mixed freely, it is reasonable to deduce that civil disobedience was, if not common, at least fairly frequent.[51]

The second example is very different, equating almost to what modern police might term a major operation; again, the evidence comes from an expense claim. In early 1843, PC James Gregg was charged with 'tracing parties suspected of housebreaking and stealing property consisting of drapery and woollen goods to the value of £40'. In doing so, he not only travelled extensively within the Kington Police district but also an astonishing ninety-seven miles, over four days, in neighbouring counties. This was clearly a sizeable theft and, by sending Gregg and two other officers on such extensive (and expensive—overall costs came to nearly £4) investigations, the Kington Police force was demonstrating a degree of professionalism not unlike that shown by the Metropolitan force in London.[52]

KINGTON POLICE 1841-50: ASSESSMENT OF EFFICIENCY AND EXPENDITURE

Despite the claims of numerous authors that the failure of the Kington force was caused by inefficiency and excessive expenditure, no assessment of either exists. To an extent, this is not surprising since establishing the efficiency of a police force remains as problematic today as it was in the early years of Queen Victoria, whilst the limited statistical and comparative information available for police activities in the period presents inevitable difficulties. Nonetheless, sufficient evidence exists to offer at least a partial assessment of the effectiveness and professionalism of the Kington Police, the expenditure required to operate the force, how funding worked, how contemporary ratepayers viewed the position, and the key factors which caused closure in 1850.

Kington Police: An Assessment of Efficiency

In his study of rural crime in Herefordshire, published in 2003, Timothy Shakesheff analysed the original Petty Session Returns of Convictions for the county, between 1822 and 1860, to identify those crimes fundamentally rural in nature, such as crop theft, Game Law offences, and trespass. From these data, he identified trends and drew general conclusions about rural crime in the county; for example, he was able to demonstrate that 'a greater number of crimes than hitherto

suggested can be embraced by the concept of social crime'.[53] Using similar methods, these same records can be used to identify convictions for all petty crimes recorded both countywide and in Kington, before and after the force's existence; a summary of that analysis is shown at Table 2.

TABLE 2: Petty Convictions for Herefordshire and for Kington, 1838-59

Year	Convictions		
	County Total	Kington Total	% from Kington
1838	297	15	5.1
1839	273	12	4.4
1840	251	9	3.6
1841	***217***	***33***	***15.2***
1842	***278***	***34***	***12.2***
1843	***349***	***45***	***12.9***
1844	***480***	***40***	***8.3***
1845	***329***	***31***	***9.4***
1846	***289***	***30***	***10.4***
1847	***328***	***34***	***10.4***
1848	***369***	***35***	***9.5***
1849	***348***	***34***	***9.8***
1850	***406***	***30***	***7.4***
1851	446	33	7.4
1852	430	28	6.5
1853	481	19	4.0
1854	339	18	5.3
1855	549	15	2.7
1856	477	19	4.0
1857	393	7	1.8
1858	585	14	2.4
1859	424	8	1.9

Note: Data are shown in bold italics for the years in which the Kington Police operated.[54]

On the face of it, the 'new' Kington Police had considerable impact from 1841, certainly in terms of convictions secured. For the three years prior to the creation of the new force (1838-40), Messrs Scull *et al*. contributed, on average, 4.4% of the county's total petty convictions, whilst, for the first three years of the new force's existence (1841-43), Superintendent Langdon and colleagues contributed 13.3%. Total convictions secured in the Kington district rose more than threefold, from thirty-six in 1838-40 to 112 in 1841-43.

For reasons set out in 1847, by the Victorian statistician, Whitworth Russell, it remains possible to debate whether the greater number of convictions brought about a decline in crime committed. Russell noted that:

> Tables cannot show the amount of actual crime, but only of such [that] has been detected…[and] several causes...have increased the proportion of detected crime to that actually committed…Amongst these…a better organised, more numerous, and more active

> police … [and] a greater willingness on the part of the public to prefer charges.[55]

Nonetheless, it seems likely that, by arresting more criminals, securing more convictions, and perhaps creating a deterrent effect, the Kington Police had a favourable impact.

To facilitate further analysis, Plate 6.4 shows the same data in graphical form.[56] Between 1841 and 1851, the rising trend in the number of convictions across the county is evident, as is the sharp increase in the fundamental level in Kington once the force was established.

However, after 1851, convictions for Herefordshire generally continued to rise whilst those in the Kington district plummeted. Following the closure of the Kington Police in 1850, Kington fell in line with the rest of Herefordshire thereafter in being policed within the remit of the 1842 Parish Constables Act, whereby paid superintendent constables oversaw each of the county's eleven Petty Sessional Divisions and their parishes. The policing itself was in the hands of *unpaid* parish constables, provided with uniforms, equipment, and a lock-up.[57] The dramatic decline in conviction rates in Kington from that time may have come about because a reduction in paid staff and professionalism undermined the benefits achieved by the force from 1841.

In the context of efficiency, it is also worth considering changes in the range of criminal activities that the Kington officers were required to police. Table 3 summarises the laws under which petty convictions were secured and demonstrates that, by 1850, the Kington Police were successfully prosecuting under twenty different charges, whereas, before inception of the force in 1841, Messrs Scull and colleagues had been doing so under just nine.[58] In part, this was an ongoing response to a changing world, demonstrated by amendments to the Poor Law Act in 1847 or the later arrival of the railway in 1857. Nonetheless, convictions under new acts necessitated some degree of knowledge and understanding by the officers required to implement them, suggesting in turn a degree of professionalism and efficiency.

A conviction for Neglect of Duty, successfully brought against constable John Owens in 1845, seems to demonstrate expectations. The charge was brought by Superintendent Langdon himself and read: '[for] allowing a prisoner to escape from him who had been given into his custody'. Owens was fined £0.18.6.[59] Owens was not part of the regular police force at Kington and, since it has not been possible to identify him elsewhere, the assumption must be that he simply provided temporary police cover, but his prosecution may indicate Langdon's professionalism and the standards he set.

Efficiency might also be measured by how the Kington Police responded to specific instructions from magistrates to tackle a particular crime. One such example arose late in 1841, when the police were instructed:

> to make a personal examination [and] deliver in an account of every public house and beer or cider shop—the name and sign and the character of each and of the respective occupiers and owners… [And record] the names of all idle or disorderly persons in each parish whose habits are bad or who live without visible means of support.[60]

Such specific guidance might be expected to have prompted a spike in convictions related to ale and cider houses, and whilst it is true that, between 1838-40 and 1841-43, they more than doubled, from five to twelve, a dozen convictions in three years is far from impressive. This could reflect anything from a very inefficient attempt at a clampdown to a reluctance to prosecute potentially popular establishments, or possibly even the return of a favour hinted at by the apparent absence of publicans and beer-shop owners in the anti-police petitions.

TABLE 3: Offences Policed in Kington District, 1838-59

'No.' means number of offences policed. '%' shows % of total offences policed in the relevant period.
The 'new' Kington police operated in the period for which column headings are shaded (1841-49).

Offence	1838-40		1841-43		1844-46		1847-49		1850-52		1853-55		1856-59	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Ale/cider house license	5	14	12	11	5	5	3	3	1	1	1	2	6	13
Malicious injury	2	6	5	4	0	0	6	6	2	2	0	0	0	0
Game Laws incl. trespass	8	22	7	6	16	16	10	10	13	14	15	29	9	19
Assault	9	25	49	44	26	26	17	17	31	34	24	46	15	31
Misdemeanour	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vagrancy	4	11	3	3	8	8	13	13	18	20	3	6	0	0
Malicious damage	3	8	7	6	11	11	7	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
Turnpike Act	3	8	1	1	7	7	9	9	4	4	1	2	2	4
Stealing (e.g. turnips, larch, peas)	1	3	18	16	2	2	6	6	6	7	3	6	1	2
Exposing his person			1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Illegal fishing			2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cruelty to an animal			2	2	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	4	8
Wilful damage			2	2	10	10	27	26	9	10	4	8	3	6
Breaking fences			3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Resisting PC: refusing work in workhouse					1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
Assault in a workhouse					12	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assaulting a PC					2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Neglect of duty - PC John Owen					1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Poor Law Act							2	2	0	0	0	0	1	2
Kington Paving Act									1	1	0	0	0	0
Pound breach									3	3	1	2	0	0
Excise license									3	3	0	0	3	6
Evading railway fare													1	2
Breach of contract													1	2
Unjust measures													1	2
TOTAL	**36**	**100**	**112**	**100**	**101**	**100**	**103**	**100**	**91**	**100**	**52**	**100**	**48**	**100**

Kington Police: An Assessment of Expenditure

At one level, assessing the expenditure of the Kington police is comparatively straightforward. Details relating to the initial expenditure for the station (£400: Plates 6.2 and 6.3 show the surviving building), the land upon which it was built (£100), and the salaries of the various officers (£75 per annum for the superintendent, £52 p.a. for the sergeant and £38 p.a. each for the two constables) can be readily ascertained.[61] The salary cost in 1841 was thus £203 p.a., a substantial increase over the cost of Miles Scull and his colleagues (in 1831, Scull was paid ten shillings per week so that, assuming that his two colleagues were similarly paid, the annual wage bill for policing Kington would have been £78). In addition, numerous records exist indicating supplementary costs, ranging from maintenance of prisoners (£1.10.0 for the quarter ending April 1845) to new shoes for all officers (£2.7.6 in November 1842) and many more items besides.[62] However, in the absence of comparable financial statistics against which Kington's expenditure can be measured, such data are of limited value.

The 1840 County Police Act allowed magistrates to levy a fair police rate over the district to which the police might be appointed, and at the summer Quarter Sessions of 1841 a rate of half a penny in the pound was ordered to be levied on the ratepayers of the Kington district. The intention was to raise a sum of £440 per annum.[63] Nonetheless, initially there were cash flow problems since there was no police 'money pot' available, and the Herefordshire magistracy was unlikely to pre-fund a nascent police force (as magistrates did in neighbouring Worcestershire) because they disapproved of it. In this situation. James Davies became instrumental in the force's launch. As a wealthy man himself, Davies had ready access to considerable sums of money, and between June 1840 and November 1842, he advanced the following sums to bankroll the emerging force:

- June 1840: £70 reimbursed for funding police clothing
- November 1841: £100 for use of Kington Police
- February 1842: £100 on account for Kington Police
- April 1842: £100 on account of Kington Police
- July 1842: £80 in part-payment of money advanced for Kington Police
- November 1842: £100 on account of Kington Police

It is not known whether other receipts were issued and are now lost, but even this figure of £550 over seventeen months indicates significant personal commitment.[64] It is unclear whether the monies advanced were from James Davies himself or his bank, but given that the receipts were in Davies's name, one suspects the former.

As regards the Kington police rate, no records have been found to explain how the rate of half a penny in the pound to fund the Kington Police was decided upon. It was simply announced at the Quarter Sessions of April 1841 as being 'the best assessment they [the Kington magistrates] could come to'. Thereafter, the rate was endorsed annually by the county magistrature with no discussion, and it was still set at the same figure by the time the station closed in 1850.[65] In 1848, the *Shrewsbury Chronicle* published a short table indicating the police rate in various places in the Midlands: Worcestershire, ¼d in the pound; Staffordshire (Potteries), 2½d; Warwickshire (Knightlow), ½d; and Herefordshire (Kington), ½d.[66]

Unfortunately, this table was published entirely without context, but it is sufficient to indicate that the Kington police rate was well within normal parameters for the region, and rather less than that levied by some Midlands districts. Indeed, all these rates pale into insignificance

when set against the 1841 Hereford City police rate of 4 pence in the pound, raised to 6 pence in 1843, twelve times higher than that of Kington. This clearly caused much local distress, judging by A Burgess's letter to the *Hereford Journal,* as he not only questioned whether he was 'better watched than formerly' but demanded that it be proven 'that no reduction could be fairly made'.[67]

Once the Kington Police station was up and running, it seems that, for a few years at least, funding was not an issue. As early as January 1842, the town's Improvement Commissioners decided that 'the present police force in the district is insufficient for the purpose' and directed the magistrates to seek approval at the next Quarter Sessions 'for an additional one [officer]', the expenses to be defrayed from the existing police rate.[68] James Davies accordingly spoke at the next Session, seeking approval to increase the staffing from four men to five, noting that it was 'with the concurrence of the public', and the request was approved without discussion.[69] It is unclear why such a request was agreed to so easily since, alongside the petitions, it would appear to have offered another excellent opportunity for the anti-police magistrates to inflict early damage on the Kington Police, a body already inadequate for the task. It would have been easy to claim that this was one inevitable step towards increased funding. The deduction must therefore be that money was readily available to pay for the extra man.

The absence of any indication of debt arising from the static police rate was, however, to last only so long, and the Quarter Sessions of October 1848 may provide the first available evidence of the financial pressures which caused the station to close. At that meeting, the Treasurer for the county, Mr F. L. Bodenham, rose to announce that five Kington parishes were very considerably in arrears in the payment of both the county rate and the police rate, and the meeting agreed that unless the arrears were 'paid within a fortnight, the Clerk of the Peace would take proceedings against the respective parishes' (Table 4).[70]

TABLE 4: Kington District Debts as of October 1848

Parish	County Rate	Police Rate
Brilley	£11.13.11	£7.9.2
Lower Harpton	£2.14.3	£1.16.2
Lyonshall	£20.14.9	£13.16.6
Pembridge	£24.4.0	£13.4.8
Titley	£7.8.5	£4.19.11
TOTAL	**£66.15.4**	**£41.6.5**

By January 1849 the debts had still not been paid, but now the Treasurer was pursuing not just five parishes but all thirteen that comprised the Kington police district. The total debt had risen to £163.10.3, of which Kington itself owed £45.10.4 for the county rate and £15.3.5 for the police rate. Local economic difficulties were clearly having a much deeper impact than an inability (or desire) to pay the police rate. Instead, ratepayers were experiencing difficulties in paying for anything at all, and two of the thirteen constituent district parishes had paid their police rate but not their county rate. It soon emerged that this problem was not restricted to Kington. Four months later, in May 1849, the town clerk announced, at the meeting of Hereford Town Council, that the accumulated 'arrears for borough and police rates [across the county for 1846-1848] now stood at between £700 and £800'.[71]

These were difficult times for Herefordshire. Population growth was much lower than for

England and Wales in general as people left for more secure and attractive work in the towns and cities, so that migration from the county offset much of the natural growth. In Kington, where total population actually declined by 8.6%, from 3141 to 2871,[72] between 1841 and 1851 (compared with overall growth in other market towns and 2.1% growth in Hereford), change was particularly marked.[73] The 'relatively late provision of rail links and the lack of convenient urban markets placed Herefordshire at a temporary disadvantage relative to some other regions of Britain', causing financial difficulties across the county.[74] The Kington Police were not to escape the impact.

CONCLUSION

The County Police Acts of 1839-40 have been described as 'the foundation of English provincial policing',[75] yet the impact in Herefordshire has received little scholarly attention. For example, although Clive Emsley's book, *The English Police*, contains no fewer than eighty-three index entries for English and Welsh county and district police forces, in addition to about half a dozen from overseas, there is not a single entry for Herefordshire.

This paper has attempted to rectify this scholarly omission by examining the only district station in the county formed under those Acts, from its creation to its abandonment, and by testing the current academic and populist view that the end came through inefficiency and excessive expenditure.

Insufficient evidence is available to fully assess the efficiency of the Kington Police and the effectiveness of its spending. Nonetheless, the balance of the evidence seems significantly weighted in Langdon's favour. The sharp increase in convictions in Kington, achieved quickly in the initial years of the force, and the dive in conviction rates after the force's closure in 1850 both strongly suggest that the force had considerable impact and achieved results. As noted above, Langdon's readiness to prosecute a fellow police officer—John Owens—for neglect of duty might well reflect his approach to professional standards.

There is no objective evidence to suggest that the Kington Police was inherently inefficient or expensive in delivering its work. Indeed, the police rate remained unchanged until closure, and funding proved adequate to support the recruitment of an additional officer. Instead, it appears that the force started to incur debts only at the end of the 1840s, when serious economic and financial problems gripped Herefordshire as a whole. Under such difficult circumstances, many parishes and districts were failing to pay not only the police rate but other rates too. Against that background, the only police force of its kind in the county was unlikely to survive.

In addition, by the time that the Kington Police was closed, the threat of Rebeccaism (and, to some extent, Chartism), which had so motivated James Davies to support the foundation of the force, had died away. It is reasonable to imagine that the ageing Davies, now seventy-three, was struggling to maintain motivation after nine years of constant opposition from his fellow county magistrates (perhaps a search of the private archives at Hergest Croft could shed further light on this). Indeed, it is hard not to feel a twinge of sympathy for Davies when, on 18 March 1850, he stood before his fellow magistrates to blandly announce that 'the Kington police…were no longer necessary'.[76]

Given the absence of local research into rural policing in the 1840s, it has not been possible to make comparisons between the Kington Police and other small, rural police stations of the 1840s. Even in Herefordshire, very different mechanisms and funding arrangements were adopted to police the market towns. Bromyard implemented the Parish Constables Act of 1842, whilst Ross-on-Wye's small force was short lived and funded by private subscription, as was

Ledbury's, created to manage navvies building the Gloucester to Hereford Canal.[77] There is certainly scope for further research in this area.

Most studies of early Victorian policing penetrate no further than the level of the Quarter Sessions, focus on urban communities, or start with the Police Act of 1856 (19 & 20 Vict. c. 69). That act finally obliged counties to start a professional police force. Perhaps then, in significant respects, the efforts of James Davies, Robert Langdon, and his colleagues in the Kington Police were ahead of their time.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] A number of academic sources have trodden this path. Amongst them are: Timothy Shakesheff, *Rural Conflict, Crime and Protest Herefordshire 1800-1860* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2003), p. 65; Vera Hadley, *Herefordshire Constabulary 1857-1967* (Hereford: Vera Hadley, 1999), p. 2; and Ken Reeves, *Glimpses of Kington's Past* (Leominster, Herefordshire: Orphans Press, 2003), p. 10. Locally it was a common theme for the 12 petitions raised by the anti-police inhabitants of the district (Herefordshire Archive and Records Centre, henceforth HARC, M17/45-46).
[2] *Hereford Journal*, 1 Jan. 1840, p.3.
[3] Herefordshire Archive and Records Centre (HARC), M17/2, 3 to 5 Dec. 1839, letters from Lord Somers.
[4] *Hereford Times,* 13 April 1839, p.3.
[5] *Hereford Journal,* 1 Jan. 1840, p.3.
[6] Allan Lloyd, *Kington: The Smallest Town in Herefordshire* (Almeley, Herefordshire: Logaston Press, 2013), p. 1.
[7] Pigot and Co. *National Commercial Directory* (1835), p.95; Richard Parry, *The History of Kington, by a Member of the Mechanics Institute of Kington* (Kington, Herefordshire: Charles Humphreys, 1845); Reeves, *Glimpses of Kington's Past*; Allan Lloyd, *Kington: The Smallest Town in Herefordshire* (Almeley, Herefordshire: Logaston Press, 2013).
[8] Pigot and Co. *National*; Parry, *The History*; Reeves, *Glimpses.*
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[16] Hergest Archives Herefordshire, unreferenced*,* 23 Nov. 1843*,* Correspondence from James Davies Esq. to Major G. F. Whinyates.
[17] Rhian E. Jones, *Petticoat Heroes: Gender, Culture and Popular Protest in the Rebecca Riots* (Cardiff: University of Wales, 2015), p. 1, Brilley.
[18] Lloyd, *Kington*, p. 99; Gordon Rattenbury and Ray Cook, *The Hay and Kington Railways* (Mold, Clwyd: Railway and Canal Historical Society, 1996), p. 99.
[19] *Hereford Journal*, 11 Oct. 1843, p. 3.
[20] *Hereford Times*, 21 Dec. 1839, p. 3; *Northern Liberator,* 28 Dec. 1839, p. 5.
[21] *Hereford Times,* 9 Jan. 1841 p. 2
[22] *Ibid.*
[23] Parry, *The History*, p. 32**.**
[24] *Ibid,* p. 62.
[25] *Ibid.* pp. 32-3.
[26] Lloyd, *Kington*, p. 9.
[27] *Hereford Journal*, 28 Oct. 1840, p. 3; Lloyd, *Kington,* p. 9.
[28] Corrine Brazier, emails to Chris Saville, 28 Oct. to 2 Nov. 2020.
[29] Clive Emsley, *The Great British Bobby* (London: Quercus, 2009), p. 81.
[30] *Ibid.*
[31] *Hereford Times,* 10 April 1841, p. 2.

[32] *Ibid.*
[33] HARC, G56/6, Herefordshire Constabulary: Constables' Appointments, 1857-1890; Hadley, *Herefordshire Constabulary*, p. 6.
[34] Hadley, *Herefordshire Constabulary*, p. 2.
[35] Emsley, *The Great British Bobby*, p. 85; Storch, *The Plague,* p. 87.
[36] *Hereford Times*, 12 May 1841, p. 3; *Hereford Times,* 30 July 1842, p. 3.
[37] *Hereford Times,* 29 June 1850, p. 5.
[38] *Hereford Times* 19 Nov. 1842*,* p. *2.*
[39] *Hereford Times,* 8 March 1845, p. 3.
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[41] *Hereford Times,* 8 March 1845, p. 3.; *Hereford Times,* 30 June 1849, p.5.
[42] HARC, M17/45-55, n.d., Police Complaints; *Hereford Journal,* 3 Jan. 1844, p. 3.
[43] *Hereford Times*, 6 Jan. 1844, p. 3.
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[48] Distances from Kington are those calculated by Google Walk.
[49] 'Stanton upon Arrow' as per note 47 above, rather than 'Staunton on Arrow' as is usual today.
[50] HARC, M17/19, n.d., Miscellaneous Claims for Expenses.
[51] W. H. Howse, *Kington Herefordshire: Memorials of an Old Town* (Kington, Herefordshire: Mid-Border Books, 1989), p. 9.
[52] HARC, M17/25, various dates, miscellaneous receipts.
[53] Shakesheff, *Rural Conflict, Crime and Protest Herefordshire*, p. 202.
[54] HARC, Q/CM/4 Petty Session Returns: Convictions 1822-1851 and Q/CE/1 Petty Session Returns: Convictions 1852-1860.
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[66] *Shrewsbury Chronicle*, 14 July 1848, p. 3.
[67] *Hereford Journal*, 22 Nov. 1843, p. 4.
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[69] *Hereford Times,* 9 April 1842, p. 2.
[70] *Hereford Times*, 21 Oct. 1848, p. 12.
[71] *Hereford Times*, 6 Jan. 1849, p. 9; *Hereford Journal*, 9 May 1849, p. 3.
[72] *Vision of Britain*, <https://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10102716/cube/TOT_POP>, accessed 15 June 2021.
[73] Joan E. Grundy, 'Population Movements in 19th Century Herefordshire', *Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club*, XLV Part 2 (1986), pp. 488-500 for a wider discussion about population in Herefordshire in the 19th century, and specifically Table 7, p. 495, for population change in Kington and elsewhere. Numbers derive from census data.
[74] *Ibid.* p. 492.

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Recorders 2023

Archaeology

By KEITH RAY

This Report summarises information made directly or indirectly available to the Recorder, concerning archaeological fieldwork and research carried out in Herefordshire in 2023. The provision of information for this annual attempt to round up discoveries and advances in the county's archaeological knowledge is wholly dependent upon the goodwill and contribution of people from a range of organisations, both professional and voluntary, who either provide information on their own initiative or respond to a request.

Previously, brief accounts of research fieldwork and reports from archaeological contractors have featured prominently in this Report. Developers are often required to commission contractors to undertake investigations prior, for instance, to housebuilding, infrastructure projects, or industrial-scale quarrying. This year, as last, few development-linked reports are recorded. This could be for the reasons cited for 2022, connected with successful deployment of non-intrusive mitigation measures, or possibly due to considerable lags in the submission of 'grey literature' reports by archaeological contractors working on individual projects.

A few years ago, the scope of this Report was extended to include identifications connected with the Portable Antiquities Scheme, co-ordinated by the British Museum. However, since 2019 no contributory reporting has been available from regional Finds Liaison Officers, and very few entries have been published on the finds.org.uk website for Herefordshire. This is unfortunate, since the PAS reports published in the Reports for 2018 and 2019 (the latter running to fifteen pages of text) amply demonstrated the range and detail of information about reported finds (chiefly from voluntary notifications made by metal detectorists) which could be made available to interested parties, whether historians or local residents.

It is hoped that it will prove possible to address the deficit more satisfactorily for Volume 72. Nonetheless, this year's Report includes items of considerable interest.

RESEARCH AND CONSERVATION PROJECTS

The largest-scale archaeological research projects have once again been the two that have operated in tandem in the Dorstone area in recent years. The first is the Herefordshire Archaeology project, undertaken annually on behalf of the Snodhill Castle Preservation Trust, while the second is the ongoing investigation of Arthur's Stone, the Early Neolithic chambered tomb, and its environs.

HEREFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY

Throughout 2023, Herefordshire Archaeology, the County Unitary Authority's archaeology service, has continued to provide routine, advisory casework (covering development management and countryside matters), together with maintaining and updating the Historic Environment Record, based at the Herefordshire Archive and Records Centre at Rotherwas. This is despite extra pressures upon the conservation service within planning, resulting in staff re-

deployments to other advisory duties related to the historic environment. In addition, the three remaining archaeological staff have continued, where practicable, to liaise with community groups. Fieldwork during 2023 has included the 'Weobley Big Dig Project' in June; the continuation of the research and training excavations at Snodhill Castle, in conjunction with further work at Arthur's Stone; and a topographic and geophysical survey at Cusop Castle.

CUSOP: Cusop Castle: A Topographic and Geophysical Survey. [NGR: SO 2390 4140; EHE 80518; HSM 1229, SM 1017253]

A topographic survey was conducted to provide a detailed plan of the surviving earthworks. This was complemented by a geophysical survey, aiming to ascertain if any of the earthworks coincided with any geophysical anomalies which could provide evidence for different kinds of structures, the remains of which might be present on the site. The project was proposed by Cusop History Group as a way of researching the history and development of Cusop Castle. The project was intended to combine new documentary research with non-intrusive ground survey techniques to construct a factual narrative, and thus to place the castle more securely than hitherto within the wider context of this area of the Marches.

A detailed topographic survey was undertaken over the site. This was concentrated upon the area of the earthworks and provided an accurate contour plan of those earthworks and their environs. A Trimble TDC600 DGPS unit was used, in conjunction with a Leica TCR 110 Total Station, to produce a 20cm contour survey (Figure 1), which was tied into the National Grid. Additional survey data was provided through photographic recording from both ground and a UAV (Drone) flight.

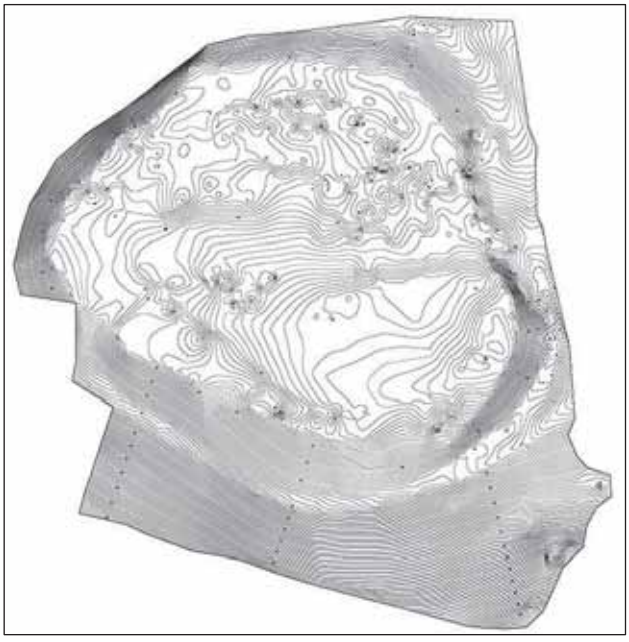


Figure 1. Contour plan of Cusop Castle with 20cm contours.

A geophysical survey using magnetometry (Plate 7.1) was carried out over the same area as the topographic survey. On many sites in the county, magnetometry has been proven to provide useful information concerning a wide range of buried features, structures, and deposits. It is generally suitable for the identification of areas of settlement and industrial activity; for boundary ditches, tracks, and other such features; and for an overview of potential archaeological interest.

Evidence from the earthwork survey suggested that a track ran across the middle of the site on an east-west alignment. There appeared to be angular earthworks within the northern part of the area. The southern half of the site showed very few surface features. The geophysical survey

provided additional information concerning the angular earthworks. The data suggested the presence of a significant stone building, aligned on a north-west / south-east axis. A second series of anomalies along the western edge of the site are thought to relate to modern disturbance from the construction of a house and garden.

Hoverd, T. and Mayes, S. 2024, Cusop Castle: A Topographic and Geophysical Survey: Cusop, Herefordshire. Herefordshire Archaeology Report No. HAR 411.

PETERCHURCH: Archaeological Excavations at Snodhill Castle [NGR: SO 3223 4038; EHE80341; HSM 15; SM 1015168]

Further archaeological excavation and recording was undertaken at Snodhill Castle, Peterchurch, during 2023 as part of a research and training project run by the University of Manchester, in partnership with Herefordshire Council and Cardiff University. As in the previous two years, students also participated via a scheme managed by the California-based Institute for Field Research. The excavations were undertaken throughout July.

This season's excavations investigated more of the postern gate, sited on the north curtain wall, which was revealed during the 2022 season. The western end of the chapel was excavated so that the entire floor plan could be recorded. Two small trenches were also excavated to locate the extent and survival of the principal gatehouse at the south-western corner of the inner bailey.

The postern gate recorded during 2022 was re-excavated (Plate 7.2), and the trench was expanded to improve understanding of how the postern gate was attached to the barbican. It rapidly became apparent that this gate did not continue to the barbican on a north / south axis as anticipated. Instead, and unusually, a *second* postern gate was revealed, facing east. This arrangement meant that, when leaving the castle in this direction, a person would have to go through the postern gate revealed during 2022, turn through more than 90 degrees before passing through the second postern gate, and presumably go through a corridor leading down to the eastern side of the barbican. This is a far more elaborate and complex structure than anticipated. It has been very difficult to find reference to a similar arrangement for a postern gate anywhere in Britain.

The western end of the Royal Free Chapel was excavated (Plate 7.3). This revealed the location of the only doorway into the building. The door is located close to the north-western corner of the chapel, and whilst it has roll-moulded jambs, as one would expect to find on a church or chapel, the width of the door is unusually narrow. A flight of stone steps was constructed against, and parallel to, the external face of the western-gable wall of the chapel. It is presumed that these led up to a wall walk on the south curtain wall. An inserted wall was discovered, aligned on a north / south axis and cutting off the western third of the chapel. This contained a large fragment of window jamb and appears to have been constructed during the 17th century, possibly to use the western end of the chapel as a store or shelter whilst the rest of the structure, together with elements of the rest of the castle, were demolished.

Two small trenches were excavated over the presumed western extent of the principal gatehouse. Both trenches contained well-bonded core work *in situ*, suggesting that the gatehouse was a very large structure that had continued down the slope to the outer bailey for a considerable distance.

Hoverd, T. and Mayes, S. 2024, Archaeological Excavations at Snodhill Castle, Peterchurch, Herefordshire, 2023. Herefordshire Archaeology Report No. HAR 412.

WEOBLEY: ***The Weobley Big Dig: A Community Project, Weobley, Herefordshire. (NGR: SO 4031 5162); [EHE80515]***

Weobley and District Historical Society commissioned a project involving the archaeological excavation of test pits in gardens and land within, or in the close environs of, Weobley village. This exercise was similar to one carried out by Herefordshire Archaeology at Ledbury and reported in detail by Dr Nigel Baker (pp. 50-72) and by Christopher Atkinson (pp. 70-71 with detailed location plan) in S. Pinches, *Ledbury: people and parish before the Reformation* (England's Past for Everyone/Victoria County History/University of London and Phillimore Press, 2010). The Weobley archaeology project was one element of an event designed to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Society and was funded by the National Lottery.

A total of twenty-six test pits were opened within twenty-five separate premises across the village. These were excavated, under archaeological supervision, by local volunteers and local groups, including the 1st Weobley Scout Group, Herefordshire Wildlife Trust, and staff and pupils from Weobley High School. Over 180 people volunteered for the Big Dig across the nine-day programme of fieldwork.

Finds from the excavations provided considerable information regarding the extent of the medieval village and how affluent it was at various times throughout its history. The finds even hinted at the possibility of a Romano-British settlement site to the south-east of the village. Unusual finds, such as a wig curler and a gun flint, encouraged volunteers to undertake further documentary research into Weobley's social history.

Hoverd, T. Mayes, S. and Reavill, P. 2023, The Weobley Big Dig: A Community Project, Weobley, Herefordshire, 2023.

THE 'BENEATH HAY BLUFF' PREHISTORY RESEARCH PROJECT

A thirteenth season of summer field investigations, undertaken as part of the 'Beneath Hay Bluff' prehistory project, took place in July 2023. The series, a collaboration between Herefordshire Archaeology, the University of Manchester, and (latterly) Cardiff University and the Institute for Field Research (California, USA), began with the excavation of the Early Bronze Age cairn at Olchon Court in 2010. It continued through nine annual seasons, investigating the principally Early Neolithic complex at Dorstone Hill. Following a year's interruption during the Covid pandemic, three seasons since 2021 have investigated Arthur's Stone, a Neolithic chambered tomb, and its environs.

DORSTONE: Excavations at, and in the environs of, Arthur's Stone chambered tomb **[NGR: SO319431; HSM 1528; SM 1010720]**

In July 2023, work at Arthur's Stone and its immediate environs was centred upon the excavation of two modest trenches towards the north-western end of the monument. The monument is in the Guardianship of the Secretary of State (administered on his/her behalf by the membership charity, English Heritage), whilst its conservation status is actively protected by the Ancient Monuments Inspectorate of Historic England. A further 'layer' of complexity is added by the fact that part of the monument underlies the carriageway and flanking ditches of Arthur's Stone Lane. This minor roadway is administered by Balfour Beatty Ltd on behalf of Herefordshire Council. The fields to both the south and the north of the monument are owned by local farming families. Their friendly cooperation with the project team has considerably helped sustain the momentum and progress of the archaeological research work. English Heritage volunteers have

also assisted considerably, both in excavation duties and in volunteer guiding of parties of visitors.

Additionally, the excavation of four trenches in the field across the lane, to the north, followed the results of the remote surveys conducted by Adam Stanford and Dr Scott Williams in 2022, using drone-based, aerial photogrammetry. Among other things, these surveys had revealed the existence of an oval-plan depression, taken to be an unusual, infilled quarry, located towards the centre of the field.

The two trenches opened on the monument itself (Plate 7.4 provides an aerial view and Plate 7.5 a view from the north-west) involved the excavation of parts of the passage and the southern flank (Plate 7.6) of the elongated chambered tomb, towards its north-western end. In each case, the initial stages of excavation comprised the removal of topsoil and the uncovering of *in situ* archaeological deposits. Following further consultation with the Inspectors and their (archaeological) Scientific Advisor, smaller sample areas were then excavated down to further stratified levels, although only beyond the mound were the natural soil levels exposed.

The trench situated the furthest north-east within the Scheduled Monument (Trench 9) spanned the passage immediately beyond the capstone chamber. Here, there were a series of massive, edge-set stones, set laterally within shallow construction trenches (see Figure 2).

Between the capstone chamber and the right-angled turn southwards towards the passage, excavation was halted at a level where deliberate stone infilling of the chamber was evident. It was presumed that infilling was carried out as a sealing deposit, following the deposition of human remains when the chambers were used for burial during the fourth millennium BC. Outside the 'box' framed by these large stones, and to their north, exposure of the turf-encased stones of the bank that wraps around the northern side of the capstone chamber and its uprights brought to light a steeply piled mass of stones, forming a steep-sided cairn made of both small and larger boulders. These were markedly different in character to those plaque-like, small slabs now known to have been used for the latest phase of the peripheral, encasing wall of the developed phases of the tomb. Removal of part of the covering turf to the south of the chamber that is framed by the edge-set, large stones, showed that the stone pile once continued all around the south-facing side of the capstone chamber (Figure 2).

One trapezoidal-shaped stone had been laid flat here, against the slipped (and therefore sloping), outer side of the most south-westerly of the surviving monoliths that frame the capstone chamber and were positioned to support that capstone. This observation is significant since this horizontally set stone had been carefully selected to lie flat in this position, with one side fitting neatly against the leaning stone. It can therefore only have been placed here *after* the monolith had reached its leaning (angled) position. In view of this, it is likely that the upright slipped inwards just as the capstone was placed over its intended chamber. The same appeared to have happened to other monoliths. This may explain why the huge capstone is broken: the consequence of a catastrophic tilt, pivot, and crack when its sheer weight forced several of the monoliths to skew and lean, thus failing to do the job assigned to them in supporting the capstone. Just how the builders reacted to this 'setback' cannot of course be known, but they clearly did not seek to rebuild the structure.

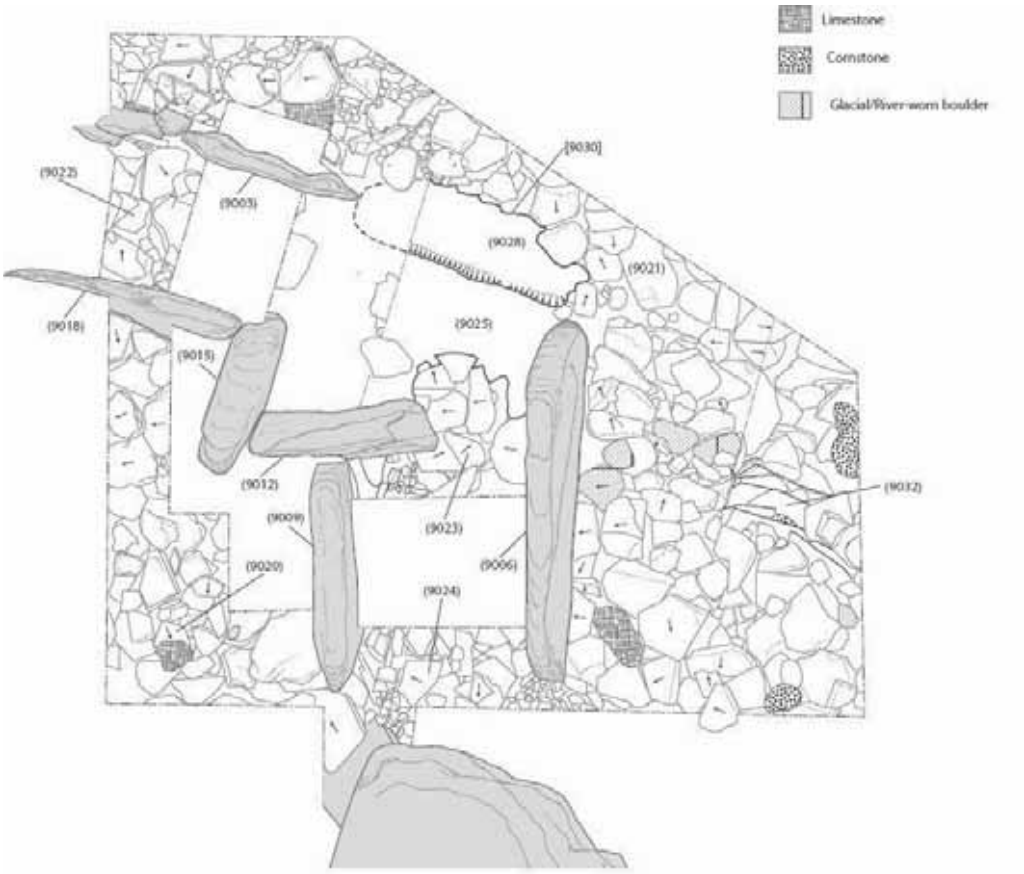


Figure 2. Arthur's Stone, July 2023: Trench 9 measured plan (North to right), drawn by Dr Nicholas Overton. The large (grey-shaded) stone beyond the trench (to the east) is the north-western end of the capstone. The grey-shaded, much smaller stone beneath it westwards is the leaning monolith that had slipped inwards under the weight of the collapse of the chamber capping. The 'blank' stone with downwards-pointing arrow immediately next to the latter is a stone of the circular cairn that initially surrounded the capstone chamber (See also Plate 7.5 for a view of some of the stones of this cairn from the north). This stone had been neatly fitted against the already-leaning monolith, thus indicating the considerable likelihood that the collapse occurred actually as the capstone was being brought to rest upon the ring of upright monoliths. The leaning monolith in question was the most westerly of those monoliths.

Context 9022 is a deliberate stone slab layer underlying the final sealing layer of red clay added during the Neolithic period. It was in this layer, at this location, that the Arran pitchstone flake was found. Context 9028 is the slot from which the most westerly of the passage chamber monoliths had at some point been removed. Context 9032 is what was a carefully placed, external facing-stone in the circular cairn that initially encased the capstone chamber.

The best-preserved bundle of bones was found in the chamber corner framed by contexts (monoliths) 9012 and 9015, where it had been placed at the angle of the passage and chamber.

Elsewhere in the passage, a red-clay deposit of varying thickness was encountered, immediately beneath the covering turf. This deposit appears to have been a carefully applied sealing layer, representing the closure of the final phase of use of the passage and its box-like chambers, that form a right-angle to approach the capstone-chamber. Halfway down the passage, excavation of a sample area of this deposit produced a wholly unexpected find. This was a mostly cortex-covered sliver of a black, glassy rock, that showed flaking scars.

This artefact was immediately recognised as a worked flake of Arran pitchstone, from the island of that name. This natural, volcanic glass (similar to obsidian, but darker and less opaque), occurs in geological dykes only on the island concerned. Especially in the Neolithic period, it was widely exchanged outwards from its source locations to sites across Scotland. However, pieces have only very rarely been found elsewhere, such as in northern England. According to the specialist researcher of this material, Dr. Torben Ballin (who has already produced a report on the item for the Beneath Hay Bluff project), the most southerly site at which an item of this material has previously been found is near Preston, in Lancashire, more than 150km away from south-west Herefordshire. This not only proves his assertion that there was most likely a broad 'interaction sphere' across Britain, represented by the working and exchanging of this substance, but, together with the exotic, worked rock-crystal found at Dorstone Hill, it demonstrates that the Dorstone area was socially and culturally central within Neolithic Britain, even if superficially 'marginally situated'.

In Trench 9, some areas framed by the massive, edge-set stones of the inner chamber were examined more closely, and a succession of deposits of human bone and stone slabs (with some interstitial sealing deposits of clay) were located. In the central areas of these chambers, that had presumably witnessed the passage of feet as bones were moved around in the fourth millennium BC, the bones were comminuted, and little more than microscopic fragments had survived. Elsewhere, there were indications of small deposits of cremated bone. However, in one corner some whole bones had survived. These included several of the smaller long bones of arms and legs, placed together in a bundle, plus a whole clavicle and several teeth, some of which were still attached to the palate or jaw.

Trench 8, to the south, aimed to uncover the southern side of the later (so-called 'Cotswold-Severn') phase of the Arthur's Stone mound. It did so, revealing that the coursed, drystone build of the outer walling of the tomb, revealed in the south-east-facing façade area in 2022, encased the chambered tomb along its entire periphery (Plate 7.4). Excavation within the passage here revealed deliberate narrowing of the opening towards the exterior of the mound, with subsequent infill and deliberate blocking of the entrance (Plates 7.6 and 7.7). This was followed by the vertical placing of thin, upright slabs against the fine walling, and then dumping of 'extra-revetment' material against the walled-over, former entrance to the passage. The angle at which (in plan) the southern line of peripheral walling was set indicates a distinct narrowing of the tomb towards its north-western end (probably located just over the roadway).

In the field to the north-east of the chambered tomb, three trenches were located to re-examine areas sample-excavated twenty years ago by Dr George Nash and associates from Bristol University's 'Clifton Antiquarian Club'. It had been suggested that a layer of stones found in this location (just inside the gateway into the north-eastern field) probably represented collapsed walling from the chambered tomb. This is now believed to be based upon an inaccurate plan of the orientation of the tomb. Instead, the stone layer is now thought to have been a light foundation spread, tipped into the upper layers of a ditch associated with the hedgerow planted in the early 19th century. This foundation is most likely to have represented the building pad for

a post-Medieval field-barn.

Notwithstanding this, excavation of a large and long (but still sample) trench, across the hollow that marks the site of the infilled quarry in the centre of the field, produced another considerable surprise. No items, such as broken clay pipes, were found to indicate 'historically recent' use of the quarry, and no evidence was seen of the use of metal tools to prise out rock deposits. Instead, the excavation, overseen by Dr Overton, produced a scatter of worked flints, found in the lower layers of the backfill of the quarry. The backfill consisted of large and oddly shaped stones, unsuitable for use in the peripheral walling of the tomb and therefore rejected by the tomb builders. In contrast, flat square stones, eminently suitable for drystone walling, had been removed. Plate 7.8 shows an ancient quarry face from which such stones had been extracted, with a small 'spine' that had been left in place. The stones used for the later-phase, peripheral walling of the 'Cotswold-Severn' tomb had clearly come from this quarry. Such quarries must have existed amongst the Black Mountains group of Neolithic tombs, but this is the first time that one has been found and partially excavated.

REPORTS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNITS: TIGERGEO LTD

HEREFORD: Castle Green Pavilion, a watching brief (NGR: SO 5117 3956; SM – HE152/1005530; LB 1196799).

The Pavilion is a Grade II listed building, standing in the south-west corner of Castle Green. It was built initially as an adjunct to the building now known as Castle Cliffe House, formerly the Watergate of the medieval castle, which was itself then converted to be the city's gaol or Bridewell. The attached, east-facing building was first a cottage for the Constable of the Green, and then provided rooms for the Society of Tempers, a kind of masonic gentleman's club, established in 1752. This was close to the time when Castle Green was formally laid out with walks as part of a scheme to convert the site of the former castle bailey to leisure grounds.

The east-facing building was transformed in 1824-6, by the architect Robert Smirke, to become the Reading Room of the Tempers. An additional building to the south featured a classical façade that faced east and south over the river, with baths below. The building to the north, directly facing east along the South (riverside) Walk, was also adapted to feature a tall colonnade, topped by a classical pediment. This attractive, tall structure survived to become the centrepiece of the Art School in the 19th century. It later became engulfed in a series of modern extensions, most egregiously in the 1950s, and the building became shared with the city's Canoe Club.

After being used in the recent past as meeting rooms and offices for Herefordshire Council, the charity, The Friends of Castle Green, took possession of the structure and has been awarded a lottery grant to restore it, stripping it back to its Regency features wherever these survive. A condition of the planning permission for this restoration was an archaeological watching-brief on any below-ground works due to take place.

Following demolition of the upper levels of the riverside extension of the 1950s, a new foundation trench was excavated along the lines of the modern wall of the outer basement, next to the river. A series of Georgian and Victorian dumped deposits were encountered here, above natural deposits of riverine silt. A second foundation trench was excavated through the basement floor, higher up the riverbank and closer to Castle Green itself. Towards the river end of the trench, the upper extent of the Georgian and Victorian dumping was recorded. The deposits closer to Castle Green and below the Georgian and Victorian dumping levels featured successive

bands of gravel of varying thickness. These deposits are thought to represent deliberately made ground that may have been created as part of refurbishments of the castle's riverine defences, during the Medieval or Civil War period. The demolition works in the basement of the 1950s extension to Castle Green Pavilion revealed what may be medieval fabric. A length of stone wall observed here continues directly eastwards along the line of the riverside wall belonging to Castle Cliffe House (the former river gate of the castle). Further east again, another length of wall on the same alignment may also be part of the same riverside wall. The demolition and stripping of the first floor of The Pavilion building, directly adjacent to Castle Cliffe House, revealed the gable end of the latter, which was then recorded archaeologically.

PORTABLE ANTIQUITIES

Despite the current difficulties noted above, one discovery that has been reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme has achieved some wider notice due to its associations and likely significance historically. This is a silver coin of Offa, King of Mercia (AD757-96), found by a detectorist at Marden in February 2022. Thanks to the good offices of Judy Stevenson, an entry has been compiled here by the Archaeology Recorder, drawn from the draft PAS report, from Hereford Museum's Press Release of 2022, and from the sale catalogue of Noonans auction house (Lot 65, 13 July 2022).

MARDEN, location undisclosed, silver penny of Offa, moneyer Babba [PAS NMGW-D677C1; EMC 2022.0066].

This extremely rare coin is an example of Offa's late 'Light coinage' issues, thought to date from *c.*AD783-92. It shares features that occur on coins not only not only of the moneyer Babba (based chiefly at Canterbury), but also of both Ibba and Ciolhard (in contrast based in London), and additionally of Pendred (also London-based). Uncertainties here reflect the fact that understanding of how the late 8th-century mints and moneyers operated is still evolving, albeit that progess is rapid.

The obverse features a Roman-style, draped, and cuirassed central portrait of the king, with his profile facing left. However, this is 'possibly only the second recorded portrait coin by Babba, the first being EMC 1004.0831 recorded by the Fitzwilliam Museum' (in Cambridge) [PAS draft entry, reference above]. '*Offa Rex'* in capitals fills two framed panels, located either side of the king's head, with a serpent (possibly a representation of a Mercian battle banner) 'flying' over the portrait head. The reverse has the letters 'B', 'B', 'B', and 'A', partly denoting Babba's name and radiating within ringed circles, set within the angles of a long cross botonee. An additional letter 'A' is placed over the terminal of the cross limb.

The discovery of a coin of Offa anywhere on the western frontier of Mercia is extremely unusual, not least because the central and western areas did not apparently feature an even slightly monetised economy. The location of the find, close to the centre of the important royal manor of Marden, is therefore not surprising, since pottery and coins are likely to have been present only at royal centres in this landscape. A palace complex belonging to the peripatetic court of Offa is long thought to have been located here. The place is linked to oral histories, first recorded by essentially Norman, clerical chroniclers in the 12th century, concerning the entrapment and murder, by Offa's order, of the King of the East Angles, Aethelberht, in AD794.

Thankfully, the coin was acquired for Hereford Museum thanks to the actions of Dr Jerry Davis, who spotted its arrival at auction and immediately acquired it, in the knowledge that the Museum would want to add it to its collections. He then generously offered the coin to the

Museum at minimum cost, and with the help of other donations, brought together by the Herefordshire Museum Service Support Group, it was saved for the public. It is potentially a key exhibit alongside the two other important, 8th-century, Mercian finds from Marden that are in the ownership of Hereford Museum.

The first of these is the large, ecclesiastical handbell, recovered in 1848 from the silts of the pond situated immediately adjacent to the riverside parish church of St Mary. Recent research suggests a likelihood that this was made in an Irish monastery, using technology imported from Raetia on the borders of Switzerland, France, and Germany. The second is the carefully preserved, wooden timbers that once lined the vertical wheel pit of one of two royal mills, discovered sited on a leat that has long been abandoned and buried but is located just across the current main channel of the Lugg (now in Wellington parish). The latter timbers are the sole preserved remains of a middle-Saxon watermill (dated by dendrochronology to the early 8th century) anywhere in England They are particularly important because a repair made to the timbers in one corner of the structure was achieved by using, as a prop, a large piece of a fine, but broken, quernstone that had been imported from Charlemagne's domains in the Eiffel region of Germany.

Alongside the Herefordshire Hoard items these three (or four) items from Marden could form a joint exhibit unique in Britain. Together, they illuminate the story of an age when this central location within the Magonsaetan and Mercian realm was also at the centre of royal attention and at the apex of powerplay in England.

Botany 2023

By STUART HEDLEY

BLACK MOUNTAINS AND GOLDEN VALLEY

Travels around the county over the last four years have inevitably raised my consciousness of lime trees, and thanks to a suggestion from Sarah King of HWT, the Herefordshire Tree Wardens Network agreed to help out in the important matter of status attribution.[1] Tree wardens are locally based volunteers who monitor the health and threats to individual trees deemed significant for one reason or another.

There are plenty of records of both Small-leaved and Large-leaved Lime *Tilia cordata* and *T. platyphyllos* on the plant database, but recorders have, in the past, been poor at distinguishing their status. This is perhaps hardly surprising given the difficulty of the task, and the more one delves into the matter, the more complicated it seems to get. The frequency with which one finds old coppice stools in a woodland context is compelling evidence that we have both species as natives, an important starting point, as this is not the case in many English counties and fewer still in Wales. One also encounters the occasional, magnificent, ancient standard. At the other end of the spectrum, however, there are several imposing avenues of lime in Herefordshire, particularly of *Tilia platyphyllos,* which were very clearly planted, not least because they flank highways and records survive of the fact. But many trees fall into neither category. Parkland lime-planting dates may well span several centuries, and for medieval deer parks there remains the question of whether lime may have been native there in the first place. In addition, throughout the county, but seemingly more frequently in areas adjacent to the native strongholds, hedgerow trees in the open countryside occur. Some of these are trimmed into anonymity, but others survive as standards, often grown from lapsed boundary hedges. This strongly suggests that farmers and woodsmen were in the habit of sourcing lime (which layers very easily) from the adjacent woods in order to quickly plug gaps in hedges, in the days before wire was an option. I would be fascinated to learn whether the avenues of the 19th and 20th centuries, some at least of which were planted by nurserymen, were grown from locally sourced stock; it seems likely. All these matters can only really be resolved by improving the collection of records about status and then examining the patterns which emerge on the map. With this in mind, on 9 August several dozen Herefordshire Tree Wardens, rounded-up by Sally Webster, attended a workshop at Chanstone Wood in the Golden Valley, courtesy of the owners, the Parker family. Chanstone supports both Small- and Large-leaved Lime, and the fact that many individuals grow on the edge of the wood affords an excellent opportunity to study them alongside one another, because they are well lit here and flower and fruit accessibly. A complicating factor is the existence of hybrids between the two species. Natural hybrids potentially bolster the credentials of lime as a locally native tree in demonstrating that both parents have been around in an area for a very long time, but cloned hybrids of the same parentage are similar and were popular from the late 17th century for parkland planting.[2] Their popularity no doubt stemmed in part from their mature form, then deemed more suitable for a specimen or, particularly, a fashionable avenue. It would be interesting to discover whether the Herefordshire gentry followed this trend to any extent or whether they just carried on sourcing their limes from their woods, as their woodsmen seem always to have done.

Whilst lime identification can be difficult, many would suggest that elm identification is

impossible. There is now renewed interest in these trees, however, from a group of specialists in the East of England, where elms seem to be at their most diverse. We can't rest on our laurels here in the west, though. An unusual elm cropped up this year at Snodhill Castle, where one or two grown-out hedgerow trees were provisionally identified, by UK expert Brian Eversham, as *Ulmus* cf *serratifrons*, a taxon normally found in East Anglia. How they got there is a mystery.

Perhaps the single, nicest, botanical surprise of the year was from this character area and came right at the end of the season. Jonathan Forsyth was out walking on the Hatterrall Ridge in November when he encountered eight plants of Stag's-horn Clubmoss *Lycopodium clavatum,* straggling through the moorland shrubs and rushes (Plate 8.1). My particular delight stems from having checked some of the formerly known sites over the last few years and found them no longer suitable. The plant is dependent upon open heathland, unquestionably one of our rarest habitats, and canopy closure from bracken and conifers has seen its demise. Jonathan's is a new site and the first record for us for twenty years. Somehow, it seems appropriate that Herefordshire, founded on rocks 400 million years old, should retain on its plant list a life form which originated at about the same time: at this time the bedrocks of many other counties had not yet even been laid down!

NORTH-WEST HEREFORDSHIRE HILLS

The BoB Group[3] had one of their most successful and memorable evenings out on 16 May, at Brilley, in the south of the character area. A large turn-out filed through Brilley Green Dingle, looking at ferns, with a diversion or two that yielded sites for Alternate-leaved Golden-saxifrage *Chrysosplenium alternifolium,* before ending the evening in a superb relict of old pasture at Little Merthyr. Globeflower *Trollius europaeus* once occurred here, with a last record of 1964. Globeflower is capable of persisting for years, if not decades, as very small non-flowering plants which are easily missed, but it does now appear to have gone from here, possibly through a switch from meadow to permanent pasture at some stage. However, the site remains of high quality, and compensation came in the form of Heath Spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza maculata*, Dyer's Greenweed *Genista tinctoria* and, best of all, the elusive Wood Stitchwort *Stellaria nemorum* (Plate 8.2), the last hunted down by Aaron Woods.

Travelling clockwise through the character area later in the year, I visited Lodge Farm, where the Rainbow remains important for mire and dry grassland vegetation, then Bradnor and Hergest Hills, both over the Whitcliffe siltstone. Bradnor is compelling in early spring by virtue of its strong showing of uncommon winter annuals, and a report comparing its vegetation to that of Brampton Bryan, further north, has been submitted as a separate paper in this issue. The Hergest Ridge, a whale-back upland to the south of Bradnor, has podzols along its summit, marked by a capping of Matgrass *Nardus stricta* that conceals a few more upland plants of humose soils, including Bilberry *Vaccinium myrtillus* and, in a seasonal stock pond, the water-starwort *Callitriche brutia.* Contrastingly, the east-facing side, which gives such superb views over Herefordshire, has plants of dry ground such as the greatly under-recorded Brown Bent *Agrostis vinealis* (first recorded here by Peter Garner in 2012) and Western Gorse *Ulex gallii.* Someone deserves praise for the large amount of pasture restoration that has taken place on this face of the hill.

Further north-east still, another BoB Group meeting took place at Croft Ambrey on 11 June. Once again, it was the trees that were memorable. In terms of the significance of the record, two individuals of Northern Wych Elm took the prize, the vast majority of the wych elms in Herefordshire being of *Southern* Wych Elm. One can be forgiven for not knowing that there is

more than one wych elm in Britain, as there is no agreement on what constitutes a species with elms.[4] Because of this, I think it more sensible not to give a Latin name here as the binomial, *Ulmus glabra* Huds., may either mean *all* Wych Elms or else Northern Wych Elm only, depending on whose treatment you follow. It is interesting though, regardless of your conception of a species, that the line dividing the northern from the southern forms is now known to pass through Herefordshire. For most present on the day, however, such a rarified matter was squarely relegated to second place by the magnificent and unique oak that Jo Weightman had been so keen for us all to see (Plate 8.3).

HEREFORDSHIRE LOWLANDS

I continue in my endeavours to try to distinguish botanically the different formations of the Old Red Sandstone, so important in Herefordshire. In contrast to the other character areas of the county, the Herefordshire Lowlands occupy the Moor Cliffs Formation,[5] still red from its iron compounds but composed of relatively more mudstones, fewer sandstones, and perhaps more uniform in terms of calcium-rich beds than the Freshwater West Formation. This year, I managed to take a closer look at two commons in this NCA which I had been wanting to visit for some time: Brimfield Common and Moseley Common. The former is an under-recognised treasure, which I hope to write more about in future, but for now we should know that it is wholly unimproved, old grassland with a fascinating vegetation pattern and a cargo of several species rare in the county, including Heath Dog-violet *Viola canina*, Marsh Pennywort *Hydrocotyle vulgaris* and Flat-sedge *Blysmus compressus.* Moseley Common is better known through its status as SSSI and through its owner, Tony Norman, highly respected in many walks of life, not least of which his championing of native Black Poplar. The centrepiece of Moseley Common is a fen, formed around a lime-rich upwelling of water travelling through glacial deposits. It has been visited by many ecologists on many occasions. On this one, I was pleased to be able to add Tawny Sedge *Carex hostiana* to the list. It turns out that, in view of thick overlying coverings of drift, neither place sheds much light on vegetation associated with the Moor Cliffs Formation.[6] Nonetheless, each was a site of tremendous importance.

South of the Wye, Bucknall's Wood, near Madley, also over drift, proved an equally fascinating place to visit. It holds relicts of possibly three types of woodland, growing on the intractable, damp ground around an Ice Age Pond. The age of the pond was confirmed by the presence of Slender Tufted-sedge *Carex elata* (Plate 8.4), highly diagnostic of old ponds south of the Wye. This is also a new site for the species.

Over in the east, Suzanne Noble began a systematic check this year on Violet Helleborine *Epipactis purpurata*, a rarer relative of the much more common Broad-leaved Helleborine *E. helleborine,* still a delight to find on a walk, as many will agree. She was aided in her venture by the *Rare Plants of Herefordshire*,[7] and pleasingly so, as providing a resource for future conservation of rare plants was the express wish of its three authors.

HEREFORDSHIRE PLATEAU

At the north-western end of the Herefordshire Plateau, the scarp slope that defines the edge of the Freshwater West Formation[8] swings in an arc into our county above Tenbury Wells, being particularly impressive in the parish of Laysters. There, by the Poet's Stone, an incredible relic of pasture, draped over the basal sandstone of the Freshwater West, survives, chiefly in the ownership of Tim and Adeline Jones of Wilden Farm. Once again, this holding really deserves a paper in its own right.[9] What makes this area special is less to do with its individual plant

species, though many of note do indeed grow there, but rather its importance in illustrating what unimproved pasture on the wider Freshwater West Formation once looked like: even though its basal sandstone shapes the distinctive hills in the centre of our county, in almost every other location intensive agriculture has erased the semi-natural vegetation overlying the Formation. Initial study suggests that the steepest parts of the scarp hold a widespread, mesic[10] variant of upland bent-fescue-bedstraw grassland;[11] this is somewhat transitional to a richer, poorly understood variant that can be found locally in northern Britain. In addition, a cargo of moisture-loving species such as Bugle *Ajuga reptans,* Marsh Thistle *Cirsium palustre,* and Greater Bird's-foot Trefoil *Lotus pedunculatus* hint at a high-water table in the sandstone. At the foot of the scarp, springs emerge, and these are dominated by Hard Rush *Juncus inflexus,* a plant community of lowland southern Britain. On the plateau above, more typical, unimproved pasture still survives locally.

The scarp at the other end of the character area, in the vicinity of Castle Frome, is very different. Whereas the scarp at Laysters is formed from Freshwater West sandstone, rising above the weak and very inconspicuous beds of limestone, at Castle Frome, the limestone appears to be the strong bed, rising over the yet weaker Moor Cliffs mudstone, with the stronger, younger sandstone that caps it so dramatically at Wilden Farm mostly planed away by erosion.[12] I would welcome input from any geologists in the society as to whether my reading of this situation is correct. In any case, the limestone scarp at Birchend, an SSSI just south of Castle Frome, is abundantly evidenced by a strong, south-eastern, calcareous flora, dominated by Upright Brome *Bromopsis erecta,* no less. In spite of many attractive downland species, the one that caught my eye the most here was a Victorian introduction, the Various-leaved Fescue *Festuca heterophylla*. With its dense clumps of extremely narrow, almost hair-like leaves, sprouting tall, arching culms, topped by airy panicles, it is unmistakable in life, though defeats both plant illustrators and photographers. It grows right beside the footpath.

SOUTH HEREFORDSHIRE

My report for South Herefordshire seems to be tree- and woodland-related this year. After an uneventful January, the field season kicks off with observations on the earliest-flowering species, which can often be made from a passing vehicle before the hedges come into leaf. At this time of year, Cherry Plum *Prunus cerasifera* is at its most obvious, and it is a productive time to look out for those plants which might fall within the ambit of a *Flora*, such as unexpected lengths in agricultural hedgerows or those rare few that have escaped gardens or landscaping schemes and are now making a bid for the wild; those tumbling into the cutting of the A40 just west of Ross-on-Wye spring to mind. Not long after the Cherry Plum fades, the wild daffodils appear, and it is a good time to try and understand how they too cluster in the countryside. People have loved *Narcissus pseudonarcissus* for centuries and have moved it about, making elucidation of its original strongholds difficult. For some years now, I have been mapping their density and the habitats they occupy. South Herefordshire is well known as a stronghold, and as a newcomer to the county, I agree that the size and context of many populations suggest very much that it is a native plant here, tumbling from woodland into pasture over hundreds of metres, or sometimes perhaps kilometres. But even here, it is remarkable, when you really look, how many stands cluster around drives and farm entrances. In other parts of the county, these may be the only wild daffodils present, and the likelihood of truly longstanding populations in these areas is weak.

More general visits to spring woodlands continue to inform and delight, nowhere more so than when coppicing or considered felling of broadleaves, delivered out of love and conviction

rather than the traditional economic imperative, continues to allow us to see something of the landscapes of the past. I visited several woods in this character area where this is the case (Plate 8.5). At Reslaw Woods, *Samolus valerandi,* at its only county station, goes from strength to strength, and I was delighted to stumble upon Sheephouse Brake near Welsh Newton. Many, perhaps most, Herefordshire woodlands thwart attempts at categorisation in vegetation terms because so many of our rocks contain localised, lime-rich strata or are irrigated by lime-rich seepage, creating shifts of character over broad fronts or uniform expressions of intermediacy between base-rich and neutral woodland types. Sheephouse Brake, though a small woodland, is an exception. It sits on the Brownstones Formation, a relatively uniform and dry sandstone, and seems to be something of a benchmark, holding uniform, lowland-oak woodland of the typical sub-community (NVC type W10a). There is a glorious display of Bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* and Wood Anemone *Anemone nemorosa* of course, but the calcareous woodland vernals, such as Dog's Mercury *Mercurialis perennis* and, particularly helpful in woodland characterisation, Soft Shield-fern *Polystichum setiferum,* are rare or absent.

UPPER WYE

In the winter of 2021, the Woodland Trust cleared some conifers from their reserve at Little Doward Woods. Inadvertently, some of the trees fell across the huge limestone rock which is the last place that the tiny annual, Hutchinsia *Hornungia petraea,* survives in our county. This southern lime-lover hangs on here in a population of no more than a few small plants, a relict of a larger one, present in the middle of the 19th century when the Doward was less wooded, with more open and actively quarried ground. In March of 2022, Dave Green, who was working nearby on the famous Doward Whitebeams, noticed the Corsican Pines swamping 'the Hutchinsia boulder' and, alarmed, got in touch. It seemed an incredible irony that an unobtrusive plant, little larger than a dot, could have suffered such incredible misfortune. Richard Brown of the Woodland Trust acted swiftly to get the trees removed and then, with forensic care, removed brash and needles from the rock, conscious not to remove tiny pockets of soil which would potentially hold a Hutchinsia seedbank. In Spring of 2023, I revisited with Ian Draycott, and we were relieved to find that seven minuscule plants had survived their ordeal (Plate 8.6). It is hard to imagine a plant with a more tenuous hold on the county list.

MALVERNS

It is time for an update on the Spreading Bellflower *Campanula patula,* whose main, surviving, Herefordshire population falls within the Malverns character area. This is one of only two Critically Endangered species in Herefordshire, but unlike the other one, Ghost Orchid, which has always been extremely rare, Spreading Bellflower has seen a truly astonishing decline over the last century. Cited as 'rather common' in the most reliable baseline source we have,[13] it now sits well and truly under the sword of Damocles. Most of us will never see a Ghost Orchid, but here is a beautiful wildflower that was, in living memory, common heritage for all and is now set to disappear as a birthright. The plant is a biennial, a life-strategy not at all sensible in today's polarised countryside. It sheds its seed by late August, which then germinates over autumn and winter, and the plant spends its first full year building up reserves in the form of a rosette, in order to flower the following summer. If conditions are favourable and it makes good growth, it seems able to flower opportunistically at the end of its first full year.

In April of 2023, a work party at its last site detected eight rosettes, the progeny, we suppose, of about fourteen plug-plants planted out the previous year, grown from locally sourced

seed. Most of these were reported flowering by a botanist who visited in July, and by August all were confirmed as so, with a further four non-flowering rosettes detected during close observation. It is unclear whether these four rosette-plants were late germinators or had come from the wild seedbank. In October, a small amount of seed was taken from the summer's plants for *ex-situ* cultivation, as has been the practice for a number of years now. By January of 2024, eight new rosettes were found, three clustered around one of the markers used to identify the previous year's plants, showing that multiple progeny can germinate in the wild, if given the right conditions. A further rosette was not close to a marker, either demonstrating that its minuscule seed is capable of travelling some distance in the wind or that soil disturbance had activated buried seed unrelated to the conservationists' work. In the course of the year, we have had a rollercoaster ride in trying to secure wider support for a plant which is on the cusp of disappearing, not just in Herefordshire but in Britain. On the positive side, there has been something of a culture shift within the relevant agencies, who were formerly extremely cautious about species action but now have several, high-profile campaigns of national re-introduction under their belt. However, we have had little support from them so far, perhaps because, unlike with a species such as Ghost Orchid, formerly widespread plants like *Campanula patula* are everyone's responsibility and hence no-one's responsibility. Nevertheless, useful links with the Millennium Seed Bank at Wakehurst Place have been established. In the course of testing the viability of their own Spreading Bellflower seed, sourced from a population near Dorstone that is now probably extinct, they have, at the time of writing, fifty beautifully healthy plants (Plate 8.7). We are now gauging how these might best be used in our small conservation programme. What we really want to do, however, is to commission Wakefield or another suitably qualified grower to supply us with larger amounts of seed to give this plant the meaningful second chance that it so badly needs. Rarely does such a pointed opportunity crop up to assist in plant conservation, so if you'd like to make a donation, please contact me (s2arth@hotmail.com).

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] Status for wild plants is the issue of whether they are native or introduced. It is becoming more important as deliberate plant introductions become more common.
[2] D. Pigott, *Lime-trees and Basswoods* (CUP, 2012), p. 107.
[3] 'Bonkers on Botany'.
[4] Furthermore, the standard text which most British botanists are encouraged to work to (Stace, third edition) tends to 'lump', rather than to 'split'.
[5] Formerly the Raglan Mudstone.
[6] Understanding the vegetation of the Moor Cliffs Formation may instead require a focussed study of churchyards in drift-free areas.
[7] L. Smith, P. Garner, & M. Jannink, *The Rare Plants of Herefordshire* (published by the authors, 2019).
[8] Formerly the St Maughan's Formation.
[9] A special meeting of the Club took place there in 2024.
[10] With the character of, or containing, plant species which are neither strong acid- or base-lovers.
[11] See pages 61-77 of this volume.
[12] Although this limestone occurs throughout the county, it will be no accident that it formerly took its name from Bishop's Frome. The differing geomorphological processes acting on the same stratum outlined here seem to have made it much more prominent in this area than in almost all other places.
[13] W. H. Purchas. & A. Ley, *Flora of Herefordshire* (Jakeman & Carver, Hereford, 1889).

Buildings 2023

By Duncan James

BRAMPTON BRYAN CHURCH ROOF

Lat./Long.: 52.347080, -2.925536 NGR SO 3704872514. Listed Grade 1, HEL 1179943. RCHME No. 1.[1]

A few years ago, I wrote a piece for the *Transactions* concerning the roof of St Barnabas Church, Brampton Bryan, in which I presented evidence that the spectacular and rare triple hammer-beam roof structure was not built using timbers from the hall roof of the adjacent castle, that was destroyed in the Civil War, but was very likely to have been the work of John Abell.[2] In short, it was not a reused medieval roof, but Jacobean through and through.

In 2021, following the tree-ring dating of the roof timbers, a dendrochronological report, produced for Historic England by Nottingham Tree-Ring Dating Laboratory, fully supported the Jacobean origins of the roof. Nonetheless, the results did, to my mind, call for some analysis and discussion.[3] In October of 2023, I was asked to give a lecture in the church to explore the implications of this new dating evidence, which indicated that samples from thirty-five of the church's roof timbers came from trees that were felled in and around 1644, right in the middle of the English Civil War; this was an anomaly that needed explaining because the rebuilding of the church took place over a decade later, being completed in 1656.

The first task was to investigate the structure in more detail by preparing a sketch, using those measurements that could be made from ground level and with the guidance of photographs of the structure above the present ceiling level, taken during the recent re-roofing. If nothing else, the drawing (Figure 1) shows just what an extraordinary roof structure this is, bridging such a wide, open space in which the internal distance between the side walls is approximately 38ft (11.6m).[4] That is presumably why the carpenter used a triple hammer-beam design, an audacious choice and one for which there was no precedent in Herefordshire and the surrounding counties.[5] The usual form for a hammer-beam roof was either a single or double tier, and these were often highly decorated, as shown by the single hammer-beam roof of Booth Hall in Hereford.[6]

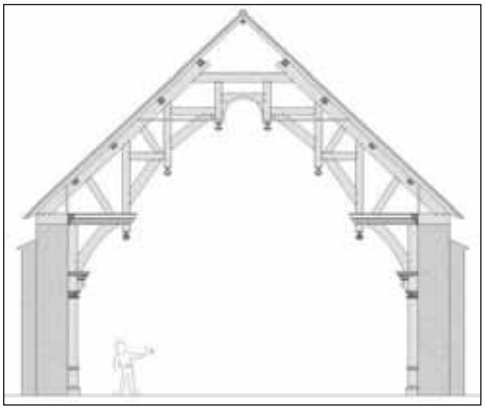


Figure 1. A sketch to illustrate the construction of the triple hammer-beam roof in St Barnabas Church, Brampton Bryan

Comparisons can be made with an example in Shropshire, where the Church of St Andrew, Shifnal, has a double hammer-beam roof in both the nave and the chancel (Figure 2). The hammer-beams are relatively plain, with only a few concessions to decoration in the form of pendants beneath them and large consoles on the walls. In Condover, the Church of St Mary and St Andrew has a very wide nave, only a couple of feet narrower than Brampton Bryan, and yet it is spanned by a single-tier hammer-beam roof.[7]



So, why had the carpenters resorted to three hammer-beam tiers when one could have done the job? Was it because suitable timbers were not available, given that a single-tier, hammer-beam structure would have needed many that were long and naturally curved? Or was it simply bravado?

Figure 2. The double hammer-beam roof in Shifnal Church, Shropshire

Here it is necessary to review the turbulent period which gave rise to the destruction of the church at Brampton Bryan and to consider the circumstances of its rebuilding. The English Civil War of 1642-9 had a profound impact on life in England, but it was particularly damaging to the village, castle, and church at Brampton Bryan, because, whilst Herefordshire was a predominantly Royalist county, supporting the king, the Harleys of Brampton Bryan were Puritans, on the side of Parliament. Sir Robert Harley was a Member of Parliament, and this kept him in London, leaving his third wife, Brilliana, to organise the defence of Brampton Bryan Castle when, in early 1643, it was first put under siege by Royalist soldiers. A second, more savage siege began in July and resulted in the destruction of the church and much of the castle. At the end of October, Lady Brilliana Harley fell ill and died without having surrendered. But the village was destroyed and, significantly, many of the trees were felled, some probably by the Royalists to create lines of fire for the cannons, others possibly taken down by the besieged to remove high vantage points, overlooking the castle, that could be used by the Royalists for ranging their guns. But, since timber was valuable, cutting the trees down may simply have been looting, gathering the spoils of war. This is suggested by the claim for recompense, prepared by Sir Robert Harley's steward in July 1646, which included:

> Two parks wholly laid open and destroyed..... £500
> Timber and other wood cut down and destroyed ... £300[8]

An estimate was prepared for damage done at Brampton Bryan in 1643 and 1644:

> ...for the rebuilding of the church and houses in the town of Brampton Bryan which were burned when the King besieged Sir Robert Harley's Castle. The total amount is 3,216 *l.* of which 1,200 *l.* is for the church and 250 *l.* is for the parsonage.[9]

It is hard to gauge the full extent of the damage to the church, but once hostilities were over rebuilding appears to have been high on the list of priorities. The village houses would also have needed replacing. To what extent the ground plan of the original church was followed is not clear. It has been suggested that formerly the church may have included arcading and side aisles and that these were not reinstated, although the present walls may well follow the line of the original foundations of the external walls. Thus, the chancel and nave are all one, a single, wide-open space; as befitted a Commonwealth church, this was intentional.

The fact that this was a Puritan church for a Puritan family might be seen as a problem if the construction of the roof is attributed to John Abell of Sarnsfield, self-styled 'Architector', because he was also a Catholic and a Royalist, having famously been given the title of 'King's Carpenter' by Charles I for his work in Hereford in 1645, constructing mills and, we are told, a siege engine.

With such a recent history it would seem hardly credible for him to have been given this prestigious task, repairing a building that had been destroyed by the very men that Abell had supported so openly for the Royalist cause. But this is to underestimate the Christian values that marked out the Harley family and to ignore the many links by marriage and association between the land-owning families of the county and beyond. The Harleys, both Edward and his father, Sir Robert, would have known about John Abell's restoration work at Abbey Dore, which had been carried out at the behest of John, 1st Viscount Scudamore, in 1633/4, and Abell's construction of the Leominster Market House, which was completed at about the same time. Abell may well have been called in by Scudamore to assist in the defence of Hereford against the Scots because he would have known of Abell's prowess through the work at Abbey Dore.

In the last paragraph of my report of 2019 concerning St Barnabas, I suggested that the evidence for this being the work of John Abell was strong because there were features linking it with other known examples of his work. Since then, I have looked in more detail at the decorative work to see what flaws there might be in this proposition, only to find further confirmation that this was Abell's work.

The decoration on the hammer-beam roof at St Barnabas is minimal, which might be seen to be in keeping with Puritan principles at that time.[10] The motifs are typical of the period as are the mouldings. At the top of each of the posts is the first tier of hammer-beams (Figure 3). These are each supported by a slightly curved brace, with the lower end tenoned into the post. Beneath this is a squat console, supporting a decorated bracket (Figure 4).



Figure 3 (left). Looking east along the north side of St Barnabas Church, Brampton Bryan



Figure 4 (right). Showing decoration above and below the console on one of the wall pillars, also at St Barnabas Church, Brampton Bryan

Beneath the console there are two tiers of moulding, separated by a frieze of recessed 'beads', a feature that, along with 'paired lines', is also on the consoles. Immediately above the console is an ogee-moulding profile with tapered run-out stops. A similar moulding can be seen at Abbey

Dore, where even the consoles have the recessed beading with paired lines between them (Figure 5). In St Barnabas the lower tier of hammer posts terminates with a pendant in the form of a stylised bunch of grapes (Figure 6). This is a John Abell motif that appears both at Leominster Market House (Figure 7) and at Abbey Dore, there in the roof (Figure 8) and on the screen.







Figure 5 (above left). Console and decoration in Abbey Dore

Figure 6 (above centre). Grapes motif on the lower hammer-beams, St Barnabas Church, Brampton Bryan

Figure 7 (above right). One of the grapes motifs at Leominster Market House



Figure 8. The Abbey Dore ceiling showing one of the grapes motifs

At Brampton Bryan, posts or pillars are set on the inner face of the wall to take some of the loading of the roof. Another example can be seen at the Church of St Bartholomew, Vowchurch, where the roof structure and the screen, dated 1631, are attributed to John Abell. His use of pillars can also be seen in Leominster's Market House and in the screen at Abbey Dore.

Another feature of Abell's use of pillars is that they stand on wooden plinths, as on the Abbey Dore screen, and on the Leominster Market House, where they were originally made in oak.[11] The Brampton Bryan plinths, in their proportions and design, compare closely with those on the Abbey Dore screen.

A significant and unusual structural feature that links Brampton Bryan and Abbey Dore



is that both roofs use purlins that are tenoned into the sides of the principal rafters, when the common practice in the 17th century, in Herefordshire, was to use trenched purlins, a method that made the roof structure easier to assemble (Figure 9).

Figure 9. One of the mortices for a tenoned purlin in the roof above the ceiling at St Barnabas Church, Brampton Bryan, made redundant by the fitting of a later purlin. Photo: Robert Cock

One thing that further confirms this triple hammer-beam roof as a work by John Abell is the sheer, robust bravado of the structure, which rises on both sides of the church like a set of girders. It is also relatively unrefined. There may be a good reason for this because the tree-ring date indicates that the trees were felled in and around 1644, and yet the church was finished twelve years later, possibly in a rush, as it was needed for the funeral and interment of Sir Robert Harley, who died in 1656. The tree-ring date tells us that John Abell and his carpenters were not able to work with freshly felled oak but had to make-do with trees that may well have lain where they fell, seasoning for some years, which would have made the timber hard to work. Usually, the head carpenter would have selected the trees from managed woodland that served to supply suitable, straight-grained timber; the trees would then be felled in the winter or spring for the work of construction to be done during the rest of the year. A close study of the roof timbers suggests that there had been difficulty working the wood, since in places it exhibits torn surfaces.

Making use of timber that lay on site may have been the only option. That raises the question of whether any of the rebuilt village houses contain oak that was felled in 1644 and, if so, whether they were also built by John Abell's carpenters.

THE LEY, WEOBLEY: THE CONSOLES

Lat./Long.: 52.155705, -2.889271 NGR SO 3926351194. Listed Grade 1, HEL 1349847. RCHME No. 8.[12]

An important part of historical research is that of identifying potentially meaningful connections between hitherto unrelated aspects of the past. With timber-framed buildings it can be the identification of separate structures that are the product of the same workshop or school of carpentry which may, in turn, illuminate previously unconsidered or hidden corners of history.

The Ley, a large, 16th-century house which stands a little way from Weobley, is famed for its display of natural, unpainted timber (Figure 10). It has a fine, storeyed porch, with carved panelling, displaying an armorial; initials for James Bridges; and the date 1589. Also, on each side of the porch, beneath the jetty, there is an impressive and unusual console in which the curves of the design are emphasised by spiral patterns on the sides (Figure 11). It is of interest to note that the post has a jowled head that has been used for the carving, so that the post and console are cut from a single timber.



Then, a little north of County on a visit to Ludlow, I was puzzling over the consoles beneath the jetties on 53 Broad Street (Figure 12), when I realised that they were remarkably similar to those on The Ley. Some of them are unusual and decidedly eccentric. A well-preserved example is on the right-hand side of the front door (Figure 13). It is large, with a spiral cut into the side of both the upper scroll and the smaller one below, but the lower spiral runs in the wrong direction. The classical form of the console is an 'S' shape as we see in Figure 11, but this is not done on the Ludlow example since the lower spiral 'rotates' the wrong way.

Figure 10 (left). The Ley, Weobley, in about 1900







Figure 11 (top left). The console on the porch at The Ley, Weobley

Figure 12 (top right). No. 53, Broad Street, Ludlow

Figure 13 (left). One of the consoles on 53 Broad Street, Ludlow

The front part of No. 53 is a three-bay, three-storey, jettied range, laid out parallel with the road. The roof has been raised in height. The range has been tree-ring dated to 1597/8, which also dates the console because it is an integral part of the structure.[13] This date, less than a decade later than that of the Ley porch, raises the possibility that the Ludlow carving is either by the same carpenter, who was relying on a faulty memory, or was the work of a carpenter who had visited the Ley and was attempting a copy.

Finally, to confuse things further, there is a house in Bell Lane, Ludlow, with three examples of this design of console under the first-floor jetty. They all appear to be modern carvings but parts of the structure that they decorate are *c*.1600 in date. Unfortunately, the building was extensively refurbished many decades ago, without a record being made before work started. Thus, we cannot tell if the consoles are copies of what was there before.

LEOMINSTER: TREE-RING DATING

As part of the recent Leominster High Street Heritage Action Zone programme, an investigation of a number of historic buildings in the town was organised by Rebecca Lane, Senior Architectural Investigator at Historic England. Tree-ring dating of suitable buildings, included as one of the elements supporting the project, has made valuable additions to our knowledge of the town's past.

Previous dendrochronological work in Leominster had been limited to just three buildings, sampled over twenty years ago; one was the Forbury Chapel , a scissor-trussed structure dated to *c*.1525,[14] and two were on land behind 40 Broad Street. Of these, one gave a felling date of *c*.1465 for the timber, and the other featured a galleried range dated to *c*.1499/1500.[15] To this list can now be added the buildings noted below.

6 CORN STREET, LEOMINSTER

Lat./Long.: 52.226848, -2.738407 NGR SO4966058990. Listed Grade II, HEL 1255425. RCHME No. 119.[16]

This is a three-storey (with cellar), single-bay building on the south side of the street with, to the rear, a two-storey range of two bays plus two half-bays. There is a shop on the ground floor and domestic accommodation above. The front of the building appears to have had a jetty which has been underbuilt. Only the rear range could be dated, and this gave a felling date of *c.*1670 for the timbers.[17]

41 HIGH STREET, LEOMINSTER

Lat./Long.: 52.226976, -2.738806 NGR SO4963359007. Listed Grade II, HEL 1255475. RCHME No. 102.[18]

Along with numbers 31 to 45 High Street, the 17th-century, two-storey building at No. 41 stands on a narrow strip of market infill. It is timber framed, with cellars and attics, employing reused timbers from trees with felling dates between 1464 and 1489. Where these timbers came from is not known but the recycling of building materials is not unusual. However, two ceiling beams in the building both gave a felling date of 1694, which may well indicate a late 17th-century construction date.

BROOK HALL, 27 BROAD STREET, LEOMINSTER

Lat./Long.: 52.229104, -2.739662 NGR SO4957559243. Listed Grade II, HEL 1255393. RCHME No. 59.[19]

This is a large house that occupies a significant site at the lower (north) end of Broad Street, at its junction with Vicarage Street. It was probably the home of a merchant of considerable status (Figure 14).



The two-storey, ceiled-hall house (with attics) has a late sixteenth-century, timber-framed core that is aligned north to south, parallel to Broad Street. At the north end is a substantial crosswing that projects a little forward of the main range and extends back, to the west, with later additions.

Figure 14. Brook Hall, Leominster showing the brick east elevation and the jettied north side

The timber framing is now completely hidden on the east elevation by a yellow-brick façade, part of an extensive remodelling of *c*.1870-80 by George Haddon, that included the addition of what is now a staircase bay at the south end and a porch to the front door, aligned with a cross passage.[20] The north side of the crosswing has a first-floor jetty and, at attic level, a jettied dormer with a window rather than the original loading doorway. A measured drawing of the side wall was made when the framing was briefly exposed during replacement of the stucco covering (Figure 15).

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Figure 15. Brook Hall, Leominster. A reconstruction of the timber framing on the north elevation of the crosswing

The work revealed that the wall has close studding above and below the mid-rails. In the top-left corner, there are three panels of decorative chevron bracing which indicate that similar chevron bracing was used on the hidden, jettied, first-floor façade of the east elevation, probably including the gable. Beneath the moulded bressummer, on the jetty along the side of the crosswing, there are carved consoles, decorated on the east face but not on the back (west) faces, thus acknowledging that the important view was that gained from Broad Street. Similar consoles would have been under the east-elevation jetty of the crosswing but almost certainly, in that more prominent position, decorated on both sides! Until the 1960s, the Pinsley Brook, a monastic canalisation, flowed along the western side of Vicarage Street, past the north side of the house, and on to the Priory reredorter, 300 metres to the east.

Inside the building, on the ground and first floors, apart from the ceiling beams, the primary structure is hidden. But, in the attic, the four bays of the main range roof structure are visible and at the north end three bays of the crosswing roof structure are exposed (Figure 16). There are substantial principal rafters with high collars and widely spaced queen posts. It is clear that the roof was designed for storage with loading access from the jettied gable at the north end. The tiebeams are hidden below the floorboards. There are two tiers of purlins. The beams and posts have suffered surface damage from a roof fire that took place in the 1980s during repairs. Charring on the surface of the oak has been removed. On the east side of the roof a second set of principal rafters has been inserted to overlay the primary principal rafters, thereby adjusting the roof pitch and extending the eaves across the thickness of the later brick façade.



Figure 16. Brook Hall, Leominster. The attic space, looking north

While the attic fire charred the timbers, it was limited to the roof. However, serious damage was done inside the building by the water that was used to douse the flames because, hidden behind the panelling and plaster on the first floor, is a series of undocumented and unrecorded wall paintings that are probably contemporary with the primary structure. The tree-ring dating that has been carried out indicates that the crosswing and the main range are broadly coeval in date, being built using timber felled at some time between 1575 and 1595.[21] This may also be the date of the hidden paintings.

It is thought that this area of the town supported a leather industry that made use of the supply of water from the Pinsley Brook, channelled into the town at a conveniently higher level than the River Lugg. Blacklock, in his account of the town, published in 1898, noted that:

> The Tanners are believed to have occupied the lower part of Broad Street, for when extensive alterations were being made, some 30 years ago, in the premises of Mr Alderman Stallard, J. P., a succession of pits full of tan were discovered.[22]

It is suggested that Brook Hall may have been the house of a merchant trading in leather, and it is possible that the attic space offered dry and secure storage for finished goods. The 1880 O/S

map shows that the house had a large area of garden in close proximity to the stream (Figure 17). The crosswing was jettied along the north side, above the Pinsley Brook. The dormer projecting at attic level had a loading door that is likely to have enabled goods to be lifted into the attic from the Pinsley.

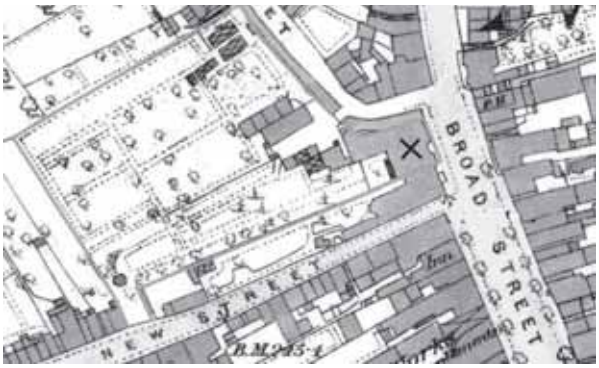


Figure 17. O/S map of 1880 showing the Brook Hall site and extensive garden, now a housing estate. The Pinsley Brook flowed east, under Broad Street, and was culverted below later buildings

5 HIGH STREET / 4 DRAPERS LANE, LEOMINSTER

Lat./Long.: 52.227743, -2.738612 NGR SO 4968058233. Not Listed. RCHME[23]

This is a hidden, two-storey building, in which only a limited number of the primary components survive *in situ*. Some have been reused and moved to a higher level when the ground floor ceiling was raised, which entailed moving the roof to a higher level. Parts of the upper structure can be seen in Nos. 2 and 4 Drapers Lane, while a ground-floor side wall is visible in No. 3 High Street. The quality of the components indicates that this was an important building although it is not listed.

The principal surviving structure is a two-storey, two-bay range on an approximate east-west alignment. The western front of the range in High Street was jettied at first-floor level (now under built) but probably without a jettied gable because the first-floor rooms were open to the ridge. There is evidence to suggest that there was a crosswing of uncertain length at the eastern (Drapers Lane) end that was aligned approximately north-south.

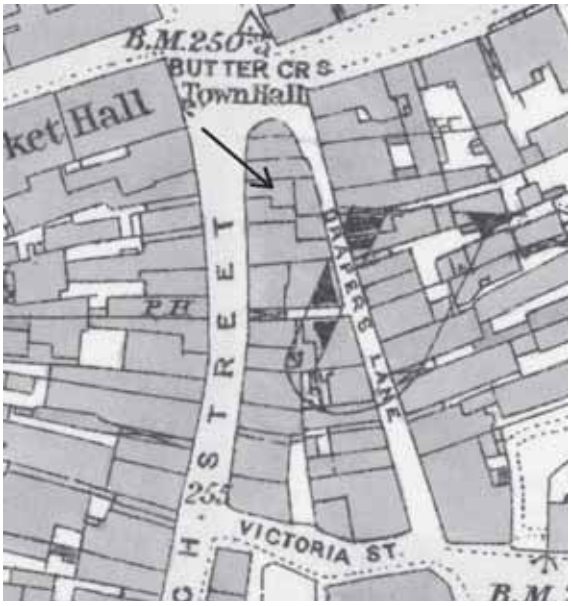
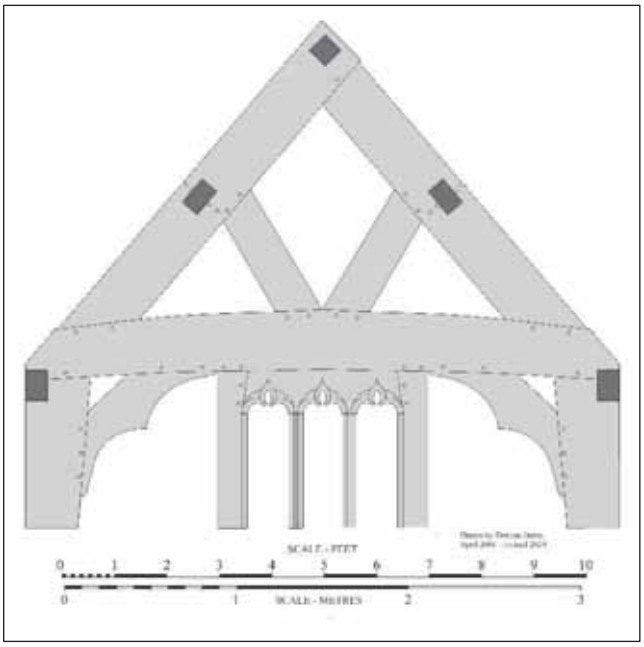


Figure 18. Gallier's map of 1832 showing the site of 5 High Street / 4 Drapers Lane

The building is at the northern end of the triangular market area where five roads meet and close to the former site of John Abell's Market House (now Grange Court) at the very heart of the town.[24] As can be seen on the map (Figure 18), there are now two buildings, Nos. 1 & 3 High Street, that stand to the north of No. 5. These are both 17th or 18th century in date, which suggests



either that this area was unoccupied when No.5 was built, in the third quarter of the 15th century, or that these later buildings occupy the site of earlier structures.[25] Also, there was a three-light window in the north elevation of the crosswing that would have given an unobstructed view of the Broad Street market (Figure 19). It is now only visible on the top floor of No. 2 Drapers Lane, which is above No. 3 High Street.

Figure 19. Reconstruction drawing of the roof truss and blocked, three-light window, visible within No. 2 Drapers Lane

It is clear that No. 3 High Street was built against the north wall of No. 5 and that it utilised the external face of the side wall of that building as an interior face. Additional posts were inserted alongside this frame to support the structure above, some of which can be seen in the barber's shop at No. 3, along with the side-wall framing of No. 5., shown in Figure 20.

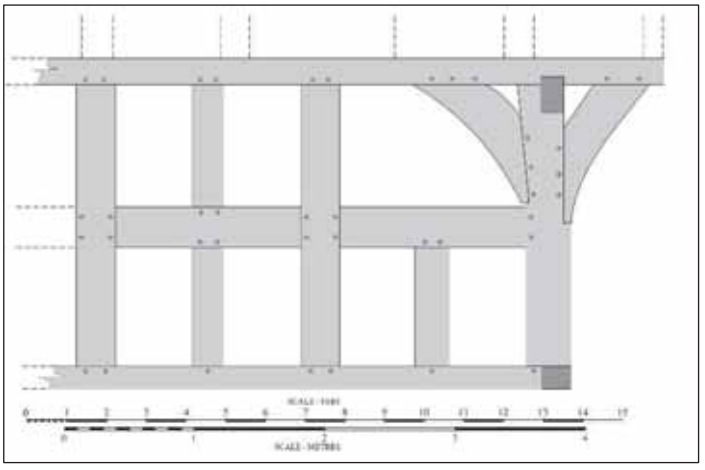


Figure 20. A reconstruction of the ground-floor side wall of No. 5 High Street, north elevation viewed from inside No. 3 High Street

The surviving components within No. 5 High Street are visible on the first floor in the flat at 4 Drapers Lane. These consist of parts of the primary wall framing and storey posts on the north and south sides, which have moulded wall plates with tapering runout stops. In the existing, later roof, some of the primary purlins are reused as are the moulded ridge purlins (Figure 21). The

principal reused component, which is now set at a higher level in the present roof, is one of the tiebeam trusses (Figure 22). This carefully designed unit features a quatrefoil design and chamfers with curved runout stops. It indicates that the primary roof had a single tier of threaded purlins and a double tier of windbraces that are likely to have been cusped to match the decoration on the roof truss and the braces beneath the tiebeam shown in Figure 19.

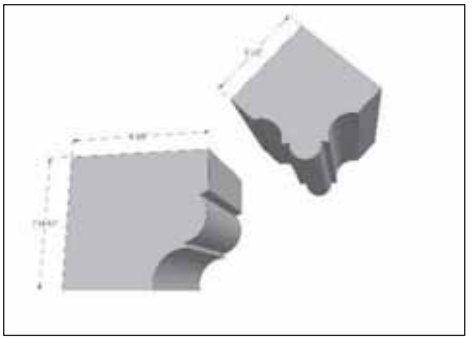


Figure 21. Wallplate moulding (left) and the diagonally set moulded ridge purlin (right)

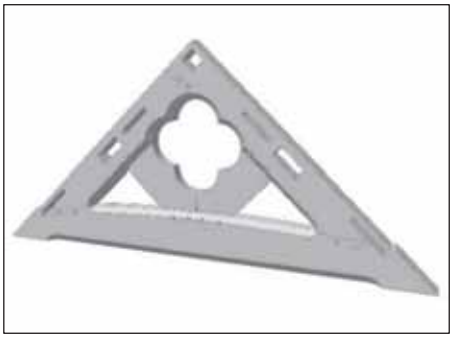


Figure 22. The surviving primary roof truss, reused in the later roof

Because much of the primary structure of this building is hidden, it has not been possible to undertake an in-depth survey. However, a provisional reconstruction drawing is shown in Figure 23. The floor level illustrated is shown before it was raised by about a metre (*c*.3ft) to increase the ceiling height on the ground floor which, in turn, led to the raising of the first-floor roof by a similar amount. The new timbers that were used to raise the height of the side walls have a felling date of 1716-17, so we have early 18th- century remodelling, principally of the ground floor, and almost certainly for commercial reasons. [26]

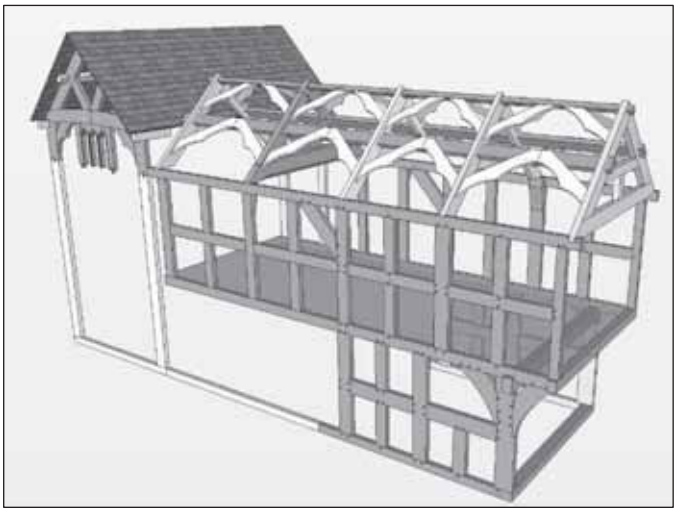


Figure 23. A simplified reconstruction showing the general arrangement of the primary structure of No. 5 High Street before the roof raising and modified floor level. Viewed from the north

The function of the primary building is problematic. It may once have been the northernmost building on the triangular market site, but this seems unlikely. Although the two buildings that stand to the north (Nos. 1 and 3 High Street) are both probably 17th or 18th century in date, they

do have cellars that could well be earlier. Because the side wall of No. 5 almost certainly did not have any windows, the area to the north is likely to have been occupied.

The primary structure in No. 5 High Street was built from timber felled at some time between 1449 and 1474.[27] There are a number of 15th-century, timber-framed buildings in Leominster, so this is not exceptional. What is of note, however, is the level of decoration in this small building and the quality of the build. In view of the trading potential of the site it seems likely that the ground floor would have been given over to commercial use although the refined decoration on the first floor suggests that it might have had some formal function in respect of managing the market. The high crosswing window would have been visible from the market, which may have been an important statement, and of course it could have offered a view over the market area.

3 CHURCH STREET, LEOMINSTER

Lat./Long.: 52.228048, -2.738436 NGRSO4966459128. Listed Grade II along with Nos. 5 & 7, HEL 1255409. RCHME No. 83.[28]

No. 3 Church Street, formerly the Baker's Arms Inn, is a timber-framed, two-storey building, laid out on an east-west axis, that has been re-fronted with brick, underbuilding the jetty and raising the eaves level on the street elevation only to create an attic storey. To the rear of this range is a two-storey structure constructed with reused timber from a number of sources.

Although Leominster would have had many late medieval shops, very few of them survive with sufficient evidence to attempt a confident reconstruction of the primary shop front and the layout within. Shops of the 15th to 17th century were often jettied, so that the original façade was set back beneath the overhang. All too often, in later centuries, the jetty would be underbuilt and the evidence for the original shop front would be lost.

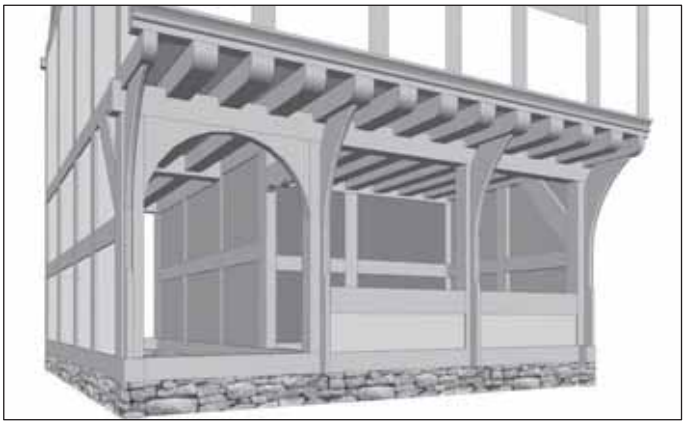


Figure 24. A reconstruction drawing of the layout of the primary shop front at No. 3 Church Street, based on surviving evidence in the timber framing

In the case of 3 Church Street, which has an underbuilt jetty, sufficient evidence remains to show that the façade was divided into thirds, one third with a wide doorway to a cross passage (now reduced in width) leading through to the land at the back, the other two thirds for shop windows to display goods and through which trading could take place (Figure 24). Early shop windows would be unglazed and have shutters for closure. Access into the shop was through a side door in from the cross passage. The interior of the shop occupied less than half the space, the rear area being divided off and linked to the large, two-bay, upper chamber by a (now lost) staircase. There was no doorway between the shop and this private back room.

The chamber on the upper floor would have been without a ceiling and open to the ridge of the roof. Over the middle of the chamber is an impressive roof truss with raking struts rising from a cambered tiebeam to meet the soffit of a curved collar (Figure 25). The collar, the principal rafters, and the raking struts all have narrow chamfers and curved runout stops. There is a double tier of threaded purlins and a single tier of straight windbraces, rising from the principal rafters to be fitted over the back of the upper tier of chamfered purlins. The windbraces are also chamfered.

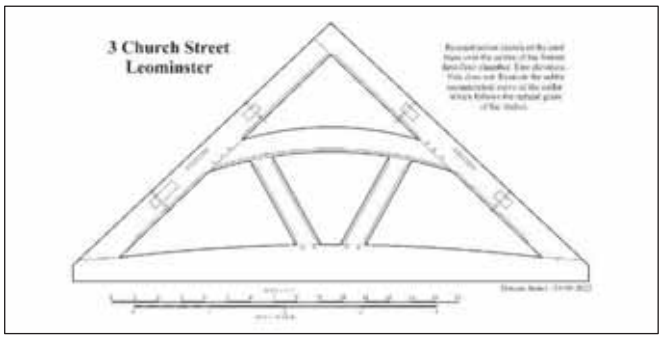


Figure 25. Reconstruction drawing of the central truss over the upper chamber at 3 Church Street

This front, two-bay, two-storey range (now with a top storey) was built using timber felled in the mid-to-late 1450s (*c*.1455-60).[29]

What makes this building even more fascinating is the impressive range of reused beams in bays C and D in the range behind the shop (Figures 26 and 27). These are moulded and use various designs of stops, including broach stops and curved run-out stops. The beams are of high status, and the moulding profiles and stops suggest they belong to the 15th century or possibly the late 14th. It is tempting to conclude that they may have come from the Priory following the Dissolution especially since Church Street is a direct route to the former monastic buildings. The beams were sampled for dendrochronology but failed to date.

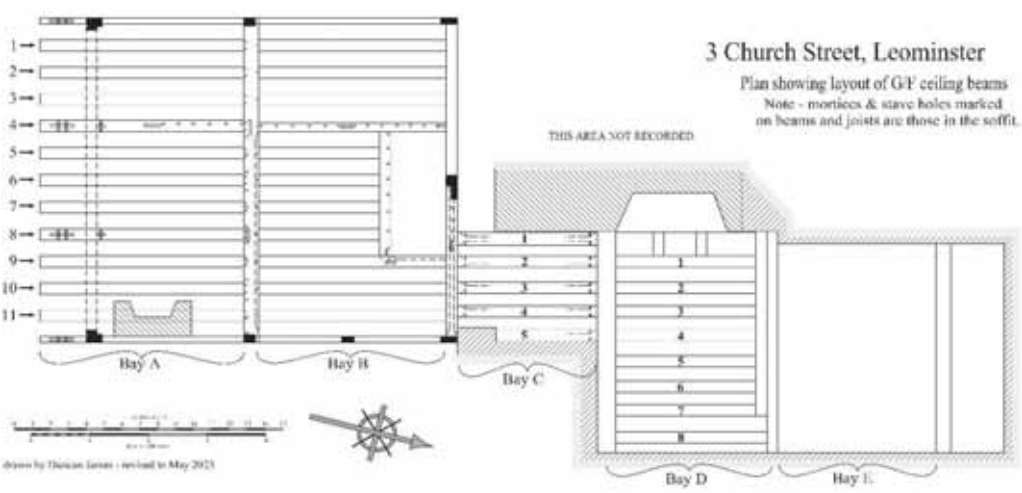


Figure 26. Plan of 3 Church Street, Leominster. Details of the mortices in the soffits of the beams are, for clarity, shown on the upper face of the timbers. The moulded beams in bays C and D are reused

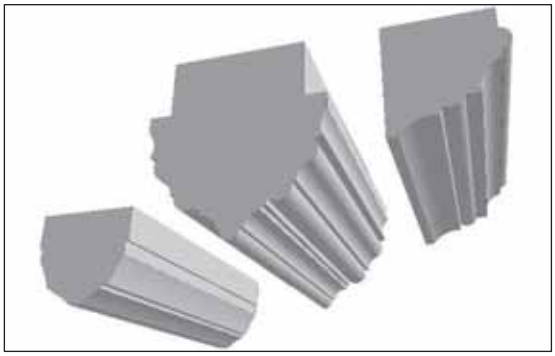


Figure 27. Examples of the moulding profiles on reused beams in bays D & E of No. 3 Church Street

16 - 17 CORN SQUARE, LEOMINSTER

Lat./Long.: 52.226881, -2.737964 NGR SO 49705899. Listed Grade II, HEL No.1255420 & No.1255421. RCHME Nos. 114 & 115.[30]

The reused beams in 3 Church Street, Leominster, were not the only timbers that could not offer a date. We were eager to establish a construction date for 16-17 Corn Square, but a close initial inspection by the dendrochronologists of the beams and component parts of the building showed that the oak was so fast grown that it would not offer a sufficient number of tree rings to give a reliable date.[31] However, a recording and analysis of this important and complex building was prepared at the request of Historic England. Figure 28 is an illustration from that report.

In summary, this is an 'L' shaped building with a two-storey, timber-framed construction of four bays, extending south along School Lane, and two bays fronting Corn Square. The east elevation on School Lane is jettied. On the ground floor, there is evidence to indicate that there were four late medieval lock-up shops, each with a central shuttered trading opening, and each with an access door at the rear. They were all of similar dimensions, but the shop at the north end had a pair of four-light mullioned windows (not for trading) looking out onto Corn Square. At first floor level there was a room above each of the shops. They were accessed from an open gallery (i.e., without a roof) along the back (west side) of the range.



Figure 28. A conjectural reconstruction drawing of 16 & 17 Corn Square, showing the four shop openings along the east side and jettied front on the north, where there is now a shop. Note the carriageway through to the back of the range. This is now another shop. At the far, right-hand end, where there is now a shop, the evidence indicates that there was a different arrangement entirely.

On the Corn Square (north) front, the first floor of the east range was jettied, and alongside it the first of the two western bays formed a carriageway to the land at the back. Over the carriageway,

the first-floor room appears to have been linked with the room above the shop in the east range, forming a single room. The bay on the west end of the building may have been a small, open hall heated by an open hearth on the ground floor.

It is thought that, in this form, the building had a first-floor school room that was supported by income from the four shop units. It is also possible that three of the first-floor rooms served as accommodation for visitors. It is suggested that its construction may have been funded by Leominster's monastic priory.[32]

Later changes at various dates involved the insertion of glazed shop windows, the conversion of the carriageway into a shop unit, and the remodelling of two bays of the Corn Square elevation by the addition of a pair of gables to create an attic floor. This latter change may have included construction in the 17th century of a two-storey range to the south.

The separate shop units in the east range are now united into a single shop, with the frontage on the north (Corn Square) elevation.

This is a building of greater importance and antiquity than the Grade II listing suggests, and it is to be hoped that it may be upgraded to offer it greater protection in the future.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, England (RCHME), *An inventory of the historical monuments in Herefordshire. Vol. 3 – North-West* (H.M.S.O., 1934), p. 19.
[2] *Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club* (67), 2019, pp. 150-1.
[3] 'Church of St Barnabas, Brampton Bryan, Herefordshire, Tree-ring Analysis of Oak Timbers', A. Arnold, R. Howard & C. Tyers, Historic England Research Report, Series 44-2021.
[4] There is some variation in this measurement because the side walls are not exactly parallel, or vertical.
[5] Indeed, at the time of writing the author had failed to locate a single example of a triple hammer-beam roof.
[6] N. Baker, P. Hughes, and R.K. Morriss, *The Houses of Hereford, 1200-1700* (Oxbow Books, 2018), pp. 170-2.
[7] D. H. S. Cranage, *An Architectural Account of the Churches of Shropshire* (Part 6, 1903), pp. 475-81.
[8] C. J. Robinson, *A History of the Castles of Herefordshire and their Lords* (1869), p.13. Robinson, in a footnote, suggests these were Brampton and Wigmore parks.
[9] *The Manuscripts of His Grace The Duke of Portland preserved at Welbeck Abbey, Vol.III* (1894), Historical Manuscripts Commission (H.M.S.O), p. 131.
[10] In 1644 and 1645 Sir Robert Harley was overseeing the destruction of imagery (glass and paintings) in Westminster Abbey, Hampton Court, and other sites. See: *The Manuscripts of His Grace The Duke of Portland*, pp. 132-3.
[11] The present ones are later replacements in stone.
[12] RCHME, *An inventory of the historical monuments in Herefordshire. Vol. 3 – North-West* (1934), p. 196.
[13] *Vernacular Architecture* 39 (2008) p. 140.
[14] *Vernacular Architecture* 34 (2003) p. 106.
[15] *Vernacular Architecture* 28 (1997) pp. 159-60.
[16] RCHME, *An inventory of the historical monuments in Herefordshire. Vol. 3 – North-West* (1934), p. 124.
[17] Historic England Research Report - forthcoming.
[18] RCHME, *An inventory of the historical monuments in Herefordshire. Vol. 3 – North-West.*(1934), p. 122 & plate 142.
[19] RCHME, *An inventory of the historical monuments in Herefordshire. Vol. 3 – North-West* (1934), p. 120.
[20] A. Brooks & N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Herefordshire,* (2012), p.458. Details on the porch and the brackets under the projecting eaves at Brook Hall should be compared with No. 2 Market Street, Builth Wells, where details around the doorway and the brackets on the dormer windows suggest that these are the work of the same architect.
[21] A. Arnold, R. Howard and C. Tyers, 'Brook Hall, 27 Broad Street, Leominster, Herefordshire - Tree-ring Dating of Oak Timbers', Historic England Research Report Series 41/2023.
[22] F. Gainsford Blacklock, *The Suppressed Benedictine Minster and other Ancient & Modern Institutions of the Borough of Leominster,* (1898) Leominster: The Mortimer Press, p.444. It is possible that this is a reference to the refronting and other work done on the site of Brook Hall in the 1870s. Stallard was a JP and mayor of Leominster six times between 1866 and 1886. He was also a chairman of the Leominster Gas Light and Coke Company, and he ran a wine and spirits business at 26 Broad Street, but these premises were at a higher level than the Pinsley and unlikely to be the site of tan pits.

[23] This building appears to have escaped attention by the Royal Commission.
[24] Abell's Market House post-dates No. 5 High Street by perhaps 150 years, but the site, at the meeting of High Street, Burgess Street, Broad Street, Church Street, and Drapers' Lane, stresses the importance of this area of the town.
[25] The primary structure has been tree-ring dated which gave a felling date for the timber as between 1449-1474.
[26] Historic England Research Report - forthcoming.
[27] Historic England Research Report - forthcoming.
[28] RCHME, *An inventory of the historical monuments in Herefordshire. Vol. 3 – North-West* (1934, p. 121.
[29] Historic England Research Report - forthcoming.
[30] RCHME, *An inventory of the historical monuments in Herefordshire. Vol. 3 – North-West* (1934), p. 123 & plate 144.
[31] Nottingham Tree-Ring Dating Laboratory.
[32] J. & C. Hillaby, *Leominster Minster, Priory and Borough c.660-1539,*(Logaston Press, 2006), 246-49.

Geology 2023

By MOIRA JENKINS

ROSAMUND SKELTON

In January, it was sad to lose Rosamund Skelton, who had battled illness bravely for many years. Her obituary was published in last year's *Transactions*.[1]



Figure 1. Rosamund Skelton helping with field work in the Woolhope Dome area

Rosamund's contribution to geology was just as important as her input into the many other topics in which she was interested. She was a member from the very beginning of the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust (EHT), formerly called H&W RIGS Group, served on the Executive Committee and then, when the EHT became a charity, acted as a Trustee until 2015. Her advice and expertise in planning matters proved particularly valuable when she sat on the panel designating sites as Regionally Important Geological / Geomorphological Sites, now called Local Geological Sites. She played a major role in the site visits needed to develop the Geodiversity Action Plan Audit for Herefordshire, whilst her contribution to roadshows, trail guides, and initiatives to communicate about Herefordshire's geology was tireless.

ICE AGE PONDS

The Ice Age Ponds project came to a successful conclusion in the summer of 2022. As reported in last year's *Transactions,* in the fine, multi-disciplinary paper by Will Watson, Giles Salter-King, and Beth Andrews, and in this Recorder's report, a great deal was learnt about the geology and ecology of kettle-hole and other ponds formed as the ice of the last Ice Age retreated.[2]

Nationally, kettle-hole ponds are scarce; it has been estimated that probably less than 2% of lowland ponds are natural and that only 1% of those are kettle-hole ponds. However, in Herefordshire we are privileged as this rises to approximately 25%.

Any wetland scheme should take into account the importance of these unique features and plan to protect them. Due to their great age, these ponds often contain rare species of plants and animals. Many contain peat deposits, which are important for storage of carbon dioxide. Kettle-hole ponds represent unique time capsules. The sediment which has gradually filled the ponds contains organic matter, including plant and perhaps animal remains. Pollen is stored too, a source of information about past climatic conditions and evidence of the changes in vegetation as the area warmed over the past 20,000 years, since the end of the Ice Age. Very little research has been done to investigate this historical record and there is much more to find out. The high concentration of these ponds in north-west Herefordshire makes them especially precious. They need recognition, protection, and promotion as a resource of national importance.

However, Ice Age ponds are very vulnerable because the public, landowners, and local authorities do not recognise their significance. In Herefordshire, many have been infilled, ploughed, or dug out.

Efforts continued in 2023 to reinforce public awareness of their value and, in conjunction with central and local government, to protect them from destruction and damage; Will Watson and his colleagues have been very active in this respect and future reports in these *Transactions* will be able to report on the outcomes, from a geological and ecological perspective. Will comments on the current regulatory position as follows:

> Kettle-hole ponds in good condition are semi-natural habitats and should be ranked alongside ancient, semi-natural woodland in terms of their importance. The latter habitat has a wealth of protection under law, and they are included in a range of policy documents. Kettle-hole ponds do not receive the attention they deserve so that there is a need to address these shortcomings. However, there are mechanisms to designate both statutory and non-statutory sites, including kettle-hole ponds, for their biological conservation value. Ponds, however, conform to a somewhat restricted set of criteria under Annex 1 of the European Habitats Directive; this recognises a range of pond types, both natural and man-made, as habitats of high conservation value but does not include any mention of kettle-hole ponds. Such sites can, however, be designated on the basis of the species of high conservation importance, such as those recorded in the *Red Data Book* and species scheduled under the Wildlife & Countryside Act, and/or where exceptional populations of key species are present. In order to address the deficiencies, the Freshwater Habitats Trust has devised a means of evaluation to assess 'Priority Ponds' based upon their conservation value. It was originally intended as a means of selecting quality ponds for inclusion within Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs). The BAP programme of protection is no longer in use because state funding has been withdrawn, but the mechanism to define ponds is still relevant today. Kettle-hole ponds, as a matter of course, qualify according to the Freshwater Habitats Trust as priority ponds because they have a limited geographical distribution and are a rare type of pond in a national context. However, some kettle-hole ponds are damaged beyond recognition, and their definition needs to be based upon examples which are in reasonable condition.
>
> Under Countryside Stewardship, Natural England do include ponds as 'priority habitats'. In their 'Priority Habitats' document for Countryside Stewardship, published in 2016, it is stated that: 'To be considered as a priority for the scheme the pond must be of high conservation or ecological importance, be home to species that are particularly scarce, have exceptional groups of plants and animals, or have other attributes such as being rare, old or part of a special landscape.'
>
> Locally, in strategic planning documents such as Herefordshire Council's Strategic Planning Document 'Biodiversity,' ponds are listed as a 'priority habitat', but there is no specific mention of kettle-hole ponds or reference to the location of hummocky kettle moraine. The habitats they mention mirror the BAP priority habitats, which are now largely obsolete.

The Ice Age Ponds project left a legacy of ponds restored, community involvement, and trail guides written. High-quality information continues to be available at https://iceageponds.org/ where a range of car tours, cycle tours, and walks can be accessed and downloaded from the app provided. One of the laminated 'Explore' guides, produced by the Herefordshire and

Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust (EHT), is also available for the walk around Kenchester and Staunton-on-Wye.

EARTH HERITAGE TRUST NEWS

The Birmingham Erratics project came to a successful conclusion in the summer of 2023. Many previously unknown erratics have been recorded, and some have been cleaned, with panels produced to describe them. A general, sixteen-page project booklet in A5 format (*From Fire to Ice—The Story of Birmingham's Erratic Boulders)* and an accessibility leaflet (*Accessibility Information for Erratic Boulders*) can be obtained from the EHT office.

Eight trails were created in total, five for walking, two for cycling, and one for both; you can download the trails for your own use at https://erraticsproject.org/erratic-boulder-trails. Information about community activities associated with the project can be found at https://erraticsproject.org/activities/. Groups at a family event, held at Birmingham University, looked at the huge rocks, carried in a glacier from North Wales and deposited as the ice melted. Volunteers and consultants, seen next to an erratic in Cotheridge Park in Plate 9.1, completed training in various aspects of accessibility, including accessible communication and accessible environments. They also undertook training in how to write an interpretation panel and in first aid. A number of guided walks took place, both for trail launches and other events such as GeoWeek 2023.

A temporary exhibition was completed and put on display at The Lapworth Museum for three months (Plate 9.2). Research into the social history of the boulders was also undertaken within the project, resulting in some excellent articles written by Julie Schroder. These are available at: https://erraticsproject.org/history-and-heroes/.

Fossil Boxes for Schools

There is an EHT project to supply fossil resource boxes to primary and secondary schools across the UK. After around twelve months of development, the first box was delivered to a Herefordshire primary school in December 2022. Thirty-five boxes have now been delivered, mostly to Herefordshire and Worcestershire, but to thirteen different counties altogether.

As shown in Plate 9.3, each box has two trays of fifteen fossils. All are common fossils from the UK, so that everything in the box could be found by the children themselves. A number of laminated materials are included to help teachers make best use of the boxes. Boxes are hand delivered, to help create a link between the school and an earth-heritage organisation, and to enable future outreach. All boxes go to educational establishments; the box is not available commercially.

In collaboration with the Royal National College for the Blind in Hereford, work is underway to add QR codes onto the boxes to make them more accessible. Boxes have been varied to fit the needs of individual schools.

A website about the whole project can be found at https://earthheritagetrust.org/fossils. This addresses most of the questions we have met as well as providing a donation route for those who want to sponsor a box. Attendance at a number of shows is planned through 2024 to promote the programme.

If you would like to be involved in the project, please contact EHT at eht@worc.ac.uk. Involvement can range from making up the boxes to delivery of fossil talks, which often accompany delivery of the boxes. Fossil donations are always welcome, and all donated material is put to good use even if it can’t be used in the boxes. If you wish, you can donate or sponsor a

box for your local school at a cost of £40. Also, it's most helpful if you make others in your network aware of the project.

CONDITION MONITORING FOR NATURAL ENGLAND

Condition monitoring was carried out by EHT for Natural England at two Sites of Special Scientific Interest in 2023.

Wilton Bluff SSSI

The cliffs of red sandstone beside Wilton Road in Ross-on-Wye have been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest for their geology. These cliffs are of Devonian Brownstones Formation, Old Red Sandstone laid down by seasonal rivers crossing an arid landscape around 400 million years ago. They show fluvial features, such as river channels cut into the layers below and then infilled with lenses of sandstone as the stream changed its course. The geology has been studied by many eminent geologists. A photograph taken in 2008 (Plate 9.4) clearly shows the cross-bedded layers and massive sandstone bars. However, as shown in Plate 9.5, it is no longer possible to approach closely to study the geological features since the exposure is now hidden behind concrete blocks, a fence, and vegetation.

In 2018 Natural England staff recommended a clearance programme designed to show up the important features safely. It was recommended that ivy could be cut back, but that the roots should not be removed as these were holding the rock face together. Saplings, whose roots were pushing apart the rock layers, should be removed. There were suggestions that certain unusual plants growing on ledges should not be removed without the advice of an ecologist. The clearance work was carried out successfully and the SSSI was in good condition.

However, a couple of years later the local council decided to do a much more thorough clearance, which did not follow the recommendations. In 2021, near the top of Wilton Road, a digger was used to remove the scree which had stabilised the bottom of the exposure (Plate 9.6). This area was hidden by ivy, which was holding the rock face together safely. With the removal of the soil bank and the ivy the rock face is now considered unsafe. Parking along Wilton Road is no longer allowed, the huge fence has been erected along the road below the cliffs, and the plants growing on the fence and becoming established behind it, are making it difficult to see the rock. This need never have happened.

Discussions are taking place to decide what to do. One drastic solution suggested is to cover the rock face with wire netting. This has been done along the A40 at Overross and along the M50 (Plate 9.7). The result is that debris has collected behind the netting and saplings have become established. It is now not possible to see the rock face. I do hope that this will not happen at Wilton Bluff.

Monnington Scar SSSI

Monnington Scar Site of Special Scientific Interest, designated for its geology, is the largest exposure of the Lower Old Red Sandstone, non-marine sediments outside Pembrokeshire, and the only inland outcrop at this stratigraphic level where large-scale sedimentation features can be examined. It sits on the outside of a tight meander bend of the River Wye a few miles below Bredwardine. The Moor Cliffs Formation, the first of the Old Red Sandstone rocks, are now classified as uppermost Silurian rock.

The cliffs at the north-western and south-eastern ends of the site are covered in trees of varying ages, from saplings to some over 100 years old, along with ground vegetation in places.

The cliffs in the central part of the SSSI are virtually bare of vegetation on their lower two thirds, delineating the cliffs that are currently undergoing erosion by the river. These lower two thirds are almost vertical; the angle is somewhat less steep in the upper third.

This exposure is now very much more overgrown than in 2015 when it was seen from a canoe (Plate 9.8). There are exposures in the central part of the bend in an area of active cliff erosion. In 2023, in order to monitor the condition, it was viewed, with permission, from the opposite bank and from the top of the cliff itself. It was not possible to reach the base of the cliff through thickets of brambles and nettles (Plate 9.9).

Malvern Hills National Landscape (formerly Malvern Hills AONB)

The Malvern Hills National Landscape (MHNL) has forty-eight designated Local Geological Sites (LGS) within its area. Every five years, the organisation has to report on the condition of a sample of these sites, essentially stating whether they are fit for MHNL's purposes of encouraging visits by the pubic and others for educational and scientific use. In 2023, they contracted EHT to report to them on the conditions of twenty-four of the sites.

The sites in Herefordshire where the condition was monitored in 2023 were: Cowleigh Bridge A; Longley Green; Brockhill Farm Quarry; Gardiners Quarry; Gullet Pass Pit; Gullet Top Quarry; Gullet Main Quarry; Clutters Cave; Coneygree Wood Quarry; News Wood; and Warner's Farm Pit. In Worcestershire the sites were: Tank Quarry; Ivy Scar Rock; Leigh Brook; Dingle Quarry; High Wood Sports Field; Rushy Valley; Park Wood; Westminster Bank Quarry; Wide Valley; Suckley 2 and 5; Broad Down Quarry; and Little Malvern Quarry.

Of the twenty-four sites, most were ranked as 'Good', with the majority of them needing regular work to maintain this as a steady state. Some were considered 'Poor' with a couple reported as 'Lost' because the interest features are now covered with no prospect of revealing them in the foreseeable future (although the features still exist). Most sites require regular clearance work to keep them in good condition.

Two of the sites monitored (Cowleigh Bridge Site A and Longley Green Quarry) are illustrated with colour plates, and a third (Brockhill Farm Quarry) is also illustrated in the context of geosite maintenance and clearance work, as reported below.

At the Cowleigh Bridge Site A LGS, the lowest of the Silurian rock in this area, the Cowleigh Park Formation, is exposed along the continuation of the Malvern Line to the north of the hills. There are massive sandstone beds, dipping steeply and separated by shaley layers. Much of the exposure is covered by moss (see Plate 9.10).

Longley Green Quarry LGS is owned by the parish council and shows Silurian Aymestry Limestone (Plate 9.11) overlain by Upper Ludlow Shales. Part of the Aymestry Limestone is well exposed to the east but, as shown in Plate 9.12, the quarry is now very overgrown and the boundary with the Upper Ludlow Shales is no longer visible, hidden by vegetation.

GEOSITE MAINTENANCE WITHIN THE MALVERN HILLS NATIONAL LANDSCAPE

During the current year (2023/24), geosite clearance/maintenance has been completed at three sites: Gardiners Quarry off Jubilee Drive; Brockhill Farm Quarry next to the B4232, the road from Colwall to Mathon; and Little Malvern Quarry (aka Berington's Quarry) on the eastern slopes of Black Hill. The recent work at the Brockhill site is typical of the programmes undertaken and is described in more detail below.

Brockhill Farm Quarry

Brockhill Farm Quarry entrance had been cleared by Malvern Hills Trust. Geological volunteers then cleared part of the Ludlow Siltstones (shown in Plate 9.13 after the clearance work) and the boundary with the overlying Downton Castle Sandstone, which had previously not been visible at all (Plate 9.14). The boundary represents the area where the change from marine to terrestrial conditions took place.

CONDITON MONITORING TRAINING

Since it is desirable to monitor the condition of all designated sites in Herefordshire and Worcestershire, to see which sites need work to keep them in good condition, EHT organised training sessions for volunteers at some sites in Herefordshire. Plate 9.15 shows volunteers at an exposure of Downton Castle Sandstone at Old Sufton. This rock, which is found at the boundary between the marine Silurian and the terrestrial Old Red Sandstone, was used locally as a building stone.

LINTON QUARRY

Linton Quarry, in the south of Herefordshire, is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest for its geology and is under the management of the local council. It was also one of the sites of the Community Earth Heritage Champions, but the latest 'Champion' retired some years ago. A group of people living locally has taken an interest in doing clearance work at the site, which was very overgrown. It is now possible to access the quarry floor, which had been impenetrable. There are some interpretation panels. The ones produced for the Champions Project are in poor condition but still legible. The one placed by the Abberley and Malvern Hills Geopark has slipped out of its frame and is resting on the ground. On 28 January 2023, the local group were joined by some of the Earth Heritage Trust volunteers, who worked to clear a few of the rock faces.

The quarry shows a sequence of rock from the Silurian Much Wenlock Limestone through the Ludlow to the Downton Castle Sandstone, the Pridoli, the lowest of the Old Red Sandstone rocks. This location has an unconformity at the top of the Wenlock. The Lower Ludlow Siltstones and the Aymestry Limestone are missing, either because they were never deposited or because they had been eroded before the deposition of the Upper Ludlow Siltstones. These strata are not missing further north in Herefordshire. Plate 9.16 shows the east face, where the Wenlock is overlain by Upper Ludlow Siltstone and the Pridoli above that.

Plate 9.17 shows the north-east corner of the quarry where there is a very clear exposure of the Ludlow.

At the balcony area, in the south-west of the quarry, the Pridoli can be seen, showing current bedding. This is the lowest of the Old Red Sandstone rocks and has the characteristic red colour of iron oxides.

Plate 9.18 shows that, in some parts of the rock face, the iron oxides have been reduced to grey-green hydroxides of iron. The rocks of the lower part of the quarry were deposited in tropical seas and contain fossils. The uppermost rocks were formed from sediments laid down on an arid land surface after two tectonic plates came together and closed off the Iapetus Ocean. One problem in Linton Quarry is that the pond on the floor of the quarry is infested with the extremely invasive New Zealand pond weed, *Crassula helmsii*. Care must be taken to avoid the area around the pond, as the weed can be spread by tiny fragments sticking on people's boots.

ABBERLEY AND MALVERN HILLS GEOPARK (AMHG): GEOPARK WAY APP

A new app was released, on 20 June 2023, at the event to mark the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Geopark.

The app, *GeoparkWay*, provides an interactive guide to the route, geology, and other points of interest along the 109-mile Geopark Way trail running through the Abberley and Malvern Hills Geopark. The trail starts at Bridgnorth in Shropshire and ends at the cathedral in Gloucester, passing through the Abberley, Malvern, and Ledbury Hills on the way.

Each of the seventeen sections of the trail can be loaded into the app as required. In addition, other walks within the Geopark will be included shortly.

This app is intended to replace the now redundant apps, one for each of the seventeen sections of the trail, released in 2011-12. It has been designed by BrooksDesigns for the AMHG. The QR code shown in Figure 2 will enable you to download the app with all its interesting information.

Figure 2. QR Code, which can be used to access the Geopark Way app

GA FESTIVAL OF GEOLOGY

The Woolhope Club, EHT, and the Teme Valley Geological Society (TVGS) shared a joint exhibition stand at the Geologists' Association Festival of Geology at University College London in November. Sue Olver represented the Woolhope Club.

The event was attended by over sixty geology societies, clubs, and organisations. Attendance and interest by the public was exceptional, with a constant stream of engaged visitors at the stand, including many young people and children. EHT featured the display and walk leaflets for the Erratics Project, along with the Voyages in Deep Time, GeoExplore, and Ice Age Ponds apps, plus the recently released Geopark Way app (see above).

SENSORY WALK IN THE BRITISH CAMP AREA

Dee Jones, who has been steadily losing her sight for many years, has set up a not-for-profit company, Sense Adventures (https://www.senseadventures.co.uk/).

Sense Adventures offers guided day activities and short breaks, in mixed groups of blind and sighted people, in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. This enables people with visual difficulties to enjoy exercise in the great outdoors. I helped with a walk on 11 February 2023. There was a group of visually impaired people, each of whom had a 'guide' to help them by showing them the way and telling them where there was uneven ground. There were two guide dogs, but they were allowed a day off to enjoy the hills. The group walked from Gardiners Quarry and had lunch at Sally's Cabin opposite the British Camp car park. I met the group there and passed round rock specimens so that they could feel the difference between the hard, crystalline rocks of the Malvern Hills and the sandstones, mudstones, and shales which are more easily eroded and which underly the lowlands. We then walked up British Camp (Plate 9.19), where I described the contrasting scenery on each side of the hill, shaped by the underlying geology and rock structure. We went as far as Clutters Cave, which was cut in pillow lavas, erupted from an undersea volcano in an island arc, 566 million years ago. It was an enjoyable walk, and it is such a good idea to give blind and partially sighted people a chance to get out and learn about beautiful

parts of the country.

AYMESTRY LIMESTONE RIDGE

In every geology report, I ask people to tell me of any temporary exposures so that I can record the geology. The importance of this is shown by one excavation into the Aymestry Limestone to the west of the Malvern Hills. This was the site where preparations were being made for the construction of a garage. The splendid rock exposure has now been covered again and can no longer be seen.

The Aymestry Limestone forms a long, thin ridge stretching north from Evendine Lane. When the Malvern Hills were uplifted, the Silurian rock strata were tilted to dip at about 45 degrees to the west, away from the hills (Plate 9.20).

The 20-metre-long excavation showed a 4-metre-thick sequence of calcareous siltstones and nodular limestone in the Silurian rocks, dating back to about 420 million years ago, from the lowest part of the Aymestry (Plate 9.21). The rock contained a few fossils including brachiopods, a coral, and the tail of a trilobite, deposited in a low-energy marine environment under the influence of wave energy, where the seabed was stable enough for these life forms to become established, although the low abundance of fossils may indicate that the conditions were marginal.

THE IMPORTANCE OF RECORDING TEMPORARY EXPOSURES

Please do let Moira Jenkins know of any temporary geological exposures so that they can be recorded before they are covered and no longer visible.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] *Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club* (*TWNFC*) 70, 2023, p.13.
[2] 'Herefordshire's Ice Age Ponds, Geology and Ecology', by Will Watson, Giles King-Salter, and Beth Andrews, *TWNFC* 70, 2023, pp. 73-85. See also, in the same volume, the report of Moira Jenkins, Geology Recorder, pp. 165-7.

Mycology 2023

By JO WEIGHTMAN

2023 kicked off in February with a moment of drama (see below). In spring, the common *Calocybe gambosa* St George's Mushroom (Plate 10.1) fruited on time and abundantly, and I received news of several uncommon vernal specialists such as *Disciotis venosa* Bleach Cup (Plate 10.2) and *Verpa conica* Thimble Morel (Plate 10.3). In July, rains triggered a short flurry that included some mycorrhizal species, and hopes rose for an exciting autumn fruiting—but then a fungal silence fell. A few mycorrhizals fruited poorly—if at all—in September, presumably deterred by the protracted dry conditions. It was only after sufficient rain had fallen in mid and late autumn to soak the fallen wood and wet the soil thoroughly that the decomposers made an appearance, rather poorly even then.

However thin the season, there is never nothing. Surprisingly, *Clitopilus prunulus* The Miller (Plate 10.4), a fungus that every autumn makes a faithful appearance in ones and twos here and there, was untypically numerous. So, it was not surprising in October to see a cluster of them in light woodland near Lingen. It had the usual characters for a Miller, a short stipe, pinkish decurrent gills, and a strong mealy smell (inspiring the English name) but the cap was grey instead of whitish. It could have been no more than an aberrant form and dismissed but, when examined under the microscope, cystidia were found. This character proved the fungus to be the rarely recorded *Clitopilus cystidiatus* Grey Miller (Plate 10.5). There are only four other records of this species on the Fungus Records Database for Britain and Ireland, and this is the first for Herefordshire.

A mycorrhizal species that did respond to the rains in July was an *Amanita* found in broad-leaved woodland near Dewsall. It belonged in the *Vaginatae* Section of that genus because the cap margin had very neat striations (grooves), like those on a pie crust, and the stipe had a volva (sac at the base) and no ring. Although very closely resembling the common *Amanita fulva* Tawny Grisette (Plate 10.6), the cap was quite a dark brown, not orange or tawny, and the volva was heavily marked with orange patches. A number of new species have been distinguished in this Section in recent years, including one named *Amanita fulvoides* (Plate 10.7) to which this collection unmistakably belonged. It was a new Herefordshire record. Interestingly, this same new species was also seen at a site near Lingen in October.

*Lactarius acerrimu*s Two-spored Milkcap (Plate 10.8) would be a good find even in a normal year, so its appearance in rough grass near trees in Eastnor Park was especially welcome. This species is close to a number of other large milkcaps with golden, more-or-less zoned caps. It can be distinguished from the others even in the field because the gills are irregular and anastomose near the stipe. The cap also is often wavy. Microscopically, the basidia carry only two spores instead of the usual four. There are a few other Herefordshire records including another at this location in 1997.

To return to the February drama. In February, a dog walker in Wapley Hill Wood was intrigued by a very white fungus growing in patches on several conifer stumps. After searching online at home, she contacted me asking if it was possible that she had found *Antrodia carbonica*, a poroid species which, she had read, would be a notable find. White patches on dead wood, with or without pores, abound and do not lend themselves to recognition in the field. Primed with some background reading and a bottle in my pocket, and feeling very sceptical, I met the finder,

who led me to the site on the south-eastern edge of the wood. There had been some windfall exposing three torn stumps. Two were in an exposed position and the third not far away. The patches were indeed large and very white, and small brackets were forming. Underneath, the pores were large, supporting the possibility that this might indeed one of the Antrodias. I produced my bottle and dabbed a little Melzer's iodine solution on the fungus, fully confident that nothing would happen. But it did. Where touched, the white crust had stained instantly purple. This purple-staining reaction to Melzer's reagent is a good diagnostic character for *Antrodia carbonica*. Dr Martyn Ainsworth at Kew confirmed the identification and sent the dried specimen for accession to the Fungarium (Plate 10.9). No further specimens were found by searching through the dark conifer plantation that covers much of the hill, so it seems probable that the exposed position of the collection and/or the broken nature of the stump were significant. At the time of writing, this is the only Herefordshire record for this species. There are only five other known UK sites.

SOME OTHER FUNGI ASSOCIATED WITH CONIFERS

On Stumps

The commonest species by far on conifer stumps, and the best known, is *Calocera viscosa* Yellow Stagshorn, a jelly fungus that mimics a club fungus (Plate 10.10). It is perhaps more orange than yellow, stands about 5cm tall, and is often, but not always, forked at the tip like antlers.

In September 2013, the bracket fungus *Postia guttulata* (Plate 10.11) was found on a conifer stump in Haugh Wood. Mature specimens are fairly thin, sometimes single, sometimes with several caps conjoined laterally, variously irregular, and narrowly attached to the stump. The surface is off-white, with reddish-brown streaks in age, and has some radial grooving and irregularity. When the fruitbody is young, it produces clear droplets on the growing edge, giving the fungus its specific epithet. I have once found an example with red droplets, so this probably accounts for the reddish streaking on the pileus. As a stump in a plantation is not necessarily from the same tree species as the existing crop, it has not been immediately obvious if the fungus is host specific or not. Ryvarden and Melo (see references below) say that, in Europe, the fungus is found mostly on *Picea* and very rarely on *Pinus*. At the time the Haugh Wood collection was made, the fungus was a very rare species in Britain, known only from the New Forest although reported as common across the Channel. It has since been recorded in nine further conifer plantations in Herefordshire, so does appear to be well established in the county.

On Logs

Appearances are often deceptive. For example, *Pluteus pouzarianus* Conifer Shield is a look-alike of *Pluteus cervinus* Deer Shield (Plate 10.12), both species having a smooth brown cap and free, pink gills. The latter is very common on dead wood of broad-leaved trees and is occasionally found on dead conifer. If on broad-leaved wood, it can be called *P. cervinus*. If on conifer wood, certainty disappears, and examination under the microscope becomes necessary. A collection made in Credenhill Park Wood, on an unidentified, fallen conifer in November 2023, was just such a case. At x400 magnification it was found to have clamps on the cap hyphae, and this is the determining character for *P. pouzarianus.* This is an uncommon species in Britain, much confused with *P. cervinus.* The only other Herefordshire collection was made in the Wigmore Rolls in December 2003 when it was identified by Alick Henrici.

Another *Pluteus* associated with fallen conifers is *P. atromarginatus* (Plate 10.13). As it has dark scales on the cap centre and a dark edge to the gills, it is easily distinguished from the above, but not so easily found; it is described as being widely distributed but rare. Long, long ago, I saw a single fruitbody in the New Forest and more recently another in Scotland. To date, there is but one Herefordshire record, from the grounds of Berrington Hall in September 2016.

On the ground

Auriscalpium vulgare the Earpick Fungus (Plate 10.14) is a charming little species with spines under the laterally attached stipe. It grows almost exclusively on old, fallen, and often buried pine cones, and occasionally on spruce cones. As its colours blend into the accumulated litter on the forest floor, it is only found by dedicated searching.

There are several gilled fungi that also arise from half- or fully buried pine cones. The commonest, and very abundant after rain, is probably *Baeospora myosura* Conifer Conecap (Plate 10.15), followed by *Pseudohiatula tenacella*. These, and *Strobilurus exculentus* on spruce cones, are best identified under the microscope. All three are small with brownish caps and white spores.

Among the many mycorrhizals associated with conifers, the following, all notable species, were recorded in 2023.

Russula fuscorubroides (Plate 10.16) grows with *Picea* Spruce. It was first collected in the Mortimer Forest in September 2004 and identified by the *Russula* specialist Geoffrey Kibby. Since then, it has been recorded at six other locations in Herefordshire, the most recent being in the Wofferwood Common area in September 2023. The strong, red-purple colour of cap and stipe, and the cream gills, together with the restricted habitat, are strong diagnostic features.

Cortinarius sanguineus (Plate 10.17) has a darkly carmine to blood-red cap and stipe. The gills are similarly coloured, becoming more muted in tone as the brown spores ripen. It is restricted to pine and spruce woodland. It was recorded in Haugh Wood in December 2023. Herefordshire records go back to the mid-19th century but must be treated with caution owing to confusion between this and the very similar *C. puniceus,* which occurs with broad-leaved trees.

It happens time after time. In a poor year, there is always a maverick that leaps onto the stage. In 2023, it was a milkcap that showed its colours—rather literally.

It was National Fungus Day, 7 October 2023. The Herefordshire Fungus Survey Group (HFSG) has, for several years, led walks and mounted a display of Herefordshire fungi at Queenswood. One HFSG member brought along a collection of a milkcap she had collected, part of a large colony, under a pine, on an island among housing in Ross-on-Wye. Clearly, with its orange cap discolouring to green, orange gills, and orange milk, it was one of the *Lactarius deliciosus* complex. The finder had been very intrigued by violet patches that had developed. On the day, we broke one cap and watched. It yielded the usual orange milk, which spread copiously over the stipe. Within a few minutes, the milk had stained everything in its path purple. This was *L. semisanguifluus* (Plate 10.18) a pine associate which, judging by the very few records on the current FRDBI, is widespread in the British Isles, but rarely recorded. This was a new county site for a species previously known only from Moccas Park, where it was recorded in 2000 and 2012. I had never seen it. Maybe 2023 was peculiarly favourable for the species as it was recorded again a week later along Monnington Walk.

I would be delighted to hear of any fungus readers have seen in Herefordshire. Please send a photograph and as many details as possible.

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Ornithology 2023

By Rachel Jenkins

‘The language of birds is very ancient and, like other ancient modes of speech, very elliptical; little is said but much is meant and understood.’

Gilbert White, in a letter to Daines Barrington, 1778.

INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that we are living through challenging times, from climate change and pandemics to geopolitical concerns, and so, to lift the spirits while we face and hopefully address these problems, I have selected birdsong as the theme for this year’s report. There has recently been a spate of lovely books about the topic, on which I have relied heavily and which are listed below under ‘Further Reading’. As I write this in February, the birds in my garden are already starting to sing each morning, especially the Robins, Great Tits, Song Thrushes, and Wrens.

As in previous years, the theme is set alongside a report on rarities sighted in Herefordshire and conservation matters of particular interest in the county.

BIRDSONG

Birdsong contributes a significant part of the backdrop to our daily lives in Herefordshire, and many of us became more tuned in during Covid lockdowns, when our busy lives became more restricted. Indeed, quite apart from birdsong, birds can make noises in a variety of ways. They can make mechanical noises with their beak, wings, tail, or feet; for example, Puffins clatter their beaks together when greeting, owls and Pied Wagtails can make snapping noises with their beaks, and Greater and Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers make drumming noises on tree trunks. Lapwings can make a thrumming noise in their display flight by making air move through their wing feathers, and the Snipe’s specially shaped outer tail feathers create a throbbing hum in their display flight, known as drumming. Birds like Coots and Mute Swans slap and plash their webbed feet on the water to create a commotion.

But generally, when we think about bird noises, we think about bird calls and bird song. So, how do they do it? Unlike the voice box in humans, which is located at the top of the windpipe, the voice box in birds is positioned at the base of the windpipe where it splits to go into each of the two lungs. This upside-down, ‘Y’ shaped section of the windpipe is called the syrinx, from a Greek word meaning pan pipes.

The syrinx is composed of an arrangement of cartilage, muscle, and vibratory membranes, over which both inhaled and exhaled air pass. Birdsong comes from the audible vibrations created when exhaled air passes over the membranous lining of the syrinx. Muscular changes to the membranes’ tension control the pitch, and the rate of airflow regulates volume.

This raw sound is shaped further by the shape of the throat and mouth. Some birds make use of the position of the windpipe, where it splits into two to supply the lungs, to exhale through one side while inhaling through the other, thus allowing them to sing for longer without pause; some are even able to produce two different notes simultaneously. The tongue plays no part in bird song, except among parrots.

It takes time and practice to become familiar with bird sounds, and the following, drawn

from the *RSPB Guide to Birdsong*, may be helpful. Bird sounds can be broadly categorised into calls and song. Calls are often signals and are thought to be innate rather than learned. They tend to be short and straightforward, produced by both males and females at any time of year. Calls may be long distance, when a bird is seeking to locate other birds of the same species or a distant mate or family member, or short distance, when birds are close together, for instance as a means to maintain contact between birds flying in a flock. Most birds have an alarm call to signal to others that danger—e.g., a hawk—is nearby. Mobbing calls are a particular form of alarm call made when birds have found a predatory bird, such as an owl, and want to rally others to come and harass the predator so that it leaves. Birds also make excitement calls, for example on discovering a food supply, meeting friends, or sensing that the time to migrate is approaching.

Some birds (e.g., geese) signal their intent to take off or land. When birds quarrel, perhaps over a mate or food, it is useful to have a threat call that can resolve the situation without further damage. Birds have calls connected with courting and mating, and with parenting. The parent may call to the unhatched chick, encouraging the chick to break free of the egg. After the chick has hatched, the parent may have calls to indicate that the chick should stay close or freeze. Some birds, including Lapwing and some waders, lure predators away from chicks by pretending to be injured, using special calls to help with the deception. Many chicks have ‘feed me’ calls.

In contrast with calls, songs tend to be longer and are generally given by the male at a particular time of year, driven by hormonal changes. To some extent, they are learned rather than innate. Young birds hear the songs of the adult birds around them while they are still chicks in the nest, and in its first autumn the young bird may sing what is known as the subsong, with little structure and little resemblance to what it will finally become. Then, in its first spring, the bird develops the subsong so that it sounds a bit more structured and assured (so-called plastic song), and finally the bird settles on several verses that form its set repertoire (crystallised song). The male Yellowhammer can use as few as two verses, while the Robin may have more than a hundred. Birds of many species continue to refine and expand their repertoire as they get older.

Just as humans in different parts of the country may use different accents, words, phrases, grammar, or dialects, so can bird populations in different geographical areas. A number of bird species are very good imitators. The Starling can imitate many sounds, including other bird calls and even machinery noise or a human voice. Jays frequently imitate the Buzzard and Reed Warbler and may imitate the Oystercatcher, Swallow or Bearded Tit, whilst the Marsh Warbler can have a huge repertoire of other bird sounds, derived both from its European breeding grounds and its African wintering grounds. It is thought that birds imitate each other to show off. In some species, the female is attracted to males with a large repertoire of different songs.

There is a specific terminology to describe birdsong. The song as a whole is made up of a range of verses. A verse, on the other hand, is just one burst of song, which may be short or long (e.g., as in the song of the Skylark). Some birds repeat their verses exactly, while others sing a new verse each time. Each verse is made up of a series of notes; for example, the Cuckoo sings two notes.

Bird song and calls can be described by considering the following aspects: duration; pace (fast or slow); volume (loud or quiet); pitch (high or low); pattern (melody or rhythm); timbre (qualities such as nasal, piping, wheezing, or trumpeting); and the overall effect. Very few bird calls last longer than half a second, so that the 1.5 second screech of the Barn Owl is unusual. The Dunnock’s ‘tse’ call lasts 0.15 seconds. Song verses tend to be longer. The Wren’s song verse can last 3-8 seconds. The Blackbird’s ‘wik’ call at dusk will produce 4 notes per second, the Little Grebe can trill at 15 notes per second, and the Nightjar may churr at 25 notes per

second. Birds process sound information about ten times faster than we do. The sound of a Crane carries a long way, whereas the snort of a Mute Swan is faint even at close range. The boom of a Bittern is very deep in pitch, whilst a Goldcrest song is very high. Curlews give a rising note and Buzzards a falling note. The call of the Nuthatch is a rapid fall and rise. Sonograms analysing bird song have been very helpful in characterising the song of different species, showing, for example, that the Reed Warbler sings to an almost regular beat, while the Sedge Warbler uses complex rhythms. Some species sing the same verse over and over again. The birds often have a handful of verses in their repertoire but will repeat one verse many times before switching to the next. In contrast, some birds sing a new verse each time. The Blue Tit, Great Tit, Chaffinch Dunnock, Wren, Yellowhammer, and Corn Bunting repeat the same verse, while the Black Cap, Whitethroat, Mistle Thrush, Blackbird, Robin, and Nightingale change each verse. The Song Thrush takes a different approach; instead of singing a recognisable verse, the birds sing one or two notes, repeat them many times, then pause and repeat some completely different notes. Several British birds have such distinctive calls that they are named after them; these include the Cuckoo, Chiffchaff, Chough, Curlew, Hoopoe, Kittiwake, and Twite, plus warbler, crow and chat, and colloquial names like Peewit (Lapwing) and Yaffle (Green Woodpecker).

There are seasonal and daily rhythms to bird song. For example, in winter Robins continue to sing to maintain their territories, some male ducks give display calls and, on still sunny days, we can hear Mistle Thrush, Song Thrush, Skylark, Dunnock, and Great Tit. In spring, the famous dawn chorus gets louder as it is amplified by returning migrants such as the Chiffchaff. In the summer, the chorus dwindles and is replaced by begging calls of youngsters. Many adult birds become very quiet as they moult, but pigeons, doves, and finches keep singing. Seabird colonies are vacated, turning quiet after months of hubbub. In the autumn, millions of summer migrants head south, and uplands begin to empty. Returning geese and wild swans are heard on wetlands, and Redwings and Fieldfares call overhead and in the apple orchards.

During the night-time, we hear owls (Tawny, Barn, and Long-eared) and Nightjars, Snipe may start drumming, Nightingales sing and, on moonlit nights in spring, Sedge Warblers, Whinchats, and Grasshopper Warblers may sing too. The dawn chorus is at its peak between late March and June. It starts just before dawn, continues through sunrise and the early morning, and settles down by midday. By mid-afternoon, all is usually quiet, but at sunset it is possible to see geese and swans flying noisily overhead to roost and Little Owls may be heard, whilst at dusk the Song Thrush, Robin, and Blackbird give panicky calls.

HEREFORDSHIRE RARITIES

It has been an interesting year for rarities. Besides those recorded in Table 1 below, it is worth noting that Ring-necked Parakeet has been seen on many occasions throughout the year in Hereford as well as elsewhere in the county.

Table 1: Rarities Seen in Herefordshire in 2023

Month	Species	Locations
January	Kittiwake	Wellington Gravel Pits
	Pink-footed Goose	Clifford (on the Wye)
	Ring-necked Duck	Wellington Gravel Pits
	Yellow-legged Gull	Upper Lugg Meadows
February	Black Redstart	Holmer, Widemarsh, Cathedral
	Cattle Egret	Hampton Park
	Firecrest	Lea Bailey Inclosures
	Lord Derby's Parakeet	Aylestone Hill
	White-fronted Goose	Bodenham Lake
March	Bonaparte's Gull	Brockhall Gravel Pits
	Cattle Egret	Lugg Bridge Quarry
	Chukar	Bartestree, Wellington
	Firecrest	Lee Bailey Inclosures, Queenswood
	Grey Plover	Brockhall Gravel Pits
	Little Gull	Lower Lugg Meadows
	Mediterranean Gull	Brockhall Gravel Pits, Pixley
	Ring-necked Duck	Wellington Gravel Pits, Bodenham Lake
	Sanderling	Brockhall Gravel Pits
	Short-eared Owl	Wellington Gravel Pits
April	Black-winged Stilt	Brockhall Gravel Pits
	Cattle Egret	Lugg Bridge Quarry
	Chukar	Wellington
	Firecrest	Lea Bailey Inclosures, High Vinnals
	Grey Plover	Brockhall Gravel Pits
	Mediterranean Gull	Brockhall Gravel Pits
	White Wagtail	Brockhall Gravel Pits
May	Chukar	Wellington, Queenswood
	Firecrest	Lea Bailey Inclosures, High Vinnals, Barnet Wood
	Quail	Hatfield
June	Bittern	Bodenham Lake
	Firecrest	Lea Bailey Inclosures, Shobdon Court Pools, Wapley Hill
	Grey Plover	Brockhall Gravel Pits
	Little Stint	Brockhall Gravel Pits
	Mediterranean Gull	Brockhall Gravel pits
	Red-crested Pochard	Wellington Gravel Pits
	Spotted Redshank	Brockhall Gravel Pits
	Turnstone	Brockhall Gravel Pits

Table 1, continued…

Month	Species	Locations
June (cont.)	Wood Sandpiper	Brockhall Gravel Pits
July	Bittern	Bodenham Lake
	Mediterranean Gull	Wellington Gravel Pits
	Red-crested Pochard	Wellington Gravel Pits
August	Firecrest	Holme Lacy
	Marsh Harrier	Lulham
	Red-crested Pochard	Wellington Gravel Pits
	Ruff	Brockhall Gravel Pits
	Wood Sandpiper	Brockhall Gravel Pits
September	Firecrest	Gamber Meadows
	Mediterranean Gull	Brockhall Gravel Pits
	Ruff	Brockhall Gravel Pits, Kenchester Pools
	Wood Duck	Eccleswall Court
	Yellow-legged Gull	Brockhall Gravel Pits
October	Cattle Egret	Brockhall Gravel Pits
	Firecrest	Ledbury
	Hoopoe	Much Cowarne
	Ring-necked Duck	Brockhall Gravel Pits
November	Cattle Egret	Brockhall Gravel Pits
	Firecrest	Lower Wolton Farm, Much Marcle
	Great Northern Diver	Wellington Gravel Pits
December	Cattle Egret	Wellington Gravel Pits
	Long-eared Owl	Tretawdy Farm
	Short-eared Owl	Lugg Bridge Quarry
	Yellow-legged Gull	Lugg Meadows

With the kind permission of Mick Colquhoun, photographs of five of these species, sighted in Herefordshire in 2023, accompany this report.

Plate 11.1 shows a White Wagtail, a passage migrant with one or two confirmed sightings each year in Herefordshire.

The Grey Plover (Plate 11.2) breeds in the tundra of Siberia and migrates to coastal areas of Western Europe, including British coasts, and to Africa for the winter. They are very occasionally seen inland.

The Turnstone (Plate 11.3) is a coastal bird found throughout the world. In Britain, it is a scarce breeder and a passage and winter visitor. The Turnstone is amber-listed and very rarely seen in Herefordshire.

Plate 11.4 shows a Great Northern Diver. The species breeds in Iceland, Greenland, and North America, but outside the breeding season may be found in the North Sea and the English Channel.

Finally, the Hoopoe, shown in Plate 11.5, breeds in central and southern Europe and in

the Middle East and Asia. Northern populations are migratory, wintering in Sub-Saharan Africa. Most sightings in Britain result from birds overshooting on their migration journeys during the spring. The earliest Herefordshire record was made in 1953, and there have been occasional sightings since then.

CONSERVATION CONCERN

The *State of Nature* report for 2023 documents how human impacts are driving sweeping changes in wildlife in the UK.[1] As well as an overarching assessment of UK flora and fauna, there are separate reports for England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Wales to look at each country in more depth. The reports pool data and expertise from more than sixty nature conservation and research organisations, a partnership unparallelled in UK conservation.

The UK, like most other countries worldwide, has experienced a significant loss of biodiversity. The trends in nature presented here cover, at most, fifty years, but these follow on from major changes to the UK's nature over previous centuries. As a result, the UK is now one of the most nature-depleted countries on Earth. The main causes of these declines are clear, as are many ways in which we can reduce impacts and help struggling species. The evidence from the last fifty years shows that, both on land and in freshwater, significant and ongoing changes in the way we manage our land for agriculture, as well as the effects of climate change, are having the biggest impacts on our wildlife. At sea and around our coasts, the main pressures on nature are unsustainable fishing, climate change, and marine development.

More broadly, among the public and policy makers alike, there has been growing recognition of the value of nature, including its role in tackling climate change and the need for its conservation. With each report, our monitoring of change improves, and we have never had a better understanding of the state of nature. Yet, despite progress in ecosystem restoration, conserving species, and moving towards nature-friendly land and sea use, the UK's nature and wider environment continues, overall, to decline and degrade. The UK has set ambitious targets to address nature loss through the Global Biodiversity Framework, and although our knowledge of how to do this is excellent, the size of the response and investment remains far from what is needed given the scale and pace of the crisis.

Of great concern is the fact that 2023 has been the hottest year ever recorded, following a decade of the hottest years ever, accompanied by extreme weather events of heat waves, wildfires, storms, high winds, and floods. Herefordshire has not been exempt. There is continuing concern about the impact of climate change on birds, including the problem that fewer overwintering migrant species are arriving as the climate crisis affects their habitat. Ducks, geese, and swans normally overwinter in the UK, arriving from Canada, Greenland, Spitzbergen, and Siberia, as well as from Iceland and Scandinavia, but in Britain, following a series of poor breeding years caused by warmer summers in the Arctic, fewer are arriving; for example, winter numbers of Bewick's Swan are down by more than 70% in less than a decade. On the other hand, we are seeing species such as Great White Egret overwintering here; a few individuals are quite often seen on the Wye and on Herefordshire's gravel pits and lakes.

2023 has, as usual, seen the publication of a number of interesting research studies. I have picked out one from *Bird Study*, the BTO journal, to describe here, related to the effects of climate change. A study by Reid *et al.* (2023) in Northern Ireland has shown that wildfires on moorland reduce the richness and abundance of bird species, along with the seedbank and abundance of ground beetles and spiders.[2] One year after the fire, the richness of bird species had declined to 50% and their abundance to 68% of the equivalent values in unburnt areas. These

effects were still detectable three years after the fires. Stonechat and Redshank vanished from the burnt areas.

This study is relevant for Herefordshire where the margins of the county include some treeless moorland, with blanket bogs and wet or dry heaths. UK moorland is internationally important and protected under the European Union Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), EEC 1992. Peatland bird species include the ground-nesting Hen Harrier, which is of conservation concern and protected under the EU Birds Directive, carried over in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Amendment (EU Exit) Regulations 2019, following the departure of the UK from the EU. Peatland plays a significant role as a carbon sink. Moorland may be subject to both controlled burning, to maintain the habitat for grouse shooting, and to wildfires. Wildfires differ from controlled burns in that they are associated with dry weather and occur not only in early spring, when they can develop from out-of-control management burns, but also in late spring and summer, when they are mostly caused by arson or accidental ignition. This means that they are more likely to occur when many birds are actively breeding. Wildfires may burn longer, hotter, and deeper than well-managed control burns and so can have particularly detrimental impacts on shallow blanket peat.

BIRDSONG: FURTHER READING

T. Birkhead, *Bird Sense—What's It Like to be a Bird*, Bloomsbury 2012.
S. Lee, *The Nightingale, notes on a songbird,* Penguin 2023
S. Lovatt, *Birdsong in a time of silence*, Penguin 2022
A. Thomas, *RSPB Guide to Birdsong*, Bloomsbury 2019.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] Published online by the State of Nature Partnership. The whole report and reports on individual countries within the British Isles are available at https://stateofnature.org.uk.
[2] N. Reid, R. Kelly, W.I. Montgomery, 'Impact of wildfires on ecosystems and bird communities on designated areas of blanket bog and heath'. *Bird Study* (70) 2023, pp. 113-126.

HEREFORDSHIRE NESTBOX RECORDING SCHEME 2023

Report and data compilation by David Coker, Herefordshire Wildlife Trust Co-ordinator.

Background

The Nestbox Recording Scheme (NRS) started when the Herefordshire Nature Trust (HNT) (now the Herefordshire Wildlife Trust; HWT) came into being in 1962 via the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club. In the following year, sixty nestboxes were made by pupils of Whitecross School under the supervision of Dr Charles Walker. As this was before any reserve had been acquired by HNT, the boxes were set up in promising hilly woodlands, such as Moccas, Mary Knoll, and Shobdon—monitoring at all three sites continues to this day. The first volunteer recorders were HOC members who had joined HNT and had the expertise. Therefore, some of the early woodlands have long-term records with equally long-term recorders and ringers, some of whom have been involved for forty years, and their dedication is much appreciated.

The duties of recorders are to maintain the boxes, now provided by HWT, to clear them ready for occupation and, once nesting has started in April, to make as nearly weekly visits as possible, recording the species nesting, the number of eggs laid, and hatching and fledging numbers; these details are passed on to the HWT Co-ordinator for collating. Recorders also notify named ringers for certain species, such as Pied Flycatcher, Nuthatch, and Redstart.

Although no formal assessment has been made, it is evident that the age profile of the county's nest recorders is steadily ageing. The recorders at some sites have had to retire, and others are finding it challenging to complete a full set of visits. As a result, the number of sites being recorded has steadily declined, and results for some species, particularly the common tits, are incomplete. For example, the presence of an identified tit species may be confirmed when the adult is seen sitting, and evidence of fledging found later (nest flattened, with droppings and feather dust—fragments of waxy sheaths in which feathers grow). From this, it may be inferred that at least one egg was laid and at least one chick hatched and fledged, but the full clutch and brood sizes remain unknown.

This report presents the summary data for 2023 from five HWT reserves, two National Nature Reserve (NNR) sites, and ten other sites.

Results

The results of sites recorded and nestbox usage for the past 10 years are given in Table 1.

Table 1. ***Overall results for the last 10 years, 2014 – 2023***

Record Details	2023	2022	2021	2209	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Sites recorded	17	19	20	18 †	25	25	26	27	27	23
Boxes available	738	749‡	768	645‡	845	825	854*	871	852	731
Boxes used	329#	396	409	364	484	485	390	501	465	447
% used		52.9	53.3	56.4	57.3	58.8	56.2*	58.0	54.6	61.1

 # The total of boxes actually used in 2023 is higher than that reported, owing to difficulties with recording all species using boxes at several sites, so no figure is given for % used.
** No record at three sites in 2017, so '% used' is based on 694 boxes used at the other 23 sites.*
† The marked reduction in sites recorded in 2020 was a result of inability to inspect boxes at several sites monitored in earlier years.
‡ This figure includes a few boxes which are provided for dormice, but which tits will also use.

As indicated above, at four sites it was not possible this year to record the species in every box used. However, at the sites where complete data could be collected, the take-up rate of boxes in 2023 was 53.2% (286 out of 538 available), marginally lower than in earlier years. As usual, this mean figure covers a wide variation between sites, from a maximum of 85% (17 out of 20 boxes) at Wellington Wood to a minimum of 20% (5 out of 25) at White Rocks; the observer at the latter site commented on the very poor occupancy, which continued from 2022 and may require replacement of some boxes. These two sites also had the maximum and minimum occupancy figures respectively in 2022.

March and April 2023 saw an alternation between colder and milder spells of weather, with a notable cold spell in early March, and it was chilly for a time in late April. Up to the middle of May, any spells of settled weather were short-lived, and southern areas were quite wet with relatively little sunshine, but the second half of May was much drier and sunnier.

Mean temperatures for March were equal to the long-term average. April also saw near-average temperatures generally. Most of May was warmer than average, especially by day and in western areas, though with no particularly warm spells.

Many areas in the southern half of the UK had more than double their average March rainfall. The overall UK rainfall total was 155% of average, making it provisionally the sixth-wettest March in a series back to 1836. April rainfall totals were generally closer to average. May was rather wet in a band from Devon to Norfolk but a very dry month in some other areas, so that rainfall for the UK overall was 55% of average.

Sunshine was in relatively short supply for many areas during March, particularly the south. May was quite sunny in Wales and western/central England. Sunshine totals for the UK overall were 74% of average in March, 102% of average in April, and 108% in May.

Table 2 presents the detailed results for the various species encountered. Incomplete data were received for some sites, so the figures for tit species are minima, and the numbers of chicks hatched have in some cases been inferred.

Table 2. Species results for 2023 compared with 2022

Species	Sites		Nests		Eggs		Fledged		% success	
	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022
Pied Flycatcher	11	11	89	76	457*	491	285*	377	62.4*	76.8
Blue Tit †	15	19	125	158	936	1,329	645	947	68.9	71.3
Great Tit †	15	18	87	121	486	823	365	608	75.1	73.9
Coal Tit	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Marsh Tit	–	2	–	2	–	14	–	13	–	92.9
Tit species	6	7	16	20	63	62	–	6	–	9.7
Nuthatch	4	5	7	11	36	64	27	51	75.0	79.7
Redstart	2	3	2	3	8	16	7	13	87.5	81.3
Wren	2	1	3	5	8	3	6	3	75.0	100.0

'% success' is calculated as total number of chicks fledged as a percentage of total eggs laid.
***** *Figures for eggs laid and young fledged are minima; nests were recorded, but actual numbers of eggs and young could not be recorded.*

† *All figures for Blue and Great Tit are minima; owing to pressure of time only Pied Flycatcher nests were recorded at some sites. The actual number of nests, etc. for the tit species actually present must be significantly higher.*

The number of Pied Flycatcher sites was unchanged from 2022, though with a change in contributing sites: St Wulstan's Wood, Welsh Newton had a nest of the species, for the first time in nearly thirty years, which successfully fledged; on the other hand, no flycatcher was recorded this year at Yoke Wood.

In view of the missing or incomplete data for tits at several sites, no meaningful deduction can be drawn about the figures for those species this year.

The nests indicated as 'Tit species' typically fail after some eggs have been laid, but before any adult or hatched chick can be observed, so the species cannot be determined with confidence

Table 3. Comparative success rates in fledging for various species for the last four years

Species	**2023**		**2022**		**2021**		**2020**	
	Sites	% Success	Sites	% Success	Sites	% Success	Sites	% Success
Pied Flycatcher	11	62.4	11	76.8	10	73.8	8	†
Blue Tit	15	68.9	19	71.3	19	56.5	16	†
Great Tit	15	75.1	18	73.9	17	56.9	16	†
Coal Tit	–	–	–	–	2	35.3	–	–
Marsh Tit	–	–	2	92.9	–	–	1	83.3
Nuthatch	4	75.0	5	79.7	3	37.5	5	80.0
Redstart	2	87.5	3	81.3	2	33.3	2	†
Wren	2	75.0	1	100.0	1	–	1	100.0

† No meaningful % success rate can be calculated.

The % success measure compensates for variations in the number of sites contributing records. This has been generally stable over the last ten years, though with a dip in the middle of the last decade. Nuthatch shows more variation than other species, partly owing to the small number of sites involved: success or failure of one or two nests can have a marked effect on the percentage.

Table 4. Pied Flycatcher results summary, 2000 - 2023

Year	Sites	Nests	Eggs	Fledged	% success
2023	11	89	457*	285*	62.4*
2022	11	76	491	377	76.8
2021	10	106	527	389	73.8
2020	8	69	369 †	243	†
2019	13	101	674	429	63.6
2018	13	109	527	397	75.3
2017	13	144	774	430	55.5
2016	17	120	666	401	60.2
2015	16	114	742	434	58.5
2014	11	86	468	304	65.0
2013	14	135	773	563	72.8
2012	9	75	477	304	63.7
2011	11	87	543	354	65.2
Mean 2000-2010	15	97	606	389	64.2

** Figures for eggs laid and young fledged in 2023 are minima; nests were recorded, but actual numbers of eggs and young could not be recorded.*
† The figure for eggs laid is a minimum, and likely to be an underestimate; accordingly, no meaningful % success rate can be calculated.

At one site with Pied Flycatchers, it was not possible to record fully the numbers of eggs laid and chicks hatched and fledged. The success rates at the ten sites where Pied Flycatchers' fledging success could be fully recorded varied from 51.9% (Merryhill Wood, Mansel Lacy) to 100% (St Wulstan's Wood, Welsh Newton, with a single nest); the success rate at Whitney Sawmills improved from last year's lowest figure of 45.2% to 63.3%. Only four out of the eleven sites had a success rate greater than 70%, but another four had a success rate greater than 60%.

The Pied Flycatcher was added to the Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) Red list in 2015, and this was also the case in Europe, where their numbers and nesting results were similarly declining, for reasons yet to be established.

Acknowledgements

Our thanks go to the ringers and recorders who persevere each year with their visits in the face of varying levels of nest failures and fledgling mortality, as well as weather conditions.

[For those interested in the details of individual nestbox sites, an electronic copy of the full HWT report can be obtained from HOC]

Book Reviews 2023

By KEITH RAY, MARK O'HANLON, JOHN C. EISEL, DAVID WHITEHEAD

Lost Realms: Histories of Britain from the Romans to the Vikings by Thomas Williams (William Collins, hbk: 2022; pbk: 2023) 413pp., ISBN (pbk) 978-0-00-817198-8, £10.99. This up-to-date introduction to a selection of the 'lesser' kingdoms of early medieval Britain was initially intended (according to the author's introductory essay, 'Little Kingdoms') as an account of 'how and why Britain changed between the end of functioning Roman government…and the turmoil of the ninth century when Viking armies irrevocably scrambled the political geography of the island' (p.14). However, the author found the idea of reiterating an Anglocentric 'top down' narrative, dominated by the four major kingdoms of Northumbria, Wessex, Mercia, and East Anglia, inherently less appealing (given how much their histories have dominated traditional narratives) than relating the history of those smaller realms 'whose struggles and failures…better represented early medieval Britain in all its diversity of place and experience' (p.23).

So, step forward into the limelight the early kingdoms of Elmet (modern county of West Yorkshire), Hwicce (Gloucestershire and Worcestershire), Lindsey (North Lincolnshire), Dumnonia (Devon and Cornwall), Essex (Essex and Middlesex), Rheged (Cumbria, Dumfries and Galloway), Powys (Montgomeryshire, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Cheshire, and Shropshire), Sussex (East Sussex, West Sussex) and Fortriu (Nairn, Moray, Banff, Buchan, Aberdeen, and northern Kincardine). As well as cultural, linguistic, and geographical contrasts, the historical trajectories of these nine kingdoms differed hugely, subject as they were to varying exposure to external influences.

Readers of these *Transactions* will inevitably be most interested in the chapters concerning the Hwicce and Powys, since the lands of both these historical polities bordered upon those of the people geographically placed between them. These latter included Bede's 'Westerna' (among whom were *possibly* the same people as the late-attested 'Magonsaete'), the Mercians, and the (undoubtedly British) people of the Kingdom of Ergyng, who together once inhabited the land area of what is now Herefordshire. Much of the rest of this review will therefore be devoted to some observations on those two chapters.

The Hwicce were the people of that part of the Severn valley encompassing Gloucester and Worcester, and of the Cotswolds. We read their history mostly through the lens of the West Saxons, who bordered them to the south. Williams puts forward a very plausible case that the propaganda embodied in both the Northumbrian cleric Bede's writing and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (a product of Wessex) probably included inventing the idea that there was a single battle (at Dyrham on the high Cotswold scarp north of Bath in 577AD) in which the (named) semi-mythic leaders of the West Saxons defeated the (named) British 'kings' of Cirencester, Gloucester, and Bath: a defeat that was said to have led immediately to the (Saxon) annexation of the relevant territories.

The author goes on to discuss the alternative likelihood, that the fundamentally British, Christianised, Hwicce people gradually absorbed Saxon migrants while maintaining the independent identity of their insular Christianity. This changed when the continental-inspired Synods of the church, culminating in Whitby in 664, extinguished several of the unorthodox (from the perspective of the Papacy at Rome) practices of the British church. The critical date in

the transformation of the Kingdom of the Hwicce into a political satellite of Mercia was not in fact 577, but rather 628AD, when Penda, then King of the Mercians, defeated the Gewisse (early West Saxon) leaders, Cynegils and Cwichelm, in battle joined at Cirencester (p. 90). From that point on, there is mention of Kings of the Hwicce (mostly witnessing Mercian charters) as Mercian under-kings until their gradual demotion led, by the time that Offa of Mercia reigned in the late 8th century, to further reduction, to the status merely of Mercian ealdormen.

Meanwhile, the Kingdom of Powys appears likely to have comprised what might best be termed a confederation of British peoples, whose lands may have once been focused upon the area of the Severn valley around *Viroconium Cornoviorum* (possibly meaning 'broad place of the Cornovii tribe'—see A.L.F. Rivet and C. Smith (1979), *The Place-Names of Roman Britain*, pp. 505-6—that is, Roman Wroxeter, south-east of Shrewsbury). Williams notes the well-known correlation between Wroxeter, the Wrekin, and the *Wreocansaete* (the latter identified as such in early Mercian tribal lists), while also remarking that 'what the Wreocansaete had to do with the Cornovii, however, and what either had to do with the Kingdom of Powys, is the central mystery at the heart of this region's history' (p.273).

Williams rehearses Alan Lane's (2014) debunking of the idea that there was a substantial sub-Roman centre at Wroxeter, built in the ruins of the baths-basilica complex (pp. 270-2), while suggesting that there was a more likely successor to the Roman regional capital in a sub-Roman royal centre, potentially a little to the west, higher up the valley near present-day Welshpool. Powys is not named as a kingdom until the early ninth century (p.255), and by that time its origins were also lost in mythmaking and rhetoric—in this case preserved in the (now-illegible) text inscribed in the late ninth century on a classical-style, columnar pillar, at Valle Crucis near Llangollen. This relates how the then King of Powys, Cyngen, set up the pillar in commemoration of his grandfather Eliseg's victory over the Anglo-Saxons, winning back lands previously appropriated by the English. But after campaigns by both Offa (d.796) and his successor Coenwulf (d. 821, at Holywell in Flintshire), it was Ceolwulf I (r.821-3) who defeated and reduced Powys to a Mercian dependency. And it was the defeat of the Mercians by the West Saxon king Ecgberht at the battle of Ellendun (near Swindon) in 825 that, ironically, was what enabled Powysian independence to resume, although it was soon to be absorbed into the more powerful Kingdom of Gwynedd to the west.

Despite the fascinating unpicking in this book of past, and frankly confusing, reconstructions of the trajectories of these two kingdoms which neighboured Herefordshire, we are nonetheless still left in doubt about the exact identity (and political development) of the people who inhabited the lands between the Black Mountains and the Malvern Hills. It is supposed that their territory extended across the area that, by the time of the Norman Conquest, stood within the Diocese of Hereford, but this is only hinted at rather than explored in this book. As David Whitehead pointed out in his 2022/3 Presidential Address, it is by no means a simple matter to establish a coherent picture, using the meagre documentary sources that throw any light whatsoever on the history of the period 400-700 (and even later) in Herefordshire.

There have been some attempts to focus upon this latter subject in book form in recent years (for example, Raymond Perry's *Anglo-Saxon Herefordshire*, 2002), but they tend only to have rehearsed accounts prepared in the later 20th century: for instance, the story that suggested that there was a simple and steady extinguishing of indigenous British communities by a westward-running tide of Anglo-Saxon settlement. So, we still await an in-depth, book-length study of the period using modern source-criticism (for the latter, see for example, Patrick Sims-Williams's textual evaluation, *The Book of Llandaf as a Historical Source*, 2019) that also draws

closely (and in an informed way) upon the archaeological evidence that has gradually accumulated over the past twenty-five years.

In conclusion, *Lost Realms* is representative of an important new trend within the writing of post-Roman/early medieval histories of Britain, whereby authors use the limited historical sources, augmented substantially by the findings of archaeology. The most incisive of such studies have so far been those of Robin Fleming, whose two works *Britain After Rome: the Fall and Rise 400 to 1070* (published in 2010) and her most recent, *The Material Fall of Roman Britain 300-525CE* (2021), constitute milestones in the process. These books have provided us with comprehensive insights as to how much light archaeological evidence can throw upon the complexities of political trajectories, provided that the well-worn/overworked documentary sources are not automatically seen as providing the narrative framework within which all other evidence is made to fit. While *Lost Realms* does not supply us with a coherent picture of pre-Norman Herefordshire, it nonetheless does provide clues as to how such a narrative may eventually emerge.

Keith Ray

Facsimile copy of *Pomona Herefordiensis* (1811), by Thomas Andrew Knight, published by Fines Mundi Verlag (2020), pp. 132, *c.*£50 plus p&p from Germany. Also, from the same German publisher (2020), facsimile copy of *The Herefordshire Pomona* (1876-1885), by Robert Hogg and Henry G. Bull, two volumes (pp. 800 in total), *c.*£200 plus p&p.

Members of the Woolhope Club will be familiar with Thomas Andrew Knight's *Pomona Herefordiensis* (1811), but I suspect few of us will have the good fortune of having an original on our bookshelves. That is to say, copies of the book are available, but today's price tag of circa £4,000 is likely to put it beyond the aspiration of most of us.

Having conducted extensive research into the often dubious quality of facsimile reprints, it is with great pleasure that I can share news of a high-quality, full-colour reproduction of the book, at an 'affordable' price—around £50 (plus p&p).

Published in Germany by Fines Mundi Verlag (2020), the hardback book is printed on high-quality paper, and includes all thirty full-page, full-colour *Pomona* plates and accompanying text. The publisher has even had the foresight to include a thin ribbon bookmark; an extra touch that speaks volumes about their attention to detail. Measuring 30.5cm x 23cm, it is similar in size to the original edition but with a 1.4cm spine. This is not a ropey Optical Character Recognition (OCR) reprint—the text and illustrations are clean and crisp, having no doubt been digitally scanned and cleaned with care prior to publication. The end result is a high-quality, faithful reproduction of the original book; an exemplary example of how facsimile printing should be done.

I was pleasantly surprised to find that the same publisher also stocks *The Herefordshire Pomona* (1876-1885), by Robert Hogg and Henry G. Bull. Although this title is more widely available, expect to pay £4,000 and upwards for a decent, original set. Members will also be aware of The Folio Society limited edition (2014), which sells today for around £600. In contrast, the two-volume facsimile set from Germany (2020) costs around £200 (plus p&p)—not cheap but certainly incredible value.

Like Knight's Pomona, this title is reproduced as a hardback book using high-quality, full-colour plates, complete with ribbon bookmark. The illustrations have been cleaned, so do not suffer from the foxing scars and discolouration commonly found in the original edition. What sets it apart though, is that the two-volume set measures 43cm x 31cm and so is actually slightly

larger than the original; each volume has a 4cm spine, and the combined weight exceeds 6kg. These books are huge, and one may struggle to find a bookshelf big enough to store them, but that is an enviable challenge!

The publisher specialises in facsimile reprints, using a simple but distinctive cover design template across the title range. Strangely, they annotate the spine with title and author printed from 'bottom to top', rather than from 'top to bottom', but this may be a European house-style. Other than the addition of a brief acknowledgement on the verso of the title page, the books appear to be faithful reproductions and certainly exceeded my expectations. For these reasons, I am pleased to recommend them.

The easiest way to purchase is via the publisher's eBay shop (prices convert from Euros) but expect to wait a few weeks for delivery from Germany. Use the book title as your eBay search criterion and check for the eBay account name: Antiquariat Nußbaum. Alternatively, they have their own website (www.fines-mundi.de) or can be contacted via email (info@fines-mundi.de).

Mark O'Hanlon

The Old Words of Herefordshire **edited by Richard Wheeler (Logaston Press 2024 ,192pp., ISBN: 978-1-910839-76-8), £12.99.**

The Great War of 1914-18 was a catalyst for change. Before that, the country was relatively stable, with little social mobility, but since there has been much change, not always for the better. Herefordshire villages, which changed little over the centuries and had a community of local families, have now changed out of all recognition. They are seen as desirable places to live. With the influx of new residents from elsewhere, children from local families cannot afford to live in the place of their birth. The sense of community and continuity is gradually being eroded.

Against this background, I find it surprising that regional accents or intonations are still well defined, if declining. What has mostly gone, however, is the use of words of mainly local origin. These are designated dialect words, although such a definition is fraught with difficulties.

This new book is a compilation of some 3,000 old words mostly lost from everyday use in Herefordshire and only a fraction of those formerly in use. The introduction outlines the history of collecting such words, which began with a relatively short glossary published by the Rev. John Duncumb in 1804. A much longer glossary was published in 1839 by George Cornewall Lewis; after he succeeded his father in the baronetcy, he became Chancellor of the Exchequer (his statue stands outside the Shire Hall in Hereford). Then, in 1887, the Rev F. T. Havergal, vicar of Upton Bishop, published a work entitled *Herefordshire Words and Phrases, Colloquial and Archaic*, to be followed the next year by a list of local bird names, collected by Dr H. G. Bull and appearing as an appendix in his posthumously published *Notes on the Birds of Herefordshire.* Major modern studies include those by Andrew Haggard (1972) and Mrs Winifred Leeds (1974), drawing on material from around Ledbury and Ross-on-Wye respectively.

This then is the material from which the compilation has been made. It is pointed out that words may have been collected from a restricted location but may have a wider usage, not necessarily limited by county boundaries. So, for instance, the use of the word 'ganzy' for a type of jersey, collected in Stoke Edith, is actually very widespread, was certainly current in Co. Durham (used by my mother, a native of the area) and is still used in Shetland.

Farming is, and always has been, the main industry in Herefordshire, and it is not surprising that about 600 words related to it are included. Since farming and rural life are

conservative, dialect words have probably survived longer in that context than in any other, so words such as 'yaffle', for the green woodpecker, are still used occasionally by the older generation. Yaffle is another word of much wider distribution. I have also heard the word 'shuff' used for 'sheaf' (not given in the compilation) but it is not clear whether this is a dialect word or merely a different pronunciation. Similarly, the word 'lezzer' (my spelling, I've never seen it written down), which is clearly derived from 'leasow' (pasture, which is given), is in the same category. This word was in use in Ullingswick in the 20th century

Some of the terms listed are actually standard usage, particularly those quoted relating to hop-picking. Although it is now archaic, I would argue that the unusual but widespread word 'higgler'—a pedlar of small items—in the 19th century was more standard usage than dialect. A search of the British Newspaper Archive finds this term used right across the country, not just in Herefordshire.

There is the odd word that I would query. So, for instance, the word 'fleam' is said to be an alternative to 'phlegm'. However, a fleam was a sharp instrument used in bloodletting, and how this other interpretation came about will need checking in the original compilation.

This is a book for reference, or dipping into, but it is worth reading the introduction in its entirety. It gives a window into a simpler past, and as a hardback book it will stand regular usage. On the front cover is a line engraving of an apple, with a dialect word ('crink', a type of small, sweet apple), while inside the covers there are line drawings of chain harrows. I will enjoy having it on my shelves.

John Eisel

The Mortimers of Wigmore 1066-1485: Dynasty of Destiny *edited by* Paul Dryburgh and Philip Hume (Logaston Press, 2023), xxv + 325 pp., illustrated, ISBN 978-1-910839-65-2.

This is a handsome hardback, published under the imprint of Fircone Books Ltd., copiously illustrated with vignettes of medieval manuscripts and modern views, especially of the Mortimer castles. It is the fifth in a series, published by the Mortimer History Society, which was inaugurated in 2000 with the publication of *The Mortimers: Lords of the March* by Charles Hopkinson and Martin Speight. Since that time, it seems that many medieval scholars have discovered that, within their specialism, there is a Mortimer lurking. Thus, several of the articles in the present publication examine the role of the family in the broader canvas of national history in the 14th and 15th centuries.

However, the eleven chapters are organised in a roughly chronological fashion, which implies that much of the local history occurs in the early chapters, i.e., before the execution of Roger, 1st Earl of March, in 1330. It is fitting, perhaps, that the first essay by Emma Cavell looks at the Mortimer women from *c*.1066 to 1282. In this chapter, wives are joined with sisters and daughters, all of whom extended Mortimer influence. Wives frequently brought land, but they were also expected to defend castles and frequently became involved in high politics. Perhaps the most significant marriage was that of Roger (d.1246) to Gwladus Ddu, the daughter of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth, King of Gwynedd. Through Gwladus the Mortimers claimed descent from King Arthur, which underpinned their imperial aspirations on the west side of the Welsh Border.

This issue is dealt with in David Stephenson's exploration of the Mortimer expansion into Maelienydd, to the west of Wigmore. Marriage also brought castles, a subject explored by John R. Kenyon. The three great castles were Wigmore, Ludlow, and Chirk. The highest density of castles built by Mortimer vassals, many of which are simply earthworks today, are to be found in Maelienyth, which was fought over for two centuries. It is well worth visiting Cefnllys, to the

east of Llandrindod and arguably the greatest Mortimer stronghold, sited in an Iron Age hillfort. In the imagination of contemporary bards, it was comparable to Roman Gloucester! More than Wigmore and Ludlow, it distills the over-weaning imperial aspirations of the Mortimers.

The Mortimer empire achieved its apogee in the early 14th century under the aegis of Roger, the 1st Earl of March (1287-1330). This is examined through a survey of his estates by Paul Dryburgh, which commences with an analysis of a recently found set of accounts, kept by the Mortimer bailiff for the year 1387-8. The original document can now be found in the Herefordshire Archive and Records Centre. Roger Mortimer (1287-1330) played a central role in the dangerous politics of the reign of Edward II. He was, of course, the lover of Edward's queen, Isabella of France. Two essays celebrate his notorious activities. Laura Tomkins examines in detail his escape from the Tower of London in 1323, and Barbara Wright discusses in detail his execution in 1330—he chose hanging rather than evisceration. Good pre-prandial reading!

This was a low point, which should have marked the end of the Mortimer story, but Andy King explores the revival of their fortunes when, in 1354, Edward III annulled the verdict of treason and restored the earldom of March to Roger, the 2nd Earl (1328-68), whose grandson, Edmund, was betrothed to Edward III's granddaughter, Philippa. The informal dynamics of Mortimer power are explored by Patrick McDonagh with reference to Ireland, where Edward Mortimer, 3rd Earl of March (1352-81) was Lord Lieutenant and depended upon an extensive 'affinity' of middling families who had benefitted from Mortimer patronage. Remarkably, these bonds of loyalty survived, notwithstanding the series of early deaths which stalked the Mortimer men in the 14th century.

This hiatus in mature Mortimer heirs is explored by Chris Given Wilson, who points out that between 1354 and 1425 the earldom of March was held in wardship for 38 years but, notwithstanding the efforts of Henry IV and Henry V, the Mortimer family maintained their claim to the throne. The Wars of the Roses, he believes, were not a struggle between York and Lancaster, but Mortimers and Lancastrians. Ian Mortimer takes up this theme, describing the career of the obscure Sir John Mortimer who, in 1424, was murdered by Shakespeare's 'golden boy', Henry V, because of his claim to the throne. Again, the implication of this rather random killing is that the Wars of the Roses have been misnamed. The Mortimers were frequently the 'fall-guys' for the Yorkists.

In the final chapter of the book, Joanna Laynesmith introduces Anne Mortimer (1390-1411), daughter of Roger, 4th Earl of March and wife of Richard, Earl of Cambridge, among whose sons was Richard Plantagenet (1411-60), Duke of York and the 6th Earl of March. His wealth came from his Mortimer ancestry, which, of course, was inherited by his sons, Edward IV and Richard III. This, together with their Mortimer claims to the throne, subsequently passed to Henry Tudor (VII) via his wife, Elizabeth of York.

For the residents of Herefordshire, this is a rare book. It explores, through several generations, the story of a local family at the centre of the political life of the nation. Clearly, its central theme is to pursue a local family whose success took them far from Herefordshire, but their possessions lay on the Welsh Border, and absenteeism produced copious documentation. For aspiring local historians, the extensive notes and bibliography open up new fields of research in local and distant repositories as well as flagging up expensive books, which are rarely found outside the walls of university libraries.

David Whitehead

Artisan Art: Vernacular wall paintings in the Welsh Marches, 1550–1650, by Kathryn Davies, new edition (Logaston Press, 2024), 304 pp., paperback, illustrated, £25. ISBN 978-1910839706. Advance notice pending review in the 2024 edition.

This is a revised and updated edition of a book originally published in 2008. It became available in August 2024, late in the cycle of preparing these *Transactions* for 2023; in view of this and because a likely reviewer became unwell, it has been necessary to delay a review until next year. However, advance notification is provided here because this is a substantial and beautifully illustrated book, including *c*.200 colour photographs, on a topic likely to interest many readers. For those wishing to find out more, details can be found via the Logaston Press website.

Life in Early Medieval Wales by Nancy Edwards (Oxford University Press, hbk: 2023), 511pp., ISBN 978-0-198-733-218, £100.00.

This attractively produced, medium-format book features just over seventy well-chosen figures (including many maps and plans), with twenty of the illustrations reproduced in colour. The task the author set herself was to consider, from *c*.AD300-1050, 'how people lived in late Roman and early Medieval Wales, and how their lives and communities changed over the course of this period'. Given the deficiencies and difficulties of the available evidence, both historical and archaeological, this represents a huge challenge, and the author is one of the few contemporary scholars who has the 'bandwidth' to have undertaken it. That she successfully navigates these difficult waters is much to her credit, and to the benefit of the scholarly community, to whom the book is largely, but not exclusively, addressed.

The book's two introductory chapters summarise first changing interpretive stances and the varied data sources; and then geographical and temporal parameters. The two following chapters review alternative narratives for the earlier, and then the later, phases of pre-Norman history. Three further chapters successively encompass settlements, farming, and 'craft, display and trade'. As one would expect of someone whose academic life's work has focused upon the archaeology of early Christian communities and their commemorative monuments in Wales, Edwards devotes four entire chapters of the book to these and related subjects. She surveys first the evidence for Christian structures and localities, next for 'conversion, commemoration and burial', then for sites and landscapes (with strong focus on churches, chapels, and monastic communities), and lastly for rituals and practices, including death and commemoration. A chapter immediately preceding the concluding one addresses the themes of power and authority.

Subjects such as élite importation of exotic and luxury items from the Mediterranean world (during the 5th to 7th centuries) are handled deftly, with up-to-the-minute information. The lack of definite identification of high-status residences, occupied *after* élite occupation (often, *re*occupation) of hillforts had ended, is correctly seen as a topic that remains to be addressed. Important advances in recent studies are nonetheless highlighted, such as new appreciation (from excavation) of the significance of corn-drying kilns to early Medieval crop-processing; and increasing awareness of the amount of metalworking taking place across the spectrum of settlement sites. The extent of content about Christian places, and especially about commemoration, substantially reflects the author's own research. Over more than four decades, she has investigated the forms and formulae of inscriptions on memorial stones that were such a feature of 'late Britonnic' Britain (taking in not only Wales, but also Scotland and south-west England).

Her concluding chapter reiterates long-standing awarenesses: that 'Romanisation'—especially of the rural population—only became embedded culturally with the rise of

Christianity; that fertile arable lands account for a relatively small proportion of the total land area and are isolated by often extensive tracts of uplands; and that immigration from Ireland was a significant factor in cultural change, as eventually was Scandinavian settlement in some areas. However, she also brings to the fore new appreciation of key historical episodes, such as the 'Late Antique Little Ice Age' and its negative impacts, both on population and on what we might term 'the spirit of the age'.

Cemeteries that have been extensively excavated in recent years (e.g., those at Llandough in Glamorgan and at St Patrick's Chapel near St Davids) illustrate the diversity of burial practices and of the burying communities. However, the author rightly acknowledges the difficulties in drawing wider conclusions from necessarily limited excavated samples. The number of potential sites to study is enormous, whilst the resources available for examining them are miniscule by comparison.

Among the delights of the book for this reviewer are those sections where the author relates rare documentary evidence (for example for estate boundaries) to her own close awareness of surviving—or recorded—commemorative monuments. So, for instance, bounds of lands at Ogmore, in west Glamorgan, that are specified in a grant by King Cadwgan of Gwent among the Llandaf charters, correlate directly with inscriptions on two stones found nearby, both of which reference the charter itself and use parallel terminology in doing so.

Some of the discussions inevitably dwell upon perennial problems of researching this period in Wales and much of the rest of western Britain. These include the difficulties of recognising, before excavation, early Medieval versus later prehistoric enclosures; frustrations caused by a 'dating plateau' that affects radiocarbon determinations for the crucial fifth century; and the fact that often hardly any material items survive on archaeological sites due to long-lasting cultural preferences; for instance, the use of organic containers rather than pottery ones. There is relatively little discussion of high-status lifestyles and connections compared with the amount devoted to religious lives and institutions, although this reflects the comparative lack of investigations of relevant élite residences.

New subjects for research are coming into focus, in some cases reflecting developments across Britain. One such is 'assembly sites'. The central location and purpose of these places has been studied intensively by Rhiannon Comeau in Dyfed but also by Reynolds and Langlands in southern England. These locations are now seen to be central to the organisation of communications, exchange, and governance regionally.

So, what is the most immediate relevance of this book and its wealth of synthesised Welsh data for Herefordshire? While Offa's Dyke and other linear works in the Marches are discussed in the penultimate chapter (including reference to the new studies that are showing the true extent of the Dyke across the county) the author still expresses much uncertainty about the status and function of Hereford as a frontier settlement.

In this context, however, the key importance of the book concerns the existence and role of Ergyng/Archenfield throughout the early Medieval period as a hybrid polity, existing, as it did, both beyond and then within the Mercian sphere of control, while retaining a large measure of autonomy and a strong local identity. The church south of Hereford was not only early in its 'Roman/Brittonic' identity but was also a bulwark of resistance to Anglo-Saxon political and ecclesiastical domination. Yet archaeologically it remains almost invisible, not least because it apparently lacked the tradition of raising the inscribed, commemorative monuments that are such an important feature in areas further west.

In this part of the Marches, there is also a need to focus upon the nascent kingdom of

Brycheiniog as a major locus of contestation and opposition to encroaching Mercian political control. It is therefore apposite that the Wye Valley, west of Hereford, will be one of the five intensive study-areas, in different parts of the early marchlands, encompassed within the three-year, interdisciplinary research project, 'Making the March'. This is due to start in 2024 and is led by Dr Andy Seaman of Cardiff University, by Dr Charles Insley of the University of Manchester, and by the author of this review (also based at Cardiff University).

The book is expensive to purchase in hardback. Judging by other titles in this series, however, it will soon be issued in paperback and should then retail at about half the price.

Keith Ray

Rules of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club, (Herefordshire)

As stipulated in Clause XIII below, the Club Rules are published every three years in the *Transactions* and thus appear here. In view of the likely change, whereby the Club is expected to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation rather than an unincorporated charity, it is anticipated that a new constitution will apply from some point in 2025. It is thus likely that these rules will be printed here for the last time.

I. — That the Society be known as the "WOOLHOPE NATURALISTS' FIELD CLUB (HEREFORDSHIRE)" for the practical study in all branches of the natural history, geology, history, and archaeology of Herefordshire and the district immediately adjacent.

II. — That the Club shall consist of ordinary members (ladies and gentlemen) and such honorary members as may from time to time be admitted; from whom a president, four vice-presidents, honorary treasurer, honorary secretary, field secretary and editor shall be appointed at the annual winter meeting to be held in Hereford in the latter part of each year, and they shall hold office for one year beginning at the next annual spring meeting. The Club may also accept for affiliation as approved such societies or groups as exist for the furtherance of similar purposes to those of the Club. Each group shall be entitled to have one representative at all meetings of the Club, to receive copies of the *Transactions* and generally be treated as one ordinary member.

The Club shall admit junior members between the ages of 14 and 18. Such junior members may become full members at the latter age, but those who are bona-fide full-time students may remain junior members until the age of 21. Nobody of the age of 18 or over may be elected a junior member.

III. — The management of the Club shall be in the hands of a central committee consisting of the said nine officers *ex-officio* and twelve other members elected by ballot at the annual winter meeting. Each elected member of committee shall hold office for three years from the next annual spring meeting and four shall retire each year but be eligible for re-election. Every candidate for election to the central committee shall be individually proposed and seconded at the annual winter meeting and no proposal for election or re-election en bloc shall be accepted. In the event of ties the president or the chairman of the meeting shall have a casting vote. Casual vacancies may be filled at any general meeting and any member then elected shall hold office until the date when the term of office of the member whom he or she succeeds would have expired. The central committee shall be empowered to appoint an assistant secretary; his/her duties shall include keeping minutes of all meetings of the Club committee. Seven shall form a quorum.

IV. — The members of the Club shall hold not less than three field meetings during the year, in the most interesting localities for investigating the natural history, geology, history, and archaeology of the district. Ten clear days' notice of every meeting shall be communicated to members by a circular; but the central committee shall be empowered upon urgent occasions, to alter the days of such regular field meetings, and also to fix special or extra field meetings during the year. The president shall have the privilege of choosing the place of one field day during his/her year of office. The committee shall also arrange such indoor meetings and lectures during the winter as they find possible.

V. — That the annual subscription for members and affiliated societies is payable on the 1 January in each year to the honorary treasurer. Each additional adult family member of the same household may at their option pay at a reduced rate, but those paying this reduced sum shall not be entitled to receive the publications of the club. The annual subscription for a junior member

shall also be at a reduced rate. This shall not entitle such members to a copy of the Transactions, but he/she may receive these on payment of an additional sum to be decided by the committee for the time being. The rates of subscription shall be determined by the Club committee, and any alteration will be notified through the newsletter.
Life members shall be confirmed on the payment in advance of twenty years subscription at the current rate when taking up membership.
Each member may have the privilege of introducing a friend to any field meeting of the Club, but the same visitor must not attend more than two such meetings in one year. Members availing themselves of this privilege will be required to pay a capitation fee of £1 a meeting in respect of each visitor.
VI. — That the president be requested to favour the Club with an address at the annual spring meeting on the proceedings of the year, together with such observations as he/she may deem conducive to the welfare of the club, and the promotion of its objects.
VII. That members finding rare or interesting specimens or observing any remarkable phenomenon relating to any branch of natural history, or making or becoming acquainted with any archaeological discovery in the district, shall immediately forward a statement thereof to the honorary secretary or to the appropriate sectional editor.
VIII. — That the Club undertake the formation and publication of correct lists of the various natural productions and antiquities of the county of Hereford with such observations as their respective authors may deem necessary.
IX. —That if any subscription (due on 1 January each year) has not been paid at the time of the Spring newsletter, a reminder will be sent requesting payment by the beginning of July. If no response is received then the membership will be deemed to have lapsed, no further communications will be sent and all privileges of membership shall cease. Membership can be reinstated by payment of any back subscriptions owing.
X. — That no addition to or alteration of the rules of the Club be made except at a general meeting, after notice has been given of the proposed addition or alteration at a previous meeting, and the general purport of such addition or alteration has been circulated to all members with the notice of the general meeting.
XI. —That the financial management of the Club is the responsibility of the Treasurer, who shall make payments on behalf of the Club and regularly report on the state of the finances to the Club committee. Any unusual payments must have prior authorisation of the Club committee or, in exceptional circumstances, be made with the agreement of the President and Secretary, such payments to be confirmed by the Club committee.
XII. — That applications for grants from the Smith Fund should be made to the chairman of the Fund sub-committee, and after due consideration the sub-committee shall make recommendations to the Club committee whether a grant is appropriate and if so, how much. The final decision will be made by the Club committee.
XIII. — That these rules be published in every third volume of the Transactions.

Agreed at the Winter Annual Meeting, November 2018

List of Presidents

Because of privacy legislation, the list of members' names and addresses no longer appears every three issues as was once the case. It is nonetheless traditional and helpful to publish the list of Presidents every three years as required by the Club's Rules above.

1851 Club formed in the winter months
1852 LINGWOOD, Mr R. M.
1853 LEWIS. Rev. T. T.
1854 SYMONDS, Rev. Wm. S., B.A., F.G.S.
1855 CROUCH, Rev. J. F., B.D.
1856 WHEATLEY, Mr Hewitt
1857 LINGEN, Mr Charles
1858 BEVAN, G. P., M.D.
1859 BEVAN, G. P., M.D.
1860 BANKS, Mr R. W.
1861 LIGHTBODY, Mr Robert
1862 HOSKYNS, Mr Chandos Wren
1863 HOSKYNS, Mr Chandos Wren
1864 CROUCH, Rev. J. F., B.D.
1865 STEELE, Mr Elmes Y.
1866 BULL, H. G., M.D.
1867 HOSKYNS, Mr Chandos Wren
1868 McCULLOGH, D. M., M.D.
1869 RANKIN, Mr James, M.A.
1870 COOPER-KEY, Rev. H., M.A.
1871 CAM, Mr Thomas
1872 STEELE, Mr Elmes Y.
1873 DAVIES, Rev. James, M.A.
1874 DAVIES, Rev. James, M.A.
1875 ROBINSON, Rev. C. J., M.A.
1876 CHAPMAN, T. A., M.D.
1877 MORRIS, Mr J. Griffiths
1878 PHILLOTT, Rev. H. W., M.A.
1879 ARMITAGE, Mr Arthur
1880 KNIGHT, Mr J. H.
1881 LEY, Rev. Augustin, M.A.
1882 BLASHILL, Mr Thomas, F.R.I.B.A.
1883 PIPE, Mr George H., F.G.S.
1884 BURROUGH, Rev. Charles, M.A.
1885 MARTIN, Mr C. G.
1886 PIPER, Mr George H., F.G.S.
1887 ELLIOTT, Rev. William, M.A.
1888 ELLIOTT, Rev. William, M.A.
1889 SOUTHALL, Mr H., F.R.MET.SOC.
1890 CROFT, Sir Herbert, Bart., M.A.
1891 CORNEWALL, Rev. Sir George H., Bart., M.A.
1892 BARNEBY, Mr William Henry
1893 LAMBERT, Rev. Preb. William H.M.A.
1894 DAVIES, Mr James
1895 WATKINS, Rev. M. G., M.A.
1896 MOORE, Mr H. Cecil
1897 MOORE, Mr H. Cecil
1898 MARSHALL, Rev. H. B. D., M.A.
1899 BEDDOE, Mr H. C.
1900 LEIGH, The Very Rev. The Hon. J. W., D.D., Dean of Hereford
1901 BLASHILL, Mr Thomas, F.R.I.B.A., F.Z.S.
1902 CORNEWALL, Rev. Sir George H., Bart., M.A.
1903 SOUTHALL, Mr H., F.R.MET.SOC.
1904 HUTCHINSON, Mr T.
1905 BAYLIS, Mr Philip, M.A., LL.M., F.Z.S.
1906 WARNER, Rev. R. Hyett, M.A.
1907 RANKIN, Sir James, Bart., M.A.
1908 MOORE, Mr H. Cecil and RANKIN, Sir James, Bart., M.A.
1909 WILLIAMSON, Rev. Preb. H. Trevor, M.A.
1910 FARN, Mr A. B.
1911 PHILLIPS, Mr E. Cambridge
1912 STOOKE-VAUGHAN, Rev. F. S., M.A.
1913 WATKINS, Rev. S. Cornish, M.A.
1914 WATKINS, Rev. S. Cornish, M.A.
1915 WOOD, Mr J. G., F.S.A.
1916 JACK, Mr G. H., M.INST.C.E., F.S.A., F.G.S.
1917 GRINDLEY, Rev. H. E., M.A.

1918 BANNISTER, Rev. Canon A. T., M.A.
1919 WATKINS, Mr Alfred, F.R.P.S.
1920 HUMFRYS, Mr W. J.
1921 JAMES, Mr Francis R.
1922 MARSHALL, Mr George, F.S.A.
1923 BRADNEY, Colonel Sir Joseph A., C.B., M.A., D.LITT.
1924 DURHAM, Herbert E., D.Sc., M.B., B.CH., F.R.C.S.(ENG.)
1925 MACKEY, Mr J. C.
1926 SCOBIE, Colonel M. J. G., C.B.
1927 DAY, Rev. E. Hermitage, D. D., F.S.A.
1928 SYMONDS, Mr Powell Biddulph
1929 SMITH, The Right Rev. Martin Linton, D.D., D.S.O., Lord Bishop of Hereford
1930 GILBERT, Captain H. A.
1931 SYMONDS-TAYLOR, Lt.-Col. R. H.
1932 SWAYNE, Lt.-Col. O. R., D.S.O.
1933 HAMILTON, Brig. General W. G., C.B., C.S.I., D.S.O.
1934 WALKER, C. W., M.C., M.D., CH.B.
1935 ELLISON, Captain F. B.
1936 ROBINSON, Mr R. S. Gavin
1937 MORGAN. Mr F. C., F.L.A.
1938 BETTINGTON, Mr E. J., F.R.S.A.
1939 BENN, Mr C. A., O.B.E., M.A., F.G.S.
1940 BENN, Mr C. A., O.B.E., M.A., F.G.S.
1941 MARTIN, Rev. Preb. S. H., M.A.
1942 MARTIN, Rev. Preb. S. H., M.A.
1943 WATERFIELD, The Very Rev. R., D.D., Dean of Hereford
1944 TEMPLER, Mr P. J. T.
1945 TEMPLER, Mr P. J. T.
1946 RICHARDSON, Mr L., F.R.S.E., P.A.INST.W.E., F.G.S.
1947 WINNINGTON-1NGRAM, The Venerable Archdeacon A. J., M.A.
1948 GILBERT, Captain H. A.
1949 WALLIS, Captain O. B., M.A., LL.B.
1950 CLARKE, Rev. B. B., M.A., M.Sc.
1951 MORGAN, Mr F. C., M.A., F.S.A., F.L.A.
1952 SALT, Major A. E. W., M.A.
1953 COHEN, Mr L., M.I.MECH.E.
1954 JOHNSON, Colonel T. W. M.
1955 MOIR, Rev. Preb. A. L., M.A., F.R.Hist.S.
1956 WINNINGTON-INGRAM, The Venerable A. J., M.A.
1957 KENDRICK, Mr F. M.
1958 LANGFORD, A. W., M.D., B.CHIR., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.
1959 LEEDS, Mrs Winifred, F.R.P.S.L.
1960 MACLEAN, Rev. D. A. L., of Dochgarroch, M.A.
1961 STANFORD, Mr S. C., B.A., F.S.A.
1962 ZIMMERMAN, Mr A. U.
1963 COLEMAN, Mr V. H.
1964 NOBLE, Mr F., B.A.
1965 POWELL, Mr H. J., F.R.I.B.A.
1966 KENDRICK, Mr F. M.
1967 TONKIN, Major J. W., B.A.
1968 CURRIE, Mrs D. McD.
1969 HILLABY, Mr J. G., B.A.
1970 O'DONNELL, Mrs Jean E.
1971 POWELL, Mr H. J., F.R.I.B.A.
1972 HOMES, Mr C. H. I.
1973 TONKIN, Major J. W., B.A.
1974 TONKIN, Mrs Muriel, J. P.
1975 PERRY, Mr R. C.
1976 HAYNES, Rev. W. B., B.A.
1977 WINCE, W. H. D., M.B., B.S., M.I.Biol.
1978 PAGE, Mr R. A.
1979 GARNETT, Mr A.T.G., L.D.S., R.C.S. (Eng.)
1980 KENDRICK, Mr F. M.
1981 VOSS, Mrs Marjorie, M., B.A.
1982 BRIAN, Mrs Anthea, D., B.Sc., Ph.D.
1983 TONKIN, Mrs Muriel. J.P.
1984 TONKIN, Major J. W., B.A., F.S.A.
1885 ATTFIELD, Mr C. E., F.I.E.H.
1986 HILLABY, Mr J. G., B.A.
1987 CHARNOCK, Mr G.
1988 PERRY, Mr R. C.
1989 WARD, Mr E. H.
1990 PEXTON, F. W., B.Sc., Ph.D.

1991 RICHARDSON, Mrs R. E., B.Ed., M.Phil., A.I.F.A.
1992 REES. Mr G., C.Eng., M.I.E.E., M.R.Ae.S.
1993 EISEL, Dr J. C., M.Sc., M.A., PhD.
1994 WHITEHEAD, Mr D. A., M.A.
1995 TONKIN, Mrs Muriel, J.P.
1996 O'DONNELL, Mrs Jean E., B.A.
1997 HARDING, Mrs B. H., B.Ed.
1998 ATTFIELD, Mr C. E., F.I.E.H.
1999 THOMSON, Mr P., B.Sc.
2000 SKELTON, Mrs R.E., B.A., M.R.T.P.I.
2001 SMITH, Mr B. S., M.A., F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S.
2002 EISEL, Dr J. C., M.A., M.Sc., Ph.D., F.S.A.
2003 HILLABY, Mr J. G., B.A.
2004 OLVER, Dr P. A., B.Sc., M.A., Ph.D., F.G.S.
2005 OLVER, Dr P. A., B.Sc., M.A., Ph.D., F.G.S
2006 EISEL, Dr J. C., M.A., M.Sc., Ph.D., F.S.A.
2007 CHARNOCK, Mr G.
2008 WHITEHEAD, Mr D. A., M.A.
2009 LOWE, Mrs R. A., B.Sc.
2010 SKELTON, Mrs R.E., B.A., M.R.T.P.I.
2011 EISEL, Dr J. C., M.A., M.Sc., Ph.D., F.S.A.
2012 COOPER, Dr. J., Ph.D., F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S.
2013 HILLABY, Mr J. G., B.A.
2014 O'DONNELL, Mrs Jean E., B.A., M.B.E.
2015 JONSON, Miss J. R.
2016 COOPER, Dr. J., Ph.D., F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S.
2017 LOWE, Mrs R. A., B.Sc.
2018 OLVER, Dr P. A., B.Sc., M.A., Ph.D., F.G.S.
2019 JENKINS, Prof., R. B.A.(Hons), M.B., B. Chir., M.A., M.D. (Cantab), F.R.C.Psych., F.F.O.H.M., M.F.P.H.
2020 EISEL, Dr J. C., M.A., M.Sc., Ph.D., F.S.A.
2021 WHITEHEAD, Mr. D.A, M.A.
2022 WHITEHEAD, Mr. D.A, M.A.
2023 JENKINS, Prof., R. B.A.(Hons), M.B., B. Chir., M.A., M.D. (Cantab), F.R.C.Psych., F.F.O.H.M., M.F.P.H.

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Plate 1.1. The walled garden from the drive with the late 17th-century stables and services beyond (Author, 1986)



Plate 1.2. The Great Cascade at Gnoll, near Neath, Glamorgan, being part of the improvements carried out by Thomas Greening in 1724-7 (Author)



Plate 1.3. Lady Bateman's refuge: the abandoned walled garden (Author)



Plate 1.4. The Canal Pool below the walled garden, used for boating (Author)





Plates 1.5 (above) and 1.6 (below). The earthen bank on the northern boundary of the park, strengthened in places by an exterior stone wall (Author)



Plate 2.1. Shepherd's Cress *Teesdalia nudicaulis,* Stanner Rocks, Radnorshire, 29 April 2024. The plant is classed as near-threatened in the England Red Data Book



Plate 2.2. Swathes of Squirrel-tail Fescue dominate the bent-fescue-sorrel grassland on the Brampton formation by midsummer



Plate 2.3 (right). Upright Chickweed *Moenchia erecta*. Unlike most members of the stitchwort family, it has only four petals, but the eye is in fact caught most readily by the pale flower buds



Plate 2.4. Quadrat 7 at Bradnor Hill, lain over a small stand of the bent-fescue-sorrel grassland atop a drought-prone rock exposure

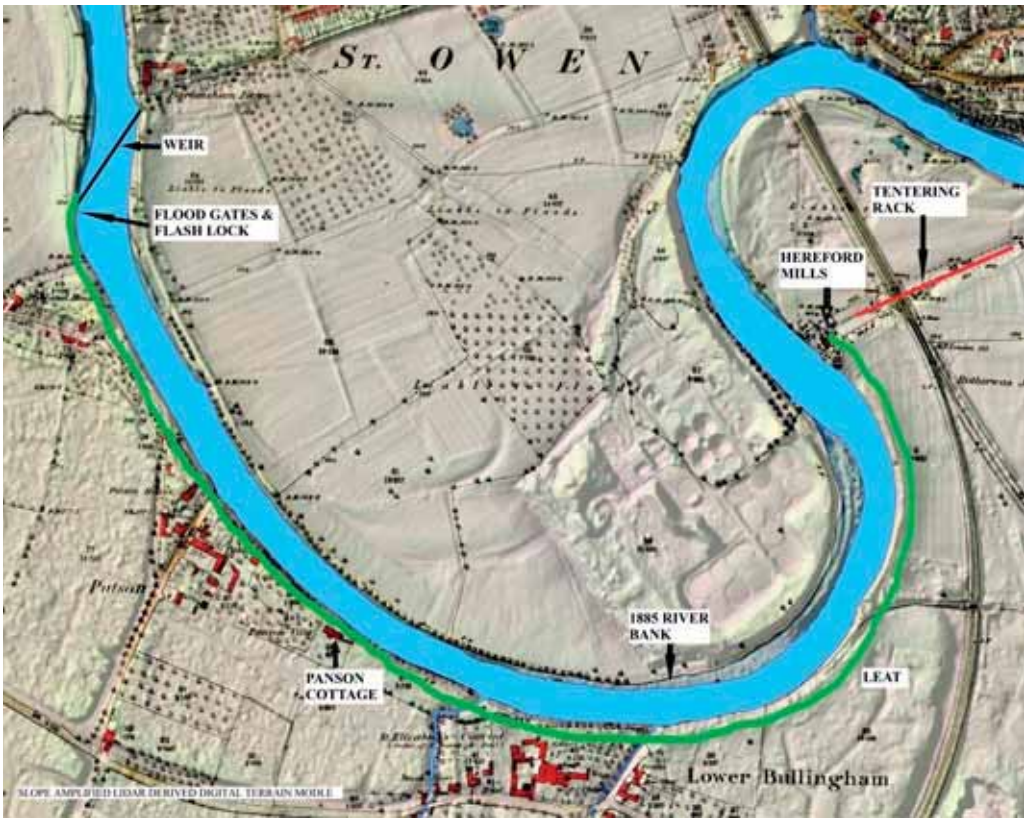


Plate 3.1. This map of the Bartonsham bend, kindly constructed by David Lovelace, clarifies the layout of the key locations discussed. The map uses the first-edition OS map of 1885, overlaid upon a LiDAR image taken recently but before the meadows were ploughed in the period 2017-19. The ploughing obliterated many of the ancient ridge and furrow features shown here. The blue line represents the course of the River Wye in 2022.

The weir crossed the river diagonally with the flood gates and a flash lock close to the take-off point to the leat. The green line indicates the approximate route of the leat around the outside of the bend, passing Panson Cottage to the Hereford Mills. The site of the mills and the position of the tentering rack, marked as a red line, are seen within the thin finger of land, delineated by boundary stones, where St Owens parish extends across the river to the Lower Bullingham side.

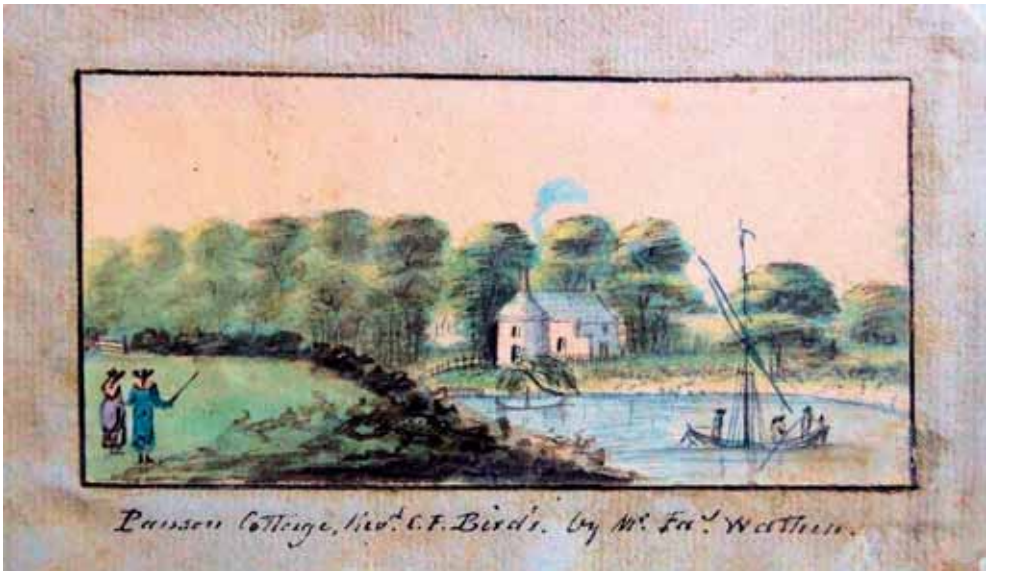


Plate 3.2. Panson Cottage, owned by the 'Rev. C. F. Bird' and painted by James Wathen in the 1790s. Found in the Bishop's collection, Hereford Cathedral, and reproduced by the Cathedral's kind permission

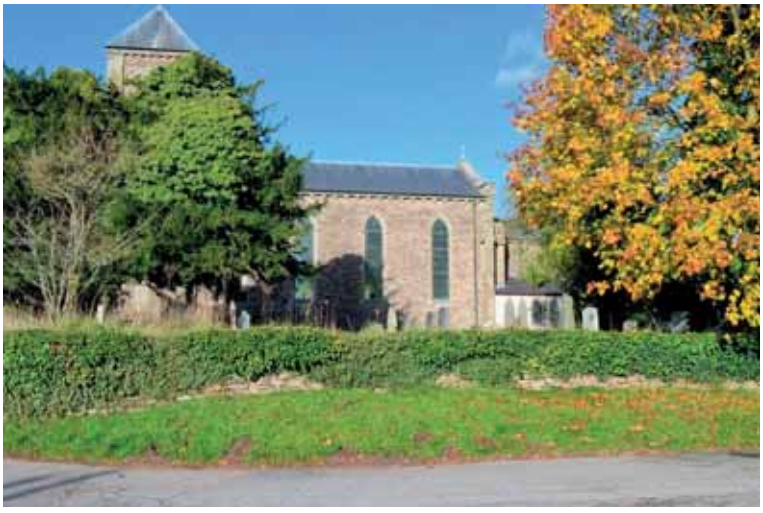


Plate 4.1. Much Birch Church today from the south. The churchyard cross was originally sited here. Photo: Keith Ray



Plate 4.2. The cross at Much Birch today, now overlooking the main A49 road on the north side of the church. The base comprises the stonework of the original cross, moved to this position. Photo: Keith Ray





Views of two sides of the crosshead fragment recovered from the churchyard at Much Birch and subsequently cleaned. Plate 4.3 (left) very probably shows an image of St Thomas Becket, the co-dedicatee of the church. Plate 4.4 (right) is interpreted as an image of St Thomas Cantilupe. The length of the ruler is 10cm. Photos: Keith Ray



Plate 4.5 (left). Upper part of a 15th-century, painted depiction of Archbishop (St Thomas) Becket in the parish church dedicated to him at South Cadbury, Somerset. Late medieval portraits conventionally depicted him wearing a bishop's mitre. © Mary Chisholm, Exploring Building History



Plate 4.6. Churchyard cross in a beautiful setting at Knill. Photo: Keith Ray





Contrasting niches. Plate 4.7 (left) shows the niche surfaces at Knill, left flat, possibly for painted decoration. Plate 4.8 (right) shows the carved crucifix in its niche at Putley. Photos: Keith Ray

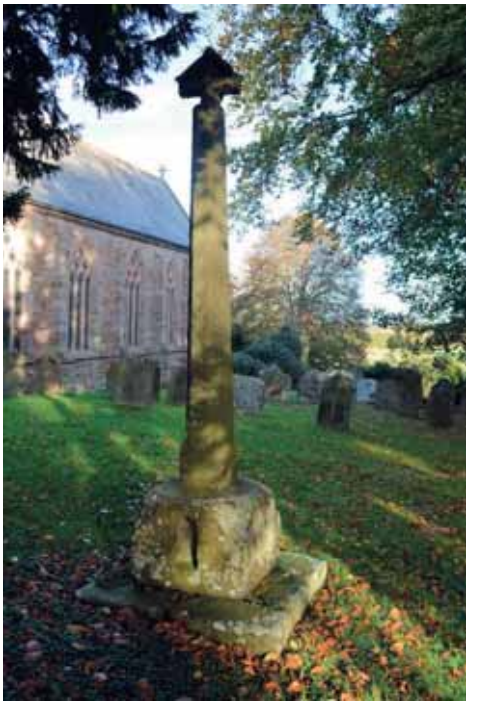


Plate 4.9. Churchyard cross at Madley.
Photo: Keith Ray



Plate 4.10. Churchyard cross at Tyberton.
Photo: Keith Ray

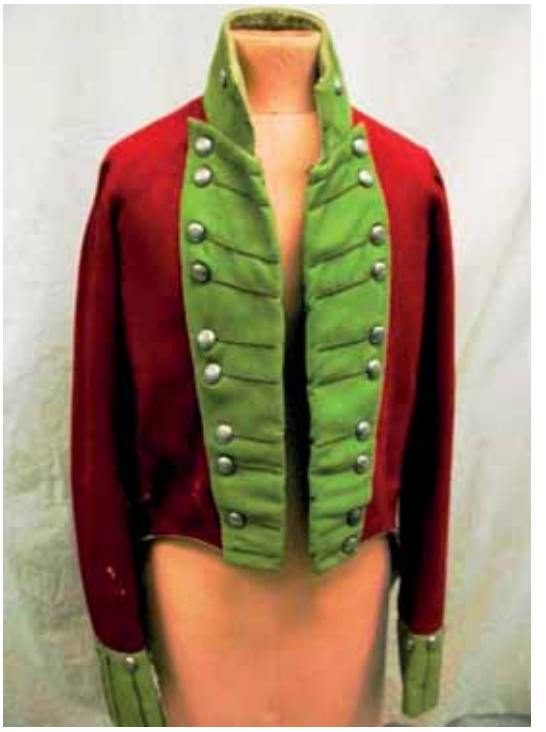






Plate 5.1 (top left). This coatee, red with what were described as apple-green facings, was part of the uniform of the Herefordshire Militia (Herefordshire Museums Service)

Plate 5.2 (top right). The tail of the coatee of the Herefordshire Militia (Herefordshire Museums Service)

Plate 5.3 (right). These buttons conclusively identify the coatee as being for the Herefordshire Militia (Herefordshire Museums Service)



Plate 5.4. Location of Preece's Coffee House, on the corner of St John Street, where recruitment meetings for the First Regiment of Herefordshire Volunteers took place in 1803



Plates 5.5. This is an Elliot-pattern carbine, approved for service in the British Army in 1773, the design of the lock showing that it was the pattern of 1799. It is unusual for a carbine to be designed so that a bayonet could be fitted, which makes it almost certain that this was the pattern of carbine issued to the Herefordshire Volunteers in 1803. On the reverse side of the lock (the upper image) is what is termed a saddle bar and ring. A carbine would be held in a deep holster attached to the saddle, and a lanyard was fitted through the ring to the holster so that if the carbine was dropped it could be retrieved. Photographs: Brian Knapp



Plate 5.6. This side drum, now in the museum of the Herefordshire Light Infantry, is thought to have been used by the Ledbury company of the first Herefordshire Volunteers. If so, it had had previous use as it is inscribed to the Loyal British Rangers, most likely the short-lived unit of that name which was being raised in Oxford in 1796. (*Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 27 February 1796). Photograph: Colonel A. Taylor



Plate 5.7. The King's Head, at Ross, where a meeting, held on 11 August 1803, resulted in the formation of what became the Archenfield Volunteers. Behind this early nineteenth-century façade is a much earlier building





Plate 5.8 (top left). Coatee of one of the regiments of the North Herefordshire Local Militia. It is natural to assume that, when the Local Volunteers became Local Militia, only the buttons on the uniform would be changed. However, since the uniform of the Herefordshire Volunteers had a red coat with red facings, this cannot be so (Herefordshire Museums Service)

Plate 5.9 (top right). The tail of the coatee of the North Herefordshire Local Militia (Herefordshire Museums Service)

Plate 5.10 (right).These buttons identify the coatee as part of the uniform of the North Herefordshire Militia; no examples have so far been found of the term 'North Herefordshire' being applied to the volunteers (Herefordshire Museum Service)







Plate 6.1 (left). Plaque setting the popular story, in stone, of how the excessive cost of the Kington Police led to its closure

Plate 6.2. The surviving building of the Kington Police station



Plate 6.3. Different view of the surviving Police station, showing its modern use as business units

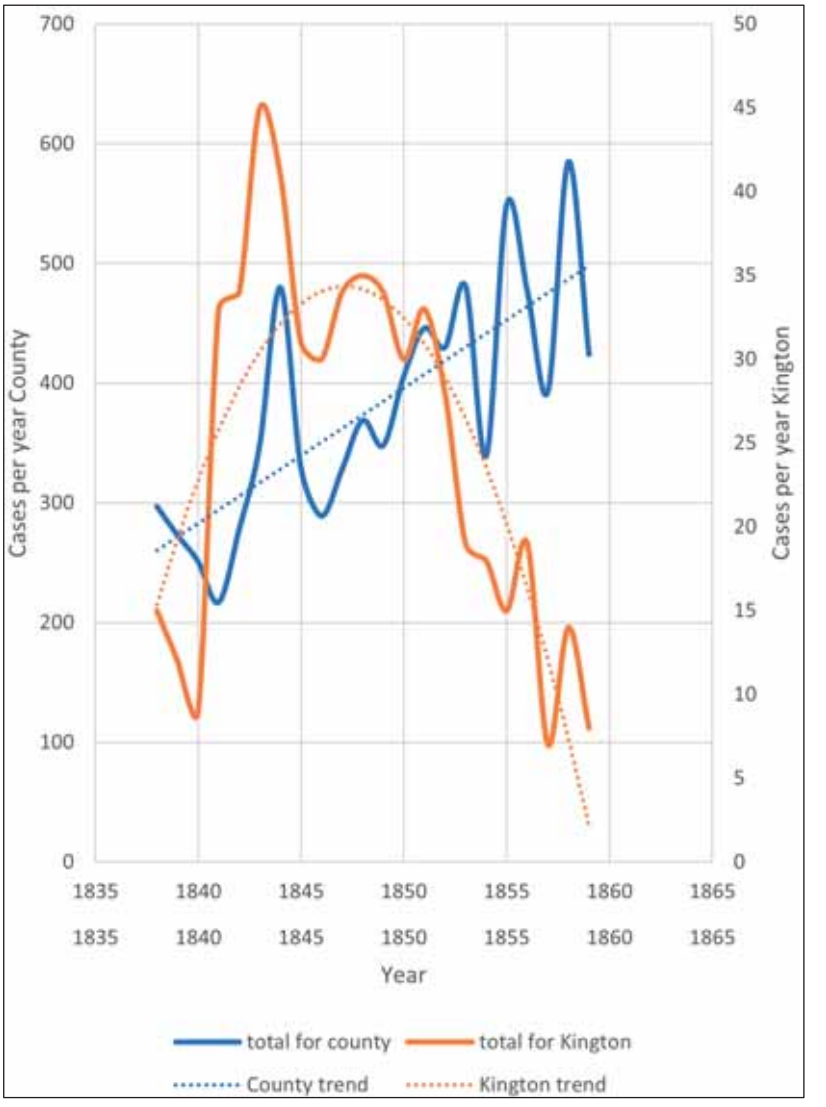


Plate 6.4. Petty Session Convictions, Herefordshire and Kington, 1838 to 1859

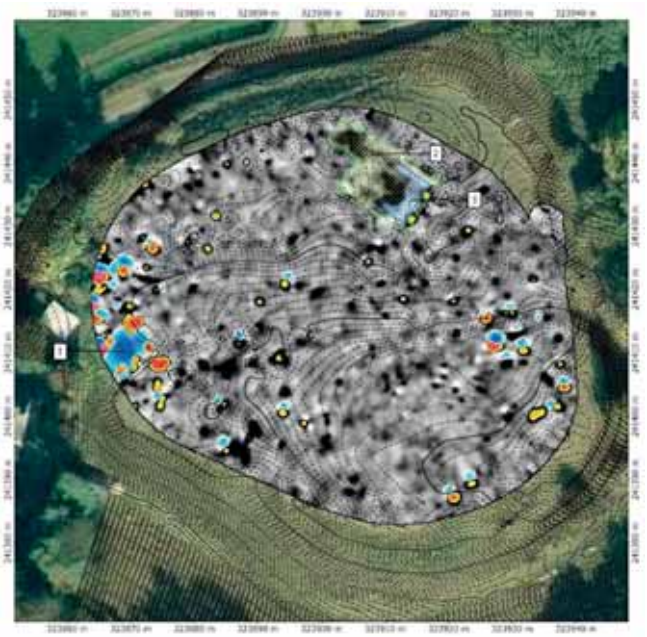


Plate 7.1. Cusop Castle. Plot of magnetic data showing areas of geophysical significance. © TigerGeo



Plate 7.2. Snodhill Castle: reconstruction plan of the double postern gate. Photography by Adam Stanford. Annotations by Simon Mayes



Plate 7.3. Snodhill Castle: excavations in the west end of the Royal Free Chapel. Photography by Adam Stanford



Plate 7.4. Arthur's Stone 2023: Trenches 8 (left) and 9 (right), at the north-western end of the chambered tomb (north-western end of capstone at bottom centre). Drone-based vertical photography by Adam Stanford



Plate 7.5. The Arthur's Stone excavations of 2023 viewed from the north-west. Especially note the carefully piled cairn of stones at left, which had formed an early-phase, continuous ring all around the capstone chamber, broken only by the early-phase entrance to the tomb, accessed from the north-west. Photo: Prof. Julian Thomas



Plate 7.6. Southern side of the mound prior to investigation of the passage and incorporated chambers. Note the upright slabs placed against the coursed drystone outer walling before the final stone deposit was made against the wall. Photo: Prof. Julian Thomas



Plate 7.7. ‘Cotswold-Severn’ (later) phase of the tomb: blocked entrance passage. Note the rebuilt drystone walling across the entrance itself, and the deposits of stones at bottom left and right. These had been placed against the coursed, outer walling to either hide, or ‘antiquate’ the mound following its final use for burial. Photo: Prof. Julian Thomas



Plate 7.8. Working photograph across the Neolithic quarry found in the centre of the field to the north-east of Arthur’s Stone



Plate 8.1. Stag's-horn Clubmoss *Lycopodium clavatum* at its new site in the Black Mountains, November 2023. Photo: courtesy of Jonathan Forsyth



Plate 8.2. Wood Stitchwort *Stellaria nemorum* ssp *nemorum.* A northern species on the southern edge of its range in Herefordshire. Little Merthyr, May 2023



Plate 8.3. The magnificent layering oak at Croft Ambrey, with the main bole just outside the image to the right, puts some of Herefordshire's keenest botanists in the shade (left to right Heather Davies, Jo Weightman, Suzanne Noble, Jerry Ross, Guy Poulton, Aaron Woods, Paul Symons and Giles King-Salter)



Plate 8.4. Slender Tufted-sedge *Carex elata* looking primeval in a wood near Madley, May 2023





Plate 8.5 (left). Woodland spring flora responding to a new gap in the canopy as it has done for thousands of years. South Herefordshire, May 2023

Plate 8.6 (above). *Hornungia petraea* clinging on, on the Doward, April 2023



Plate 8.7. Herefordshire stock of Spreading Bellflower *Campanula patula,* Millennium Seed Bank at Wakehurst Place. Surely awaiting a home? Photo: courtesy of Steph Miles, Kew



Plate 9.1. Volunteer training. Volunteers were shown an erratic in Cotheridge Park. It was explained that the huge rock had originated in North Wales and been brought to the Birmingham area in the Ice Age



Plate 9.2. An exhibition on the Birmingham Erratics project was held at The Lapworth Museum for three months



Plate 9.3. Fossil box for schools. Each has two trays of fifteen fossils with laminated material to help teachers



Plate 9.4. Wilton Bluff in 2008. The cross-bedded layers and massive sandstone bands are clearly visible



Plate 9.5. The same exposure is now hidden behind concrete blocks and a fence, behind which vegetation is becoming established, hiding the geological features. Close approach, to examine the geological features, is no longer possible



Plate 9.6. Digger clearing basal scree in 2021. This and other types of clearance work did not follow recommendations for the site



Plate 9.7. The exposures at Overross were covered in netting, which has trapped debris. Vegetation has grown obscuring the rock face. This will happen at Wilton Bluff if the face is covered with netting



Plate 9.8. Monnington Scar SSSI. Photo taken in February 2015, from a canoe, showing the deeply eroded and incised lower cliff



Plate 9.9. Approach to the base of the cliff at Monnington Scar was prevented by a thicket of brambles



Plate 9.10. Cowleigh Park Formation sandstones, the lowest of the Silurian rocks in the area, north of the Malvern Hills



Plate 9.11. Aymestry Limestone at Longley Green Quarry LGS



Plate 9.12. Longley Green Quarry LGS. The boundary between the Aymestry Limestone to the left and Upper Ludlow Shales to the right is completely hidden by vegetation



Plate 9.13. Brockhill Farm Quarry. Upper Ludlow Shales after clearance



Plate 9.14. Boundary between Upper Ludlow Shales and the overlying Downton Castle Sandstone, where the change from marine to terrestrial conditions took place. Before clearance, this section could not be seen



Plate 9.15. Volunteers at Old Sufton, where there is an exposure of Downton Castle Sandstone at the change from marine to terrestrial deposition



Plate 9.16. The east face of Linton Quarry, with Much Wenlock Limestone at the base overlain by Upper Ludlow Siltstones. The rocks of the Lower Ludlow and Aymestry Limestone are missing



Plate 9.17 (left). The north-east of Linton Quarry, where clearance shows a good exposure of the Upper Ludlow. Nodular Much Wenlock Limestone is seen in the foreground on the right



Plate 9.18 (right). South-west face in Downton Castle Sandstone (Pridoli) at Linton Quarry, showing current bedding at the top with iron oxides giving the red colour. There are pale grey-green layers lower down where the iron oxides were reduced to ferrous hydroxides of iron



Plate 9.19. Sensory walk, organised by Sense Adventures, in the British Camp area. Each visually impaired person has a sighted guide. The two guide dogs were allowed a day's holiday



Plate 9.20. A temporary exposure of Aymestry Limestone on the ridge stretching north from Evendine Lane, with bedding dipping to the west, away from the Malvern Hills



Plate 9.21. Nodular limestone layers in the Aymestry Limestone of Plate 9.20, on the ridge stretching north from Evendine Lane





Plate 10.1 (above left). *Calocybe gambosa* St George's Mushroom was unusually abundant in 2023. Monnington. Photo: Ed Fox

Plate 10.2 (above right). *Disciotis venosa* Bleach Cup**.** The prominent veining is characteristic. Leintwardine. Photo: Janette Evason





Plate 10.3 (above left). *Verpa conica* Thimble Morel. The cap lacks the brain-like appearance of most morels and hangs like a bell on the stipe. Kent. Photo: Jo Weightman

Plate 10.4 (above right). *Clitopilus prunulus* The Miller**.** Cefn Common**.** A common species with a white (not grey) cap**.** Photo: Ed Fox

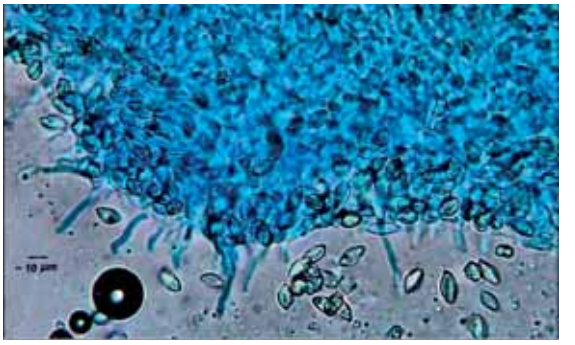


Plate 10.5 (above). *Clitopilus cystidiatus* Grey Miller. A rare or under-recorded Miller with a grey cap. The photograph shows the cystidia which define this species. Lingen. Photo: Mike Stroud



Plate 10.6 (right). *Amanita fulva* Tawny Grisette**.** A very common Amanita with an orange cap**.** Kent. Photo: Jo Weightman



Plate 10.7. *Amanita fulvoides*. The photograph shows the brown cap and orange patches on the volva of this newly separated species. The fruitbody is curved because it was kept too long lying in a collecting box and was trying to reach the correct vertical position. Dewsall. Photo: Jo Weightman



Plate 10.8. *Lactarius acerrimus*. A close-up showing the anastomosing gills. Kent. Photo: Jo Weightman





Plate 10.9 (left). *Antrodia carbonica*. The photograph shows the purple stain where it has been touched with Melzer's iodine. A rare species found on a broken conifer stump. Wapley Hill. Photo: Jo Weightman

Plate 10.10 (right). *Calocera viscosa* Yellow Stagshorn**,** a very common jelly fungus found on conifer stumps. Mortimer Forest. Photo: Jo Weightman



Plate 10.11. *Postia guttulata* has become well-established in Herefordshire on conifer stumps. Note the droplets on the growing edge. Haugh Wood. Photo: Jo Weightman



Plate 10.12 (left). *Pluteus cervinus* is very common on fallen broad-leaved wood and, occasionally, on conifer. Moccas Hill Wood. Photo Ed Fox



Plate 10.13. *Pluteus atromarginatus*. A rare fungus on dead conifer wood. The photograph shows the characteristic dark gill edge. Scotland. Photo: Jo Weightman



Plate 10.14. *Auriscalpium vulgare* Earpick Fungus occurs on old pine cones. Kent. Photo: Jo Weightman



Plate 10.15. *Baeospora myosura* Conifer Conecap is restricted to pine cones. Bircher Common. Photo: Jo Weightman



Plate 10.16. *Russula fuscorubroides* is a spruce associate that is spreading in Herefordshire. Mary Knoll Valley in Mortimer Forest. Photo: Jo Weightman



Plate 10.17. *Cortinarius sanguineus*. This beautiful fungus is mycorrhizal with pine and spruce. Kent. Photo: Jo Weightman



Plate 10.18. *Lactarius semisanguifluus* is one of several milkcaps with orange latex that are associated with pine. The orange milk of this species rapidly turns purple and stains the flesh. Ross-on-Wye. Photo: Jo Weightman



Plate 11.1. White Wagtail (© Mick Colquhoun)



Plate 11.2. Grey Plover (© Mick Colquhoun)



Plate 11.3. Sanderling (© Mick Colquhoun)



Plate 11.4. Great Northern Diver (© Mick Colquhoun)



Plate 11.5. Hoopoe (© Mick Colquhoun

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