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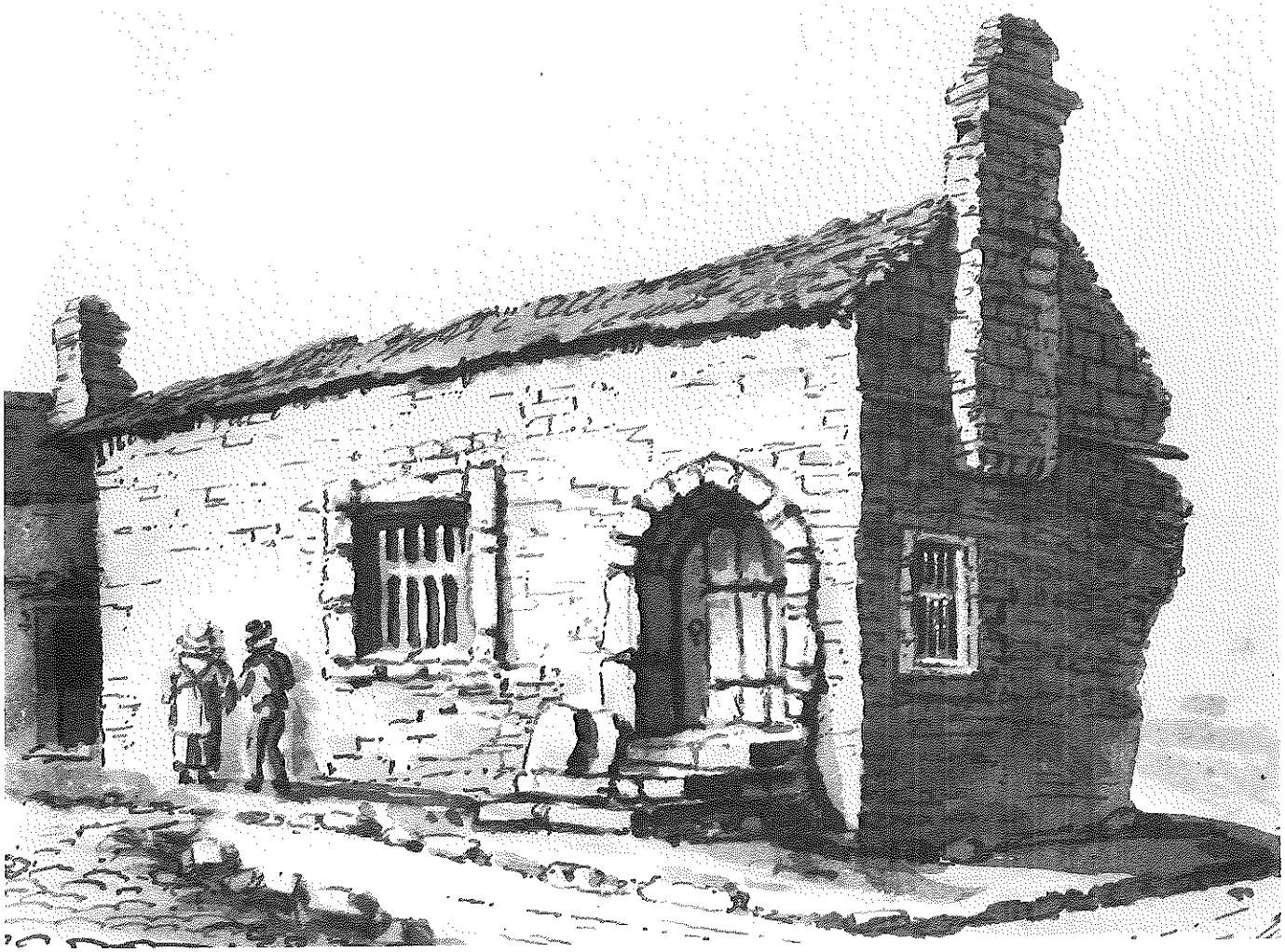

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SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK CARRIED OUT BY THE WROXETER HINTERLAND PROJECT, 1994–7

By ROGER WHITE, Project Archaeologist, University of Birmingham

The Wroxeter Hinterland Project was established in September 1994 to investigate the effects of Romanisation within the area of the Roman town of *Viroconium Cornoviorum*, present-day Wroxeter. The project is a largely computer-based, desk-top study of existing data sources using GIS (Geographical Information Systems) software as the primary analytical tool (Gaffney & Stancic, 1996). The study area was defined as a block of territory 40km east–west and 30km north–south centred on Wroxeter. This boundary was determined by the position of the nearest large Roman settlements in relation to the Roman town. In association with the project, a programme of fieldwork was implimented, the intention being to suppliment the existing data with a systematically collected body of material which would be of direct value in the GIS analyses which form the core of the project. The fieldwork consisted of a limited programme of excavation and evaluation, an extensive surface collection (fieldwalking) programme carried out on randomly-selected 1km blocks within a 'Y-shaped' transect centred on Wroxeter, a parish survey coinciding with the surface collection transect (Fig.1), and an intensive geophysical campaign at Wroxeter. All the practical work, with the exception of the bulk of the geophysical work and the excavation at Whitley, was carried out using volunteer labour.

EXCAVATIONS

Chilton Farm, Atcham (SJ532094; SA16)

A bivallate kidney-shaped cropmark enclosure, SMR SA16, was evaluated by a small scale excavation consisting of two trenches in November 1995. One trench proved negative but the second located and sectioned both ditches. An extension of the second trench, carried out at right angles to the initial line, located a series of postholes and linear cuts in the natural clay. Dating evidence from the second trench was plentiful and indicated that the ditches had been infilled in the late second or early third century. Surface collected finds of Samian and other Roman wares within 100m of the site indicated a wider date range for the enclosure than suggested by the ditch finds, a conclusion reinforced by the recovery of a *sestertius* of Hadrian near the southern ditch. More unexpectedly given the glacial sand and gravel subsoils, a significant collection of animal bone was found in one of the ditches. This, although eroded, was identifiable to five species and indicates that the site has great environmental possibilities. The postholes were dated to the late 16th century by pieces of coal in the fill and by sherds of 'Cistercian ware' tygs and indicate that the site, an orchard on the tithe map, may originally have held a small croft.

Day House Farm, Nobold (SJ471107; SA9)

A small scale evaluation trench of 10 x 3m was excavated in September 1995 across the northern side of a square enclosure (SMR SA9). This located a V-shaped ditch cut into gravel filled with clean gravel and silts. No evidence for recuts was observed. Internally, there was a clear area 2m wide and, beyond this, two postholes suggesting the position of a bank and possible internal features. Finds located in the upper ditch fill consisted

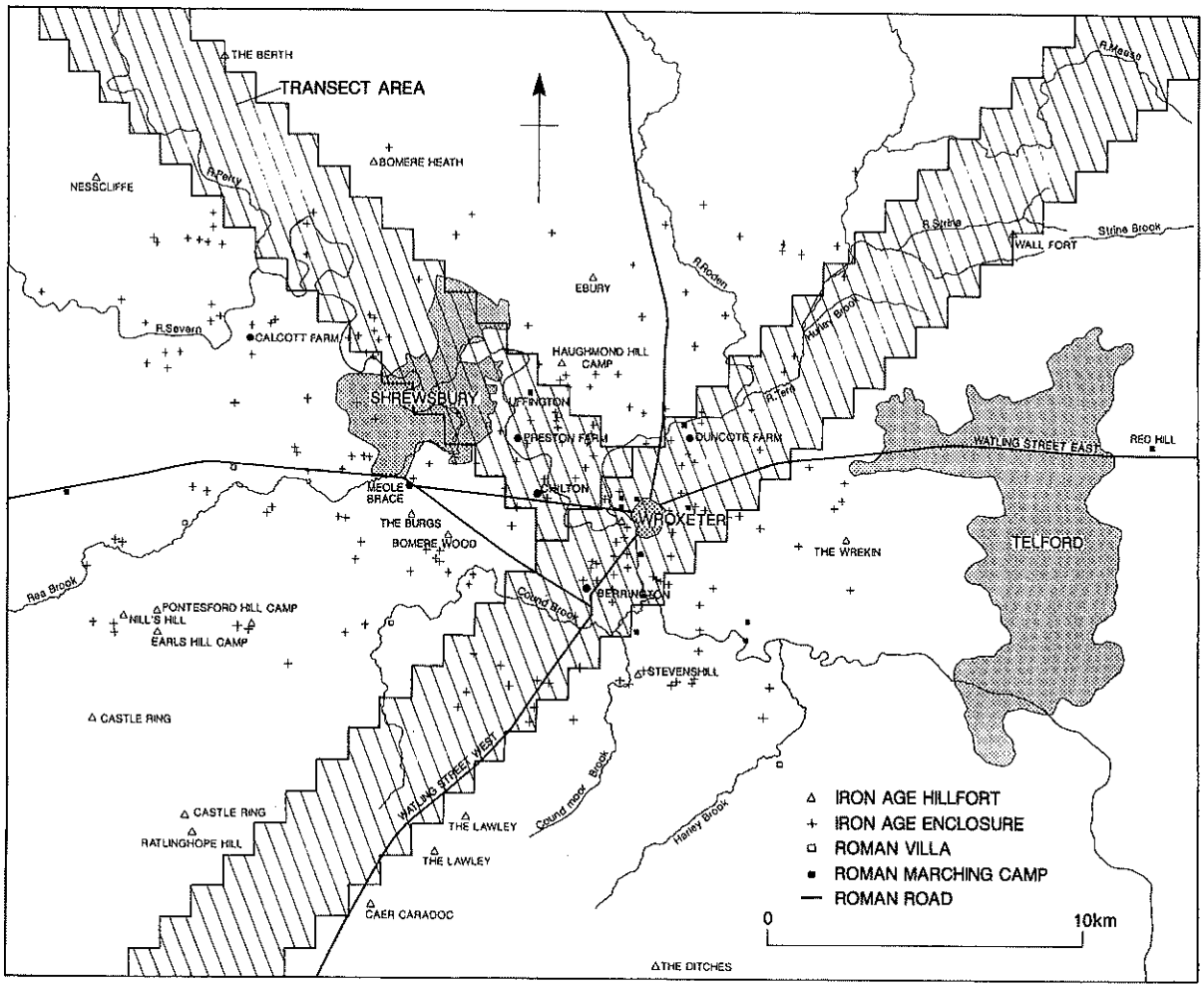

FIGURE 1. MAP OF WROXETER HINTERLAND PROJECT STUDY AREA SHOWING FIELDWALKING TRANSECTS AND KNOWN PRE-ROMAN AND ROMAN SITES.

entirely of 18th- and 19th-century pottery and brick perhaps indicating that the enclosure had survived into that period as an earthwork. Charcoal was recovered from the primary fill of the ditch but has yet to be submitted for radiocarbon assay.

Cloud Coppice (Cross Houses / Berrington) (SJ547069; SA477)

A small scale excavation was carried out on the well-known field system and adjacent enclosure SA477 et al. in October 1996. The site had been singled out as of high potential by Rowan Whimster's survey of Upper Severn Valley cropmarks (1989, 62–3). The 20m by 3m trench was sited so as to sample the intersection of the supposed field system and associated enclosure. Initial machining of the ploughsoil followed by cleaning revealed natural with a number of parallel linear V-sectioned features. Excavation showed that these were the remnants of sub-soiling for agricultural purposes in modern times, an interpretation confirmed by the farmer. A deeper cut 10m by 3m wide was made to the east of the initial trench to ensure that any features had not been missed but this too produced negative results. A small number of abraded Severn Valley ware sherds and one fresh sherd of medieval pottery may give a date for the system and its enclosure but this now seems to have been ploughed out in this field, although cropmarks still appear in adjacent fields (Watson & Musson 1993, 49).

Whitley Grange, Hookagate (SJ456096; SA62)

1995

Intensive and extensive surface collection in 1995 in Chapel Field, Whitley located a suspected Roman stone building (Toms 1985). Analysis of the finds, mainly tile, tufa and roofing slates, indicated that the building was probably a bath house. On the basis of a geophysical survey carried out by Geophysical Services of Bradford, a 20m^2 area was opened which located a building in the north-west corner. After removal of the shallow ploughsoil by machine, initial cleaning revealed the partially robbed but otherwise intact remains of a bath house.

To the south and east of the baths the ephemeral remains of structures were located among an extensive but badly damaged pebble surface. Evidence for the buildings comprised shallow stone-packed postholes, pebble spreads and linear arrangements of rubble. On the east side of the trench, three parallel lines of rubble lying beneath a later structure probably represented the remains of a granary.

A second area in Weir meadow was also surveyed by Geophysical Surveys of Bradford to see whether the remains located by G Toms (*ibid*) could be added to or be put into context. A 10m^2 area was opened by hand but nothing of archaeological significance was found.

1996

Following the results of excavations in 1995, it was decided to extend the original 20 by 20m trench to the west by roughly the same area in an attempt to locate the west end of the building. Further extensions later in the season enlarged the trench to a total area of about 50 x 50m. Topsoil clearance rapidly clarified the plan showing that it consisted of two wings, a north wing aligned east–west which can be identified as the bath house whilst the west wing which abutted the south west corner of the bath house may have been either residential or reception rooms (Fig. 2).

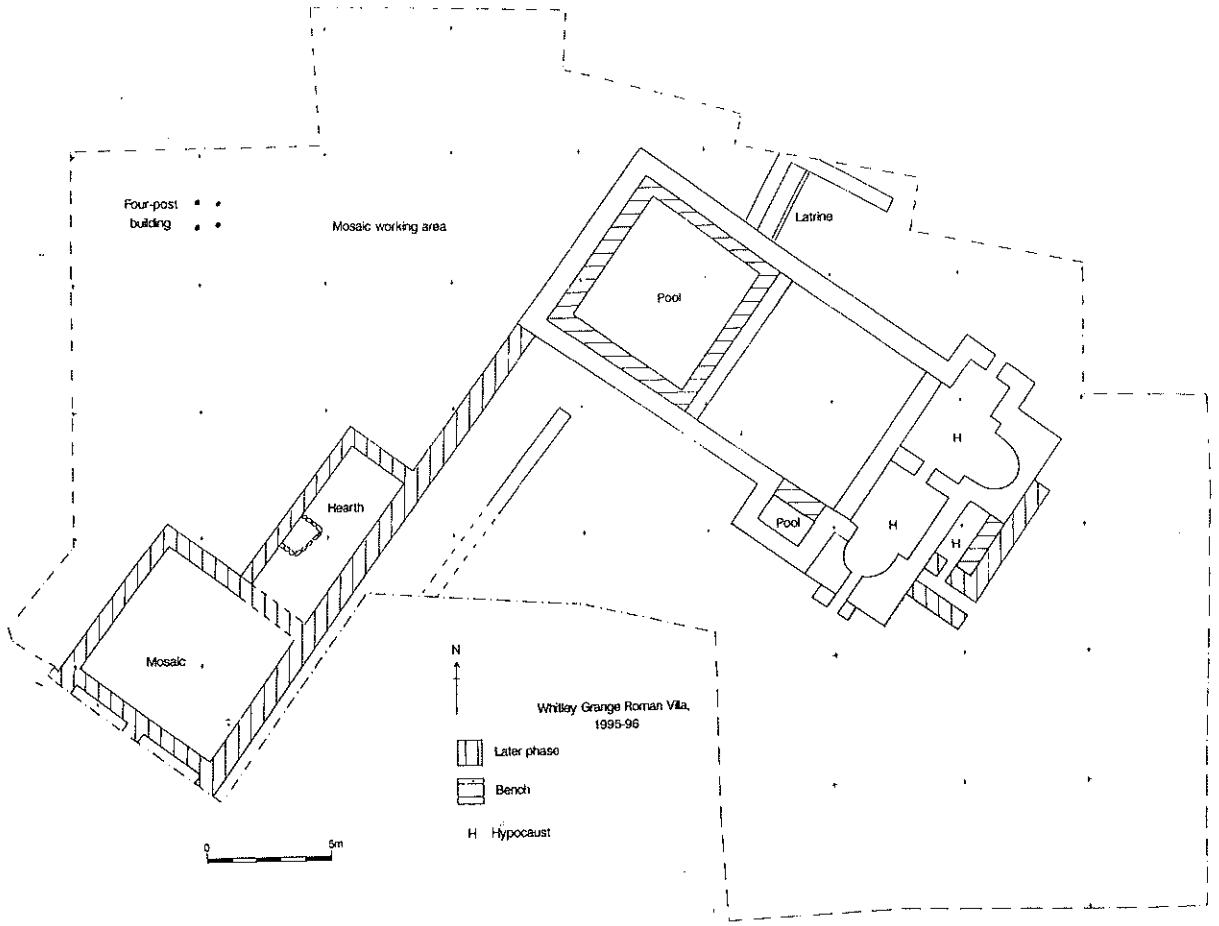

FIGURE 2. PLAN OF WHITLEY GRANGE VILLA SHOWING EXTENT OF 1995–6 EXCAVATIONS.

North wing

The bath house, measuring 20 x 8.2m, and built throughout in a pale green fine sandstone was fully exposed and its development elucidated. At the west end there were two rooms 8.2m square externally (approximately equal to 25 *pes Monetalis (p.M)*).The westernmost (Room 4) had an intact *opus signinum* floor 4.2m square. The remaining 0.6m around the periphery of the floor was taken up by a masonry bench surviving in places to 0.4m high and finished with smooth red cement on a backing of complete *tegulae* on the south side. This covering was less well preserved on the east and west sides, and the bench on the north side had been totally ploughed out. A roll-moulding of *opus signinum* at the junction of the bench and floor showed that the bench had been an original feature and itself showed signs of repair and reconstruction in places, especially on the east side. It has been suggested by David Neal (pers. comm.) that this room is an indoor pool, a conclusion reinforced by the location of the latrine drain downslope (north) of the room's north-east corner. No inlet or outlet for water was, however, found.

When first uncovered, it was apparent that there had been some plough disturbance of the upper levels but that these were well preserved in general. Planum excavation showed that the fill consisted almost entirely of grey-green micaceous roof slates and nailed *tegulae* and *imbrices*. On analogy with Carsington, Derbys. villa, it is assumed therefore that the roof of the room consisted of a mixture, perhaps banded, of slates and tile (Ling 1992).

Room 3 was less comprehensively examined but must be assumed to be an *adodyterium* or *frigidarium*. Flooring consisted of rough plaster or mortar mixtures which tended to be concentrated in the northern half of the room, and rough beaten earth floors with rubble in the south. Between, there was a rough sandstone path in places suggesting centrally placed doorways in the west and east walls and perhaps an entrance in the south. (This latter feature was less clear due to destruction by a modern pipe-trench.) It is possible that the two halves of the room were separated by a partition but no firm evidence either way was uncovered. In the south-east corner of the room was a small bath 1m by 1.5m with a tile floor (Room 3a). This had an *opus signinum* lining and a drain in the north-west corner which could be traced running beneath the floor of Room 3 as two parallel red sandstone walls trending towards the open end of the latrine.

North of Rooms 3 and 4 was Room 4a, the latrine. This was built in red Keele Beds sandstone and consisted of a west and north wall with a deep drain and a bench parallel with the west wall. There was no east wall but the gap was bridged by two substantial post holes.

To the east of Room 3 were the heated rooms. These had been modified and reconstructed but the original appearance can be restored with confidence:

Phase X

Two rooms each consisting of a square with an attached apse aligned at right angles to each other with furnaces to the north and south were built on the east wall of Room 3. Originally, these rooms had been interconnected at hypocaust level but this channel had later been blocked. The south room (Room 1) was heated through the apse whilst the north room (Room 2) was heated by a projecting furnace on the north side. Both apses were contained within the line of the building and a considerable quantity of broken tufa attested to a vaulted roof in that material.

Phase Y

A refurbishment of the heated rooms, probably to be dated to the later third or fourth century, was indicated by the renewal of the hypocaust in the north room reusing in some instances a box-tile, broken pieces of the previous floor, and an unfinished capital as pilae. The hypocaust in Room 1, after initial definition, was not completely excavated but refurbishment is presumed here too. The same phase also saw the addition of a new room, Room 1a, at the south-east corner of the bath house. This consisted of an L-shaped wall to enclose the narrow rectangular area at the awkward angle formed by the junction of Rooms 1 and 2. The new room was heated by a furnace at the southern end which may also have heated Room 1 since the original south furnace had now been blocked. Dating evidence for the phase came from numerous pieces of thin greenish window glass and three barbarous radiates of about AD 270–273 which were found in the furnace for Room 1a.

Phase Z

The baths were systematically robbed after their disuse with the south-east and north-east corners being completely removed down to the lowest foundation levels. Remanent magnetic dating showed that the baths were last used in the period between AD 420–520 (at 95% confidence) or 450–520 at 66% confidence. The robbing must have occurred at some time after the disuse of the furnace but before the building became ruinous and probably extended to other parts of the villa too since a complete dwarf column base was found in the hypocaust fill.

West wing

The west wing, which abutted the south-west corner of the baths, was built in a blue-grey sandstone. Only one phase of construction was identified consisting of a single wall 0.9m thick onto which the slightly thinner walls of Rooms 5 and 6 abutted. Room 5 lay 7m south of the junction with the bath house and was 7.5 by 3m in size externally. Its south and east walls were formed by Room 6 and the facade of the wing respectively so that its east and north walls, built in red sandstone, abutted these. No obvious internal fittings were found other than a substantial hearth built against the west wall from four upside-down *tegulae* surrounded by a low sandstone wall. A raking-out pit lay nearby. The earliest floor appeared to be of mortar with pebbles but this was largely obscured by a later covering of layered slates. Constraints of time meant that little further investigation took place here.

Room 6 lay to the south of Room 5 although there was no clear division between the rooms and they may have been interconnected. Two phases of occupation were detected here:

Phase Y

The original layout of the room consisted of a square 21 *p.M.* internally, 25 *p.M.* externally. The walls were built in identical stone to that of the main facade wall and were clearly part of the same construction. The floor area was entirely taken up with a mosaic which had been plough damaged in the north-east corner in addition to Phase Z holes which had been cut into its surface towards the centre and northern periphery (Fig. 3). The mosaic consisted of geometric panels defined by a two-strand guilloche framework within a coarse border of alternate bands of tile and micaceous flagstone. At the centre was an elaborate roundel with the head of Medusa. The date suggested for this mosaic by David Neal was between about 350–375 but there is only one other parallel for its design elements, a mosaic discovered at Ewefields Farm, Warks. (*Britannia* 26 (1995) pl VII). The mosaic had been damaged by later intrusions but some of these on closer examination appeared to be patches within the surface suggesting repairs. Some discolouration of tesserae due to burning

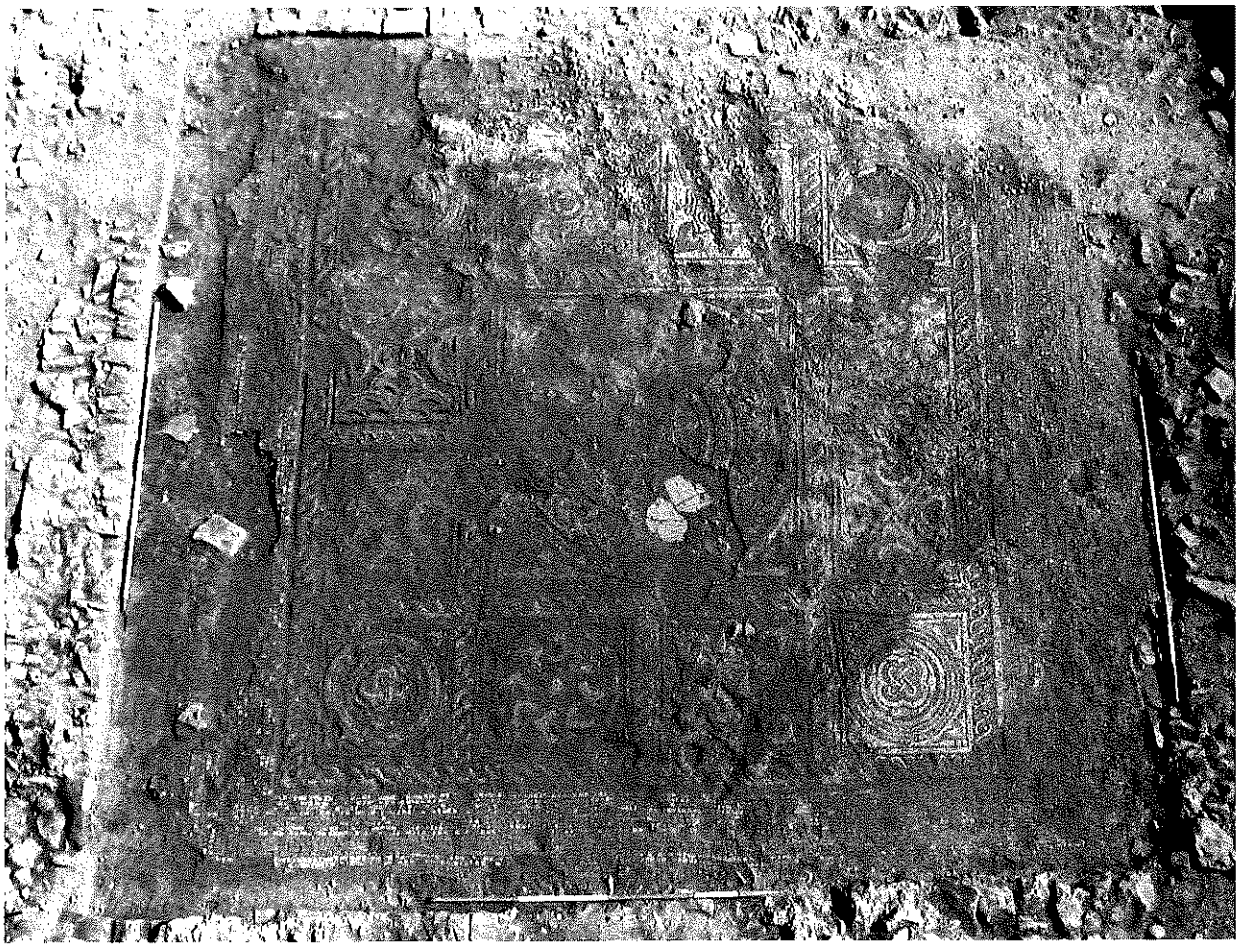

FIGURE 3. WHITLEY GRANGE VILLA. PHOTOGRAPH OF THE MOSAIC IN ROOM 6, SCALE 2M (PHOTO R WHITE).

was also noted. Beyond these areas, the mosaic was generally well preserved although the white tesserae had in many cases been leached away by the acidic soil.

Phase Z

Overlying the mosaic was a compacted dump of silt containing rubble. Some of this rubble had been pressed deeply into the underlying mosaic causing further localised damage. Planum excavation of this layer showed that the rubble was concentrated in rough lines arranged at a tangent to the external walls, although all were contained within the room and these are interpreted as the ephemeral walls of a building. The most prominent of the wall lines were on the south and east sides, and the latter eventually resolved into a beam slot about 5m long with slates in its base, a post hole at the south end, and a pad stone at its north end. The south line was less clear, and may have had a change of angle within it. At the west end was a gap and a dished area of floor suggesting an entrance while, internally, there was an ashy spread contained within the south-east corner of the structure. The west and north walls were less well defined, the latter probably due to degredation by ploughing. Excavation of the silt layer showed, however, that underlying holes cut into the mosaic lay beneath the putative wall line and may represent post-positions. There was no dating evidence for this phase, although some charcoal was recovered from the rubble areas and will be submitted to radiocarbon assay. Nonetheless, the mixed construction using post positions, beam slots, and rubble packing was very reminiscent of the buildings identified in the post-Roman Phase Z at Wroxeter which is dated to between about AD 550–650 (Barker, White, *et al* 1997).

South of the south wall of Room 6, more walls were observed running north–south. These represent further, uninvestigated, rooms contemporary with Rooms 5 and 6.

In the open area west of the west wing, a dense rubble surface was located abutting the west wall of Room 6 and extending to the north. This had been cut by a modern pipe trench which had removed the north-west corners of Rooms 6 and 5. In the north-west corner of the excavation two independent structures were identified. The first was a four-post building 1m square, presumably a granary or storage structure, and the second was an ill-defined spread of tile chippings within a possibly circular building or shelter which may have been the preparation area for the tesserae in Room 6.

East of the west wing was a narrow corridor 2.2m wide with the fragmentary remains of a dwarf wall parallel with the west wing. This presumably represented a portico, already evidenced by the dwarf column bases found on the site. East of this a courtyard surface was further cleaned and defined.

Finds throughout were sparse: only 79 sherds of pottery have been recovered in total including Samian, black-burnished, Severn Valley, Mancetter mortaria and other wares. The date of these artefacts seems to be consistently 2nd to 4th century. Significant amounts of thin, green window glass of fourth-century date and a fragment of a second-century glass oil flask gave some further dating evidence, as did a single early fourth-century coin which was located during a systematic metal detector survey of the ploughsoil prior to excavation and three third-century coins referred to earlier. Little bone survived and the result of envionmental sampling is still awaited.

Survey

Wroxeter (SJ5608; SA2)

An intensive series of geophysical and earthwork surveys were undertaken in 1995 within the walled area at Wroxeter. The work was carried out by a number of institutions including the Ancient Monuments laboratory, Geophysical Surveys of Bradford, Centre National des Recherches Scientifiques, NARA Cultural Research Institute (Japan), Royal Commission Historic Monuments (England), University of Keele, University of Liverpool. The data are stored and have been collated at the Field Archaeology Unit by Martijn van Leusen, the WHP information technologist. The main survey methodologies comprised magnetometer, resistance, ground penetrating radar (GPR), with smaller areas covered by conductivity, seismic and proton magnetometer. The results were consistently of an excellent quality with much greater density of occupation than expected being detected. Several complete *insulae* have been added to the city and a significant number of buildings clarified or discovered.

In 1996 the A. M. Laboratory surveyed the large field in the north-west of the town and Geophysical Surveys of Bradford finishing the survey on the 'football field' behind Wroxeter Stores. The AM Lab survey found evidence for considerable industrial activity in their area including a 40m long dump of industrial waste or kiln debris in the town ditch. GSB also found some evidence for industrial activity. Within the village, the

University of Liverpool looked at the fields adjacent to the south-east ramparts. The geophysical survey will be completed and written up during the course of 1997 due to the generosity of The Roman Research Trust's Special Award. Earthwork survey of the town circuit was carried out by RCHM(E) and will enhance our understanding of the post-Roman development of the site. Evidence for trackways on the western, river-cliff, side of the town were mapped accurately for the first time giving hints of possible ancient routes down to the flood plain. David Pannett and Roger White also surveyed the river at Wroxeter in high summer looking for evidence of cutwaters, weirs and building stone marking possible riverine structures.

Berth at Baschurch (SJ431238; SA129)

On behalf of Michael Hurll Television, The Field Archaeology Unit at the University of Birmingham and Geophysical Surveys of Bradford carried out a geophysical survey of the enclosure attached to the causeway leading to the Berth hillfort. The 0.5ha internal area was surveyed using an RM15 resistivity meter, a fluxgate gradiometer and GPR. The gradiometer detected a probable ring-ditch within the enclosure in the centre of which was a strong iron signal. A GPR transect over this anomaly detected the cut of the ring-ditch and a central pit. The magnetometer also detected a possible wall revetting one of the entrances to the bank and the resistivity detected areas of burning close to the ring-ditch.

FIELDWALKING

Fieldwalking in 1994–5 concentrated on the south-west arm of the three transects defined by the project team (White 1993). Little arable was found beyond 6km from Wroxeter but small areas were investigated at Woolstaston (SO460098) and at Longnor Park (SJ470005). More significant samples were taken at Pitchford (SJ530050), Eaton Mascott/Berrington (SJ535065) and on both sides of the Severn at Atcham (SJ5409). Small scatters of Roman pottery were detected at Berrington and Pitchford but more significant quantities were collected at Chilton Farm, Atcham and east of Atcham village. Here, a dense concentration of Severn Valley ware of third-century date, a lava quern fragment and a sherd of Dressel 20 amphora suggested a possible site.

Parts of the north-eastern arm were also walked, especially at Tibberton (SJ6919) and at Longdon-on-Tern (SJ6215). Neither site produced significant clusters of Roman material. At the centre of the study area, the fields to the north of Wroxeter and west of Norton were walked (SJ5609). This produced large quantities of finds, including a fragment from a prismatic bottle possibly of 2nd-century date. Further areas were investigated in advance of excavation at Nobold (SJ4610) and Whitley Grange (SJ4509), although these lay outside the defined transects. Finally, another area on the periphery of the north-west transect was walked at Wood Farm, Adcote (SJ422188) as part of an evaluation carried out on a proposed land-fill site (White 1995). A sherd of Mancetter/Hartshill mortarium and some possible sherds of colour-coated upright-rim dishes ('dog-dishes') were recovered from the field and from a known bivallate circular enclosure nearby (SA487).

Over 300 hectares were covered in the 1996–7 season. Activity was concentrated in the north-west transect arm including substantial areas at Wroxeter (SJ5609, 5709) Berwick Wharf (SJ5411), Huffley Bank (SJ4916), Walford (SJ4220 & 4320), and Baschurch (SJ4322) and smaller areas at Allfield (SJ5007), Atcham (SJ5309), Condover (SJ4805), Fitz (SJ4417), and Wykey (SJ3824).

Finds throughout these areas were sparse although fresh sherds of a Roman grey ware jar at Walford indicated a probable site here, further strengthening the suggestion that the modern road line is following the route of a Roman precursor. This possibility was reinforced by the work at Huffley Bank which produced a reasonable background scatter of Roman pottery but no concentrations. A similar pattern was observed at Berwick Wharf but here a sherd of Iron Age pottery and some Roman sherds adjacent to an enclosure suggest a date for this settlement. There was no pottery at Baschurch but a scatter of flint work suggests that the area was utilised in prehistoric times. Around Wroxeter, Roman pottery was found in considerable quantities within 500m of the town defences but rapidly tailed off beyond that point. Finds included the base of a grey ware cremation urn adjacent to the Horseshoe lane and beads of Iron Age and Roman date. At Uckington, Roman and medieval pottery were found in some quantity suggesting that the site is a long-lived one. The investigations of possible villa sites at Allfield Farm and Grove Farm, Condover both proved negative, the only discovery being a burnt mound at Grove Farm.

Survey at Wroxeter (SJ558094) located the ploughed out remains of an industrial site (probably an iron-working hearth) of late 1st–2nd-century date and, nearby, the probable remains of a building defined by a dense spread of tile and pottery measuring approximately 30m by 20m. Again, a second century date may be indicated. Both sites lay within 100m of the town's defences. At Upton Cressett (SJ64926493) a dense

concentration of Roman pottery and a few sherds of Iron Age pottery confirmed a major site here spreading over about 4ha. The area is apparently defined by a bank extending around the lower slope of the site perhaps suggesting that it is an enclosure although this has yet to be confirmed either by aerial photography or excavation and the intriguing possibility that this is an unenclosed site must not be ruled out. The quantity and quality of the pottery was unusual for Shropshire and there was in addition a background scatter throughout the 67 hectares surveyed indicating a classic manuring spread. Flint work of Mesolithic–Bronze Age date was also recovered.

Parish Survey

A parish survey was launched using a volunteer work force of local people in order to map modern land use within the transect areas of the survey. These will be used for the detailed analysis of land use changes in the period between 1840 and today which can then be used to establish what factors are most important in the discovery of sites. Parishes covered include the following (completed surveys at the end of 1996 underlined): *Acton Burnell*, Atcham, Baschurch, Bayston Hill, Berrington, *Bicton*, Chetwynd, Condover, Cound, Kynnersley, Little Ness, Longden, Longnor, Pitchford, *Rodington*, Ruckley & Langley, Ryton XI Towns, *Shrewsbury*, Tibberton & Cherrington, *Uffington*, Upton Magna, Withington, Wollstaston, Wrockwardine, *Wroxeter & Uppington*.

A number of stray finds were located and these will be added into a database of metal detected and other stray finds which have been generated during the life of the project.

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GREAT OXENBOLD, MONKHOPTON, SHROPSHIRE (SO 594920)

by MADGE MORAN

Great Oxenbold is, at present, an isolated farmhouse complex within the parish of Monkhopton. It is situated on the south-western boundary of the parish and is approached from a farm track off the B4368 Craven Arms to Bridgnorth road[1]. At the time of Domesday Oxenbold was held by two free men as separate manors, but by 1244 the manor of Oxenbold had been given to Wenlock Priory by Robert de Girros[2]. The place-name is a simple descriptive one, 'where oxen were kept'[3] and indeed one part of the structure has features which suggest housing for horned beasts. The complex is stone-built and retains architectural features of the 13th century. Recent tree-ring sampling and analysis produced a felling date for flooring timbers of 1247, indicating that it was built by Prior Humbert of Wenlock (1221–1261), who seems to have been a 'building' Prior[4]. Details of the dendrochronological report are given at the end of this paper.

There are two main units, the house which is built into rising ground and incorporates a hall at 1st-floor level[5], and an adjoining chapel to the east which takes advantage of level ground. The external measurements of the house are 50ft 6ins (15.392m) by 29ft (8.839m), and the walls are, on average, 3ft 2ins (0.965m) thick.

The stone used for the chapel is similar to that used later at the Prior's house at Much Wenlock, thought to be the deep red sandstone from the Alveley quarries. As at the Prior's house it has weathered badly, exaggerated through a combination of salt and damp. At one time a salting bench was located against the inner wall in the north-east corner. For the hall-house a local rubble sandstone was used, but the dressings are of a better quality sandstone whose provenance is at present unknown. A flaggy sandstone roofing tile found in the roof space may indicate that at one time the complex was so covered; at present a few subquadrata limestone slabs, of the type used exclusively on the Prior's house at Much Wenlock and known locally as 'Harnage tiles,' occur on the chapel roof, but modern clay tiles cover the bulk of both units.

MEDIEVAL FEATURES OF THE HOUSE

a) Entrances, stonework and mouldings

Most of the medieval remains are to be found on the north elevation. Here, as shown on figs 1, 7, 8 and 9, the original arched entrance is above the external entrance to the undercroft. The worn sill is still *in situ* as is most of the moulded doorway. The moulding is a simple half-round with a frontal fillet, and the same moulding, typical of the early 13th century in Shropshire, is used on the windows. On the internal features, such as the stair jamb and the inner face of the doorway, the fillet is omitted. The door surround is emphasised by dressed quoins of a deeper colour and better quality stonework than the largely rubble and flag stones which constitute the bulk of the house. The same device is used on the corners of the walls except in the north-east corner where a projecting stair turret would have made it ineffective.

Immediately below the sill is one of a pair of pivot corbels which originally functioned as part of a 'drawbridge' mechanism. The missing corbel is incorporated into a garden wall, only a few feet from its original position. The drawbridge gave access to the hall entrance and cleared the entrance to the undercroft below. It provided both an impressive entrance and a security device (Figs. 7 and 9).

Below the corbel level is an arched entrance to the undercroft (Figs. 1, 3, 7, 8, and 9). In effect it is an entry with an outer and inner arch. A third arch is formed by a later wooden frame which is inserted into the original

rebate and blocks the bar sockets. The present door is of single opening form, but earlier double doors have left witness marks against the joists. The width of the doorway is 4ft 9ins (1.448m), and this would be wide enough to admit oxen; a possibility which relates directly to the place-name. At present a flight of stone steps gives access to the entrance, but these are re-used dressed stones, and each has a rounded chamfer on the top, a rebated straight chamfer on the bottom and a hole in the vertical face (Fig. 5). Their previous function is a matter for conjecture, but they could have been part of the drawbridge mechanism. The entry into the undercroft appears to be a vulnerable point and it may be argued that the doorway and the window to the west of it are later additions, but, if security was such a consideration, why were the windows not given a defensive form?

b) Windows

At the western end of the north wall is a blocked window whose form was unknown until a winter storm in January 1990 caused the thick growth of ivy to fall away. As revealed, it is a two-light square-headed window with a central monolithic stone mullion which has a half-round moulding similar to that on the entrance doorway, but with a central quirk. The jambs are also moulded and have the frontal fillet as described above. The lintel and the sills to each light are fashioned from separate stones, and the surround is similar to that of the entrance doorway (see Figs. 1, 3, 4, and 9). The inner form of the window is different. Here it is splayed and has a pointed segmental arch, and each light is rebated for a shutter (Fig. 4). Later stripping of ivy from the wall revealed fragments of the jambs of a similar window to the east, set mid-way between the entrance and the western window. Internally the position relates to a modern window in the ground-floor bathroom (Figs. 1, 3, 8, and 9). By comparing the measurements of these windows with the evidence for other original windows on the western gable wall, the single window on the south elevation and some fragments which could relate to one on the concealed east wall it seems reasonable to conclude that all the main windows were of this form and size, and all were set at the same level except that on the south side which was slightly lower. At Much Wenlock Priory the east side of the block to the south of Dorter range has two windows of identical form in the upper floor. It also has a blocked doorway at first-floor level, making an impressive comparison with Great Oxenbold[6].

c) The Stairway

To the east of the entrance door is the area which housed a projecting turret containing a spiral staircase. This has been reduced to a mere lean-to with a pentice roof but the ground plan and that of the undercroft show how the stair fitted into the turret. Half-round moulding without a fillet is present on the jamb of the spiral where it rises from the undercroft (Figs. 2, 8, and 7). The question of whether it was built in one or two phases is pursued in the 'discussion' section (p. 13).

d) The Solar or Camera

The argument about the staircase affects views about the presence of a small private upper chamber at the eastern end of the hall. Much of the evidence rests on the interpretation of the large beams in the roof which are described later but the main evidence for the chamber rests with the remains of a window with a central mullion located in the eastern wall at the north end and with an opening, perhaps for a garderobe, to the south of it. These features are shown in the reconstruction cut-away perspective (Fig. 8).

d) The Undercroft and Floor Levels

The undercroft is remarkable for the vaulted effect given by eight huge closely-spaced cambered joists. These are fashioned from whole trees and have no chamfers. Each measures 1ft 4 ins (0.406m) square and they are set at intervals of 1ft 5ins (0.432m), bridging the area from east to west, the first being trimmed to allow the door at the foot of the stairs to swing open. The unusual stepped joint is shown as a detail on the drawings (Fig. 9). Above the joists is a thick earth floor which rests on 9ins × 3ins (0.229 × 0.076m) boards, apart from a small area between the last joist and the south wall where stone slabs are used. Some years ago a layer of stone slabs, described as 'being like crazy paving' were uncovered when alterations to the floor surface in the present drawing room at the western end of the plan briefly exposed the earth packing and the slabs[7]. The use of rammed earth above wooden boards is well documented in medieval times[8].

The eastern end of the undercroft has been extended to give more support to the ends of the joists, and this wall is plastered over, but the remainder is built of the same rubble walling as the bulk of the structure. Internally the door and the window have surrounds of dressed stones. As the undercroft only occupies one third of the hall area at present and there is no access to whatever is beneath the remainder, the discovery of the floor construction at the west end raises the possibility of two concealed sections of undercroft. As there is a sharp decline in the ground level towards the west this was thought to be the case. Measurements showed that the accessible area of the undercroft occupied exactly one-third of the potential space, but a small excavation in the westernmost room carried out in October 1994, revealed packed clay forming the foundation for the floor at that end. The report of the excavation is given at the end of the paper.

e) Internal features of the hall

In the hall above the undercroft recent repair work has led to the uncovering of the inner face of the original entrance door on the northern side. As mentioned above, this has a surround of stonework with half-round moulding without the fillet. The top two-thirds of the aperture was blocked with loose rubble stones and these have been cleared away. Blocking the lower third of the aperture is a brick feature with two square vents in the base and a wooden slab on the top which has square openings linking with the vents (shown in plan, Fig. 1). It resembles a modern barbeque, but although the metal bars inside the vents are warped and twisted, as though from exposure to great heat, there is no fuel residue on the brickwork. The bricks measure on average 9¼ins × 2ins × 4½ins (0.235m × 0.050m × 0.114m). It appears to be a 'potager', an appliance where stocks, stews and soups could be kept at or below simmering point for long periods and on which the more delicate cookery operations such as confectionery, sauce-making and preserving could be carried out. Charcoal or even embers from the fire would be put onto the metal bars and a steady draught was provided by the venting system. Thus no fuel staining would occur and what little clean ash was produced could easily be cleared from the base of vents. Such appliances are still to be found in some French farmhouses and in some of the larger English establishments[9].

The same repair programme uncovered the jamb of a doorway in the eastern wall at right-angles to the main entrance door. This also had half-round moulding and was fitted with a draw-bolt, the channel for which remains in a cupboard shown as a slightly recessed area on the plan (Fig. 1). The present opening to the south of the cupboard perpetuates the position of the original doorway, and this is shown with the bolt in position on the cut-away reconstruction drawing (Fig. 8). From the same wall but further to the south, some years ago, two blocks of dressed stone with half-round moulding, but without the frontal fillet, were removed and have been re-used as a feature in the garden. They were located at a higher level than the door jamb, and although it cannot be said with certainty that they related to the jambs of a window, they were set slightly sloping as though in an arch and seem to indicate the possibility of a window in that position. However, a more recent fire in the bedroom above revealed other pieces of roll-moulded stonework which had been used as random blocking and so perhaps too much reliability should not be placed on the earlier discovery,

f) The Roof

Nothing remains of the original roof structure but within the roof space are seven massive beams. Six of them simply rest on brickwork at the wall-head on either side. Their span corresponds with that of the hall but they have no mortices or tenons which would link them to a jointing system and so they are unlikely to be tie-beams. They appear to hold the house down rather than support the roof. Slightly smaller than those of the undercroft, and less heavily cambered, they are chamfered and brought to a stepped and grooved run-out stop in the centre. The grooving is confined to the stepped area; it does not run the length of the chamfer (Fig. 5). Two are located to the west of the inserted chimneystack, four to the east and the seventh was trapped at a lower level when the stack was inserted. This beam supports rebated floorboards from an earlier (though not original) floor, and its position is probably indicative of the original level of a chamber floor. As it is unlikely that the beams would have been moved round the chimney they must have been raised at the time the stack was inserted and the walls raised in height. Some of the beams still have packing and levelling boards on the flat surface on which to lay the floor-boards. Dendrochronological sampling and analysis of the beams established the same felling date as for those in the undercroft.

It is suggested that the beams functioned as common joists supporting the floor of the *camera* as shown in the reconstruction drawing (Fig. 8). There is no evidence of any other joisting system. As such, this boarded floor in an otherwise open hall probably represents the earliest known example of its kind in Britain. The ends of the

beams are cut diagonally to follow the pitch of the roof and the smoke blackening stops short of the cut ends (Fig. 3). One is thinner and is only chamfered on one side, suggesting that it was set against an end wall. The most westerly beam has a mortice on its western face near the south end. This might indicate that it connected with a stair. The mortice is 3ins (0.076m) deep and has no peghole.

Few other features appear on the beams and those which do have no apparent significance. A further beam in the western bay is different in that it is shorter, is unsupported at one end, is hollow-chamfered and grooved along its length, and is finished with carved decoration in the form of a fleur-de-lis and scalloping (Fig. 4). Its resemblance to a wall-plate in Canterbury suggests that it fulfilled a similar function[10]. Alternatively it may have been used as a masking-beam for the floored end of the hall or as a beam over the dais end – assuming this to have been at the western end. Perhaps its location in the western bay of the roof indicates a dais at that end. It has a slight smokiness, while the remainder have a light deposit of soot.

The mullioned window in the eastern wall, mentioned above, has been put forward as corroborative evidence for a chambered eastern end, but there is a possibility that this was a later alteration and that the cambered beams originally supported an early form of flat or very shallow-pitched lead roofing. If this is so it would have been extremely advanced for its date, predating that at New College, Oxford by *c.* 140 years[11].

To the south of the window and at about the same height is the jamb of an opening which serves at present as the access from the roof space of the chapel to that of the house. It has a rounded edge similar to the edges of the undercroft steps, described earlier. It may relate to a garderobe serving the chamber, but is a very fragmentary feature, and it should be noted that similar stones are used at random and extensively in the farm buildings.

THE CHAPEL

The chapel at Great Oxenbold adjoins the house at the eastern end and is built on level ground. The stone in the upper half of the northern wall, though still of an Alveley type, differs slightly from that used in the lower half. This may indicate that stone from a different quarry was used in a single building phase or that the northern wall shows evidence of two building phases. (For the implications of this see p. 00.00, below.) The roofline of the chapel is higher than that of the house, the walls are thinner, and, at present, the ground-floor area is used partly as an entrance lobby and partly as a dairy.

External features include two single-light, pointed-arched windows with ashlared heads and quoins, and the remains of a third. The windows are set tightly under the eaves and there is no evidence of windows at the lower level. Immediately above the window heads is a corbel-table which supports a chamfered stone cornice, each corbel having a groove and a plain half-rounded end (Fig. 1). There is a window in the eastern gable whose original form is not clear (Fig. 2). All external features on the southern side are obscured by the addition of a kitchen.

The external entrance is immediately to the east of the stair turret of the house, and the doorway is distinguished by half-round moulding on an inner jamb (Fig. 1). It is possible that this and the draw-bolted doorway opened onto a form of lobby from which a few steps gave access to a chapel at a slightly raised level, but the interpretation of the chapel is fraught with difficulties. The draw-bolted doorway suggests that the house was defended from the chapel. Obviously this cannot have been the case but it does bring into focus the urgency of establishing the building sequence in this area of the complex.

Internally the space was divided into three bays but a modern partition largely obscures the original plan (Fig. 1). The ground level has been lowered, presumably to create headroom in the lower storey when a floor was inserted and the chapel was brought into secular use. Two reminders of the building's ecclesiastic function remain in the form of an aumbry on the northern wall and a piscina on the southern wall. The aperture which contains the piscina has a simple rebated outline and a trefoil head, while the basin itself is fashioned to the form of a quatrefoil (Fig. 6). Its position high up in the wall is misleading and suggests a possible relocation, but if a line is taken from the original floor level of the hall, the lowered ground level taken into account and allowance is made for a slightly raised chancel, then the position is correct and tends to support the theory of the chapel being located above a slightly raised base (Fig. 1).

On the southern wall of the chapel, in the upper storey but well below wall-plate level, are three stone corbels which, at present, appear to have no function. One of them provides a convenient foothold to gain access to the roof-space, but that is all. They are similar to the external corbels in that they have a groove on the face but they are larger and have a double-rolled form. They are chamfered along the upper arris which suggests that they did not support horizontal beams but vertical timbers connected in some way with the roof construction, the form of which remains unknown (Figs. 4, 6, and 9).

That the chapel communicated directly with the house, as indeed it still does, is shown by the recently uncovered draw-bolted doorway described above.

DISCUSSION[12]

Four dominant questions are raised: is the complex complete? Which came first, the chapel or the house? Did the house have a floored eastern end originally? How did the spiral staircase function? Several secondary questions are also raised and some of these, such as the position of the piscina, the redundant corbels, the external entrance to the undercroft, and the jointless beams in the roof have been raised, if not satisfactorily answered, in the descriptive account.

To a considerable extent these four outstanding questions have a common bearing on the overall interpretation. It is possible, indeed it is very likely, that the complex has been the subject of piece-meal development and/or has lost some of its units. The possibility that there was a wing on the northern side beyond the stair turret is raised under 'Thesis A', below. It would not have obscured the light from the westernmost window of the chapel. Another missing unit may have been located on the south side of the house. Here there is a long stretch of walling with no openings for windows. Although the lie of the land works against such a theory, could there have been a structure here at right-angles to the main range? If so, what was it? Perhaps the space was occupied by an external chimneystack, the seepage of smoke from such a stack might account for the light smoke-blackening on the beams in the roof.

An account of Great Oxenbold, published in 1915, stated that the house was added to the chapel, and subsequent authors have repeated this over-simplistic view[13]. But recent detailed investigation of both structures makes it clear that the building sequence is not clear-cut, that there is room for differing opinions and that the complex may not be complete. It is not enough to say that the sequence is the reverse of that published earlier; such a basic re-appraisal is not the whole story.

The alignment of the hall and the chapel is such that the chapel faces due east. This appears to have been a deliberate planning decision and suggests that the two units were planned at the same time even though the hall may have been built first. The range cuts across the contour lines and this accounts for the curious levels encountered in the building. As shown on the setting-out diagram, the proportions of the chapel are exactly two-thirds of the hall, and both units indicate a practical knowledge of geometry and the use of what is now known as Gunter's chain for measuring[14] (Fig. 6).

Because the hall-house is built into rising ground the small part which contains the stair turret, to the east of the original entrance, is at ground level; further, the lie of the land is such that on the south side more of the hall is at ground level and so the definition of Great Oxenbold as a first-floor hall house should, perhaps, be qualified to some extent. However, the original entrance is clearly at first-floor level and there is an undercroft below; therefore, for the purposes of this report, these features are taken as criteria to classify the structure as such, but it may be a mistake to think of the house as a 'hall' of any kind.

There is room for argument as to whether the staircase originally reached a level above that of the hall, or whether it was designed to communicate only between the hall and the undercroft. One school of thought argues strongly for two phases of construction; another for only one. Both forms are shown on the undercroft plan (Fig. 2). If there is a key to the interpretation of Great Oxenbold it is likely to lie within the form of the staircase, and therefore the reasoning on both sides is given.

Thesis A

Phase 1. From the north-east corner of the hall the spiral had a three-quarter turn and the stair gave access downwards to the undercroft and upwards to a level at present unknown but likely to have been that of a solar, *camera*, or private chamber of some kind above the eastern end of the hall. The undersides of some of the treads relating to the upper level are still visible and are located above the first quarter turn rising from the undercroft. The centre of this spiral is based within the wall thickness. This would have caused a small projection on the outer wall enclosing the staircase. The base of the turret was lit by a single-light window.

Phase 2. The stair turret was enlarged and the steps between the hall and the undercroft were altered for the upper two-thirds of this section to allow a new spiral to be constructed at the upper level with its centre approximating to the inner face of the east wall and the outer face of the north wall. The upper spiral has the remains of five treads contained within the thickness of the wall and it is to this section that the blocking of the pentice roof, shown on the north elevation, relates (Fig. 1). It is the infilling of the inner half of the spiral. The top tread faces away from the inner face of the wall and it appears that the spiral continued to a still higher level. At present there is no evidence at the upper levels of either spiral for communication with an upper floor at this end of the hall, but archaeological evidence may remain beneath modern plasterwork on the internal wall. That the upper flight was well used is clear from the 6ins (0.152m) depression in each of the treads.

A possible reason for the alteration to the spiral staircase could be the construction of a now demolished wing lying to the north of the stair tower. As the building remains at present there would be no reason for the stairs to continue above their present levels.

Thesis B

The argument for a single phase of development states that the deviation from the true helix is merely to allow the steps to emerge from the undercroft and not outside it. The main spiral starts from the turn by the window and its centre is as described above. The undersides of the treads relating to the upper level, mentioned above, are interpreted as stepped lintels supporting the wall above. The upper spiral with the remains of the five treads could have continued for a further rotation to reach wall-plate level and thus give access into the solar or *camera*. This arrangement is shown on the cut-away reconstruction drawing (Fig. 7).

In both accounts there is an unknown factor: the level from which the drawbridge operated.

It cannot be denied that the upper spiral served a purpose, perhaps a dual purpose: that of reaching a convenient point for operating the drawbridge, and giving access to an upper chamber.

Pursuing the theory of piecemeal redevelopment, could the chapel represent an adaptation of something that was there previously?. If the precursor was a floored building it could be seen as a precedent for the chapel to be located at a raised level. Was it is a solar block which served the hall and was later remodelled to form a chapel? This would account for the later miserly solar area, for the extension of the spiral staircase in order to reach it and perhaps for a later external access to the undercroft necessitated by the insertion of the upper floor. On the other hand the hall could have stood as a self-contained unit before the 'chapel' was built. But piecemeal redevelopment could be used to suggest a building sequence that takes into account the fact that the eastern wall of the house is marginally thicker than the other three. While it is unfortunate that plasterwork obscures much of it, it could be argued that, with its attendant features such as the draw-bolted doorway, the window to the south of it and the features in the upper level, this wall and the undercroft represent the remains of phase one in the sequence. Phase two saw the addition of the chapel which obliterated the outlook from the upper window of the house and relegated the draw-bolted doorway and the garderobe to internal features, and phase three saw the re-building of the hall. This, among other things, would account for the proximity of the main entrance door and the draw-bolted doorway. If this is seen as a logical sequence it means that the present external entrance and the window in the undercroft are likely to be original features. In passing, it should be noted that the window is angled into the cross wall and splayed to distribute light where it is needed.

In turn, this raises the question of how effective was the lighting in the hall and how the eastern end functioned. The windows in the north, south and west walls provide plenty of light for the western half of the hall, but the eastern half is served only by the supposed window to the south of the draw-bolted doorway. Three doors and a window seem to be located within a very small area (Fig. 1). Perhaps they were all features in a lobby which may have been divided from the better-lit end by a low timber partition of some kind. If there was such a partition to the west of the main entrance it would coincide with the edge of the undercroft and might follow the line of the lower floor level which was briefly exposed some years ago. Until very recently there was a full height partition at this end, but it cut across the position of the main entrance and was entirely modern. However, it could be seen as perpetuating the tradition of a partitioned off lower end.

An alternative building sequence is as follows:

Phase I A hall with a raised entrance over a full-sized undercroft, two-thirds of which is now inaccessible, with a spiral staircase down to the undercroft and up to a solar or similar private chamber over the eastern end of the hall, the level of which is not yet determined.

Phase II At the eastern end of a further block was added (the 'chapel') whose floor level was about 1ft (0.0305m) higher than the entrance level. This evidence comes from the moulding on the external doorway. It was a single-storied structure.

Phase III The spiral staircase was reconstructed, perhaps to facilitate access to a wing which was added on the northern side and which had the level of its upper floor higher than that in phase I.

Phase IV A chimneystack was inserted centrally within the hall and at the same time the chamfered beams over the hall were relocated to a higher eaves level to form an attic floor. Another floor was inserted over the entire hall area.

There remains a most important question of all – Are the two units really a hall and a chapel? Or is the so-called hall really a solar range which accompanied a now-vanished hall? The position of such a hall on the southern side would account for the long stretch of featureless wall, mentioned above.

Wealthy institutions and men of means would surely demand spacious private accommodation and the present so-called solar arrangement at Great Oxenbold, whether original or not, is cramped. However, if the building was primarily intended as a retreat or 'pleasance' for the Prior, perhaps a hall with a small *camera* and a private chapel were all he needed.

COMPARISONS, DATING and BRIEF HISTORY

It is difficult to compare Great Oxenbold with any known complex in Shropshire or elsewhere but Madeley Court, Telford, Shropshire, which was also held by Much Wenlock Priory and probably run as a grange from Norman times until the Dissolution, has certain similarities although the site and the buildings are larger. It too was probably built in the 13th century. At Madeley Court a similar steeply sloping site accommodates two levels of building, and an addition shortly afterwards blocked the hall windows at one end. Similar stone mouldings are used and features such as a spiral staircase, a chapel and a garderobe are all present[15]. The similarity between the mullioned window on the north elevation and those on the block to the south-west of the Dorter range at Much Wenlock Priory has already been noted.

At Charney Bassett in Berkshire a 13th-century, two-storied solar block has a chapel attached to it in much the same way as the so-called hall has at Great Oxenbold. It also has a trefoil-headed piscina, and the similarity extends to the chapel being accommodated at an upper level and a window appearing in the re-entrant angle[16]. However, at Charney Bassett there is no doubt that the larger block is a solar.

It cost Prior Humbert 300 marks in 1252 to obtain the royal assent to enclose land at Oxenbold for a deer park[17]. Clearly he was a hunting as well as a building Prior, had fishponds there and at times entertained in some style. This raises again the possibility of vanished buildings. However, by 1370 the two parks at Madeley and Oxenbold barely sufficed to support the animals there[18].

THE DENDROCHRONOLOGICAL REPORT by D. Miles

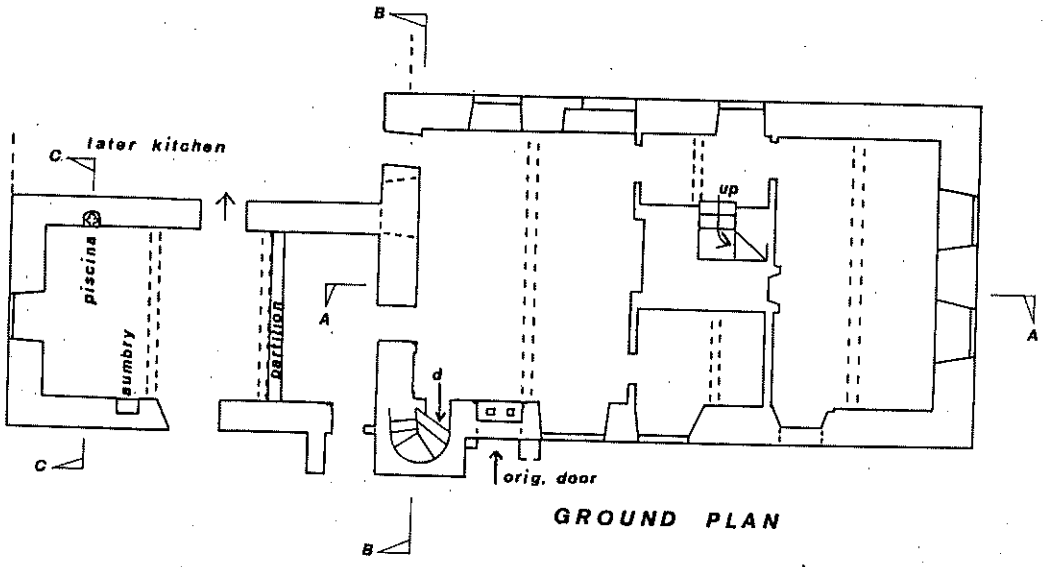
Dendrochronological sampling was carried out at Great Oxenbold in June 1992 by Daniel Miles. A summary of his report reads:

GREAT OXENBOLD The joists in the undercroft were felled in the spring/early summer of 1242, and two of the main beams upstairs were felled in the winter of 1246/7, and another in the spring/early summer of 1247. The fleur-de-lis beam had a heartwood/sapwood transition of 1226 which is entirely consistent with it having been felled within the same period as the other timbers. A purlin in the present roof was found to be a re-used wall-plate which dated to 1510–45 and probably related to a re-roofing at that time.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORT by P.A. Stamper and D. Miles

A trench 400 × 400mm was excavated against the south wall of the hall, 600mm from the S.W. corner. The modern boarded floor was supported on low brick walls running N–S. These sat directly on the flat top of the clay beneath, that clay being 480mm below the height of the top of the floorboards. Although the top of the clay was flat, and there were some signs of a thin mortar skim on top of it, there was no sign of any tiled or other floor. The clay filling the hall's lower part was excavated to a depth of c. 440mm and tested with a probe below that (which failed to find bottom) to a total depth of 760mm. The clay was olive/grey, with some red sandy material. There were no finds.

Conclusions. The clay filling was original, to form the foundations of whatever floor the hall had. There is not, nor has there ever been, an undercroft here.

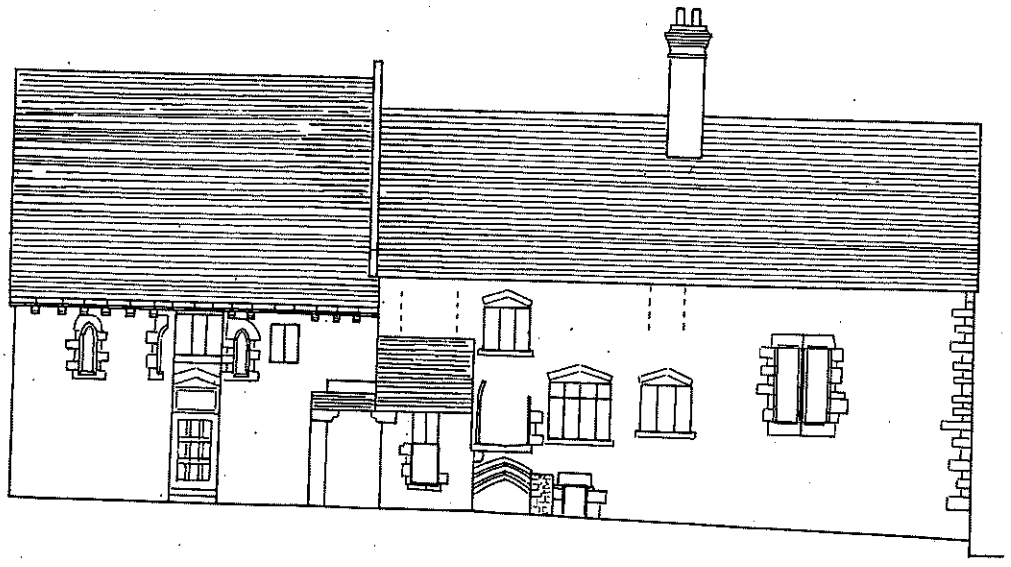


GROUND PLAN

N

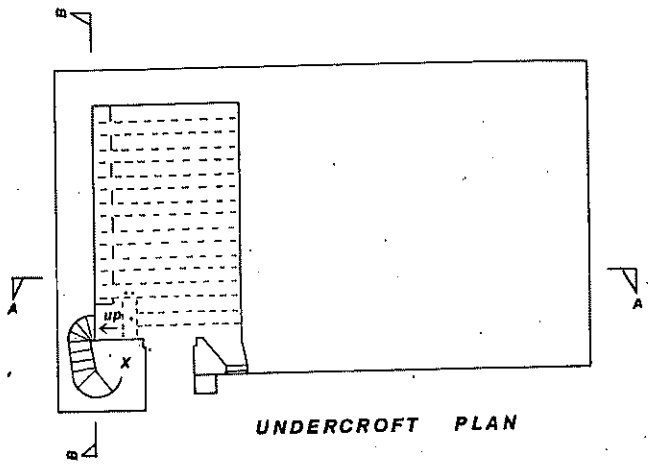
GREAT OXENBOLD
MONKHOPTON
SHROPSHIRE

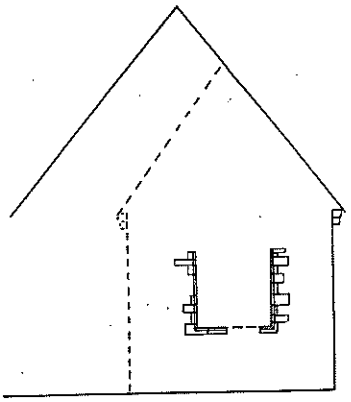
SO 594920



N. ELEVATION

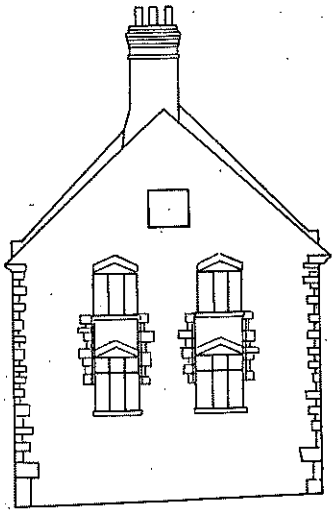
0 5 10 ft. 0 2 4 m.



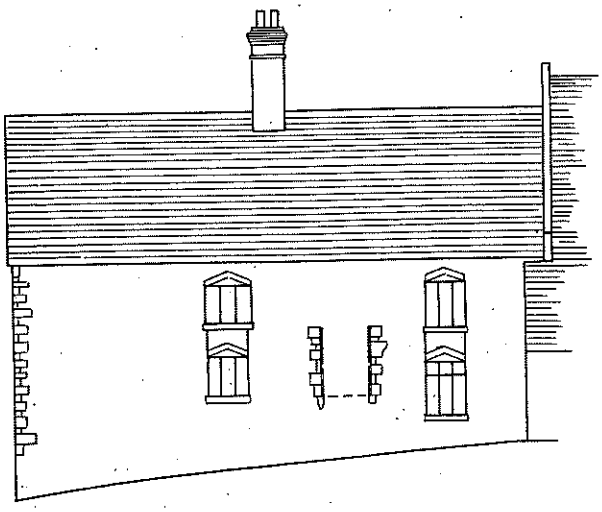


E. ELEVATION OF CHAPEL

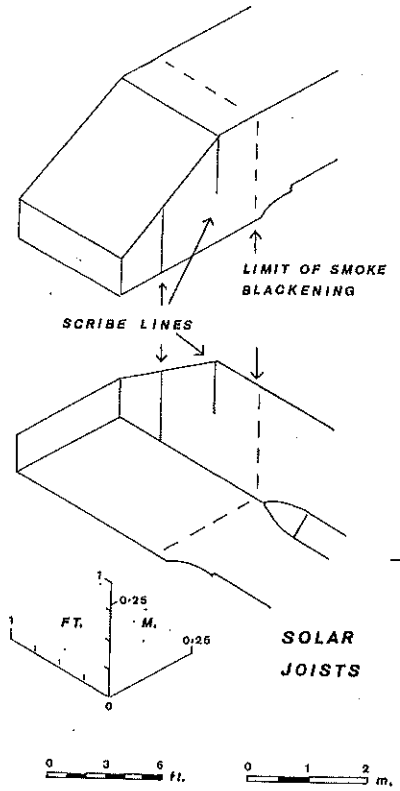
0 5 10 ft. 0 2 4 m.

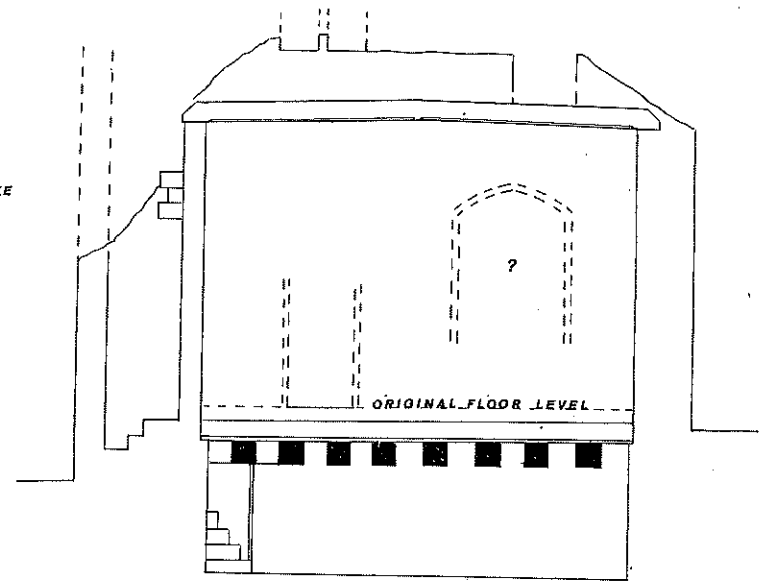


W. ELEVATION

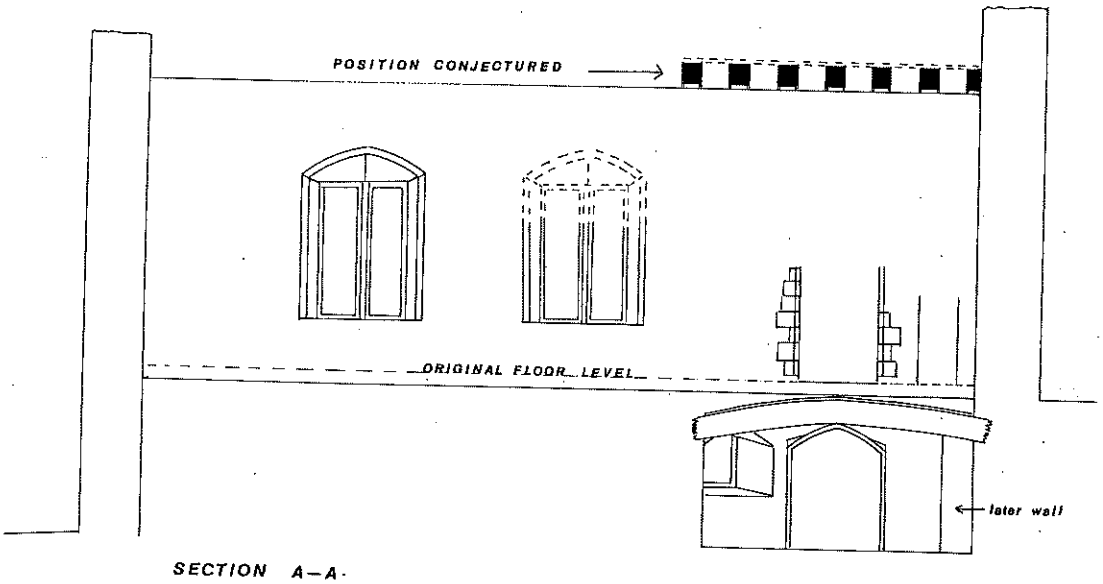


S. ELEVATION

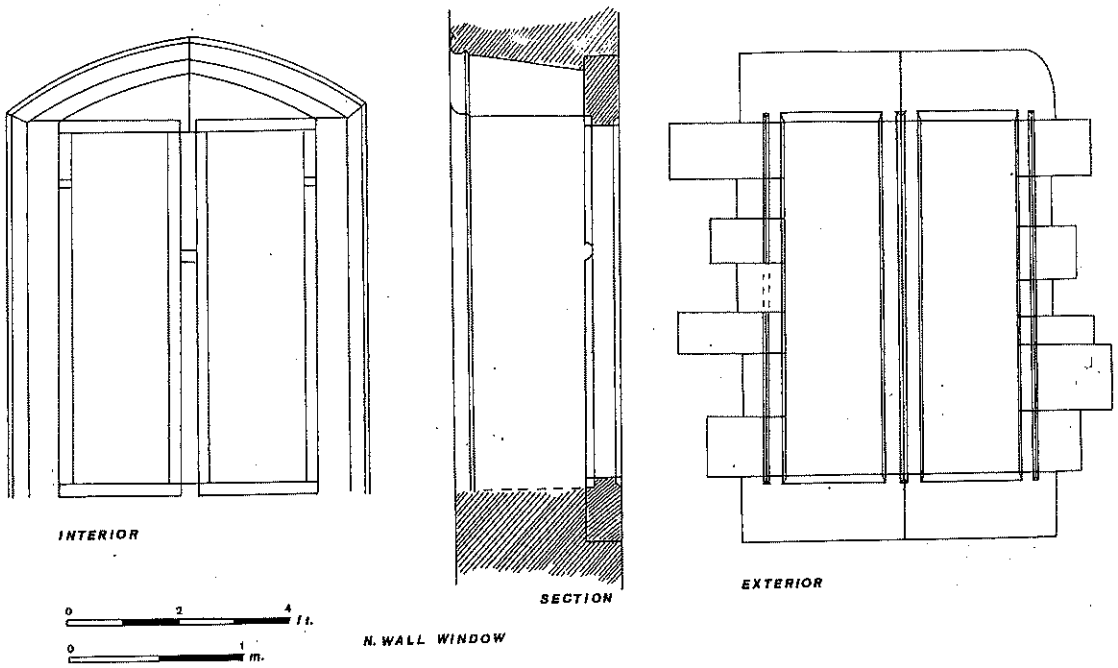


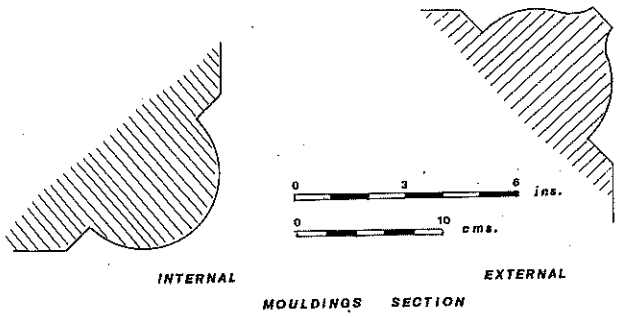


SECTION B–B



SECTION A–A


INTERIOR
SECTION
EXTERIOR
0 2 4 ft.
0 1 m.
N. WALL WINDOW


0 3 6 ins.
0 10 cms.
INTERNAL
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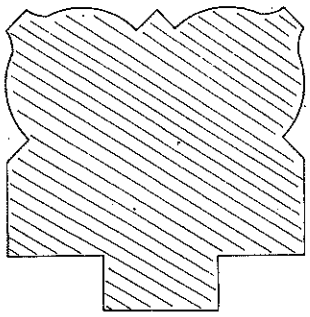
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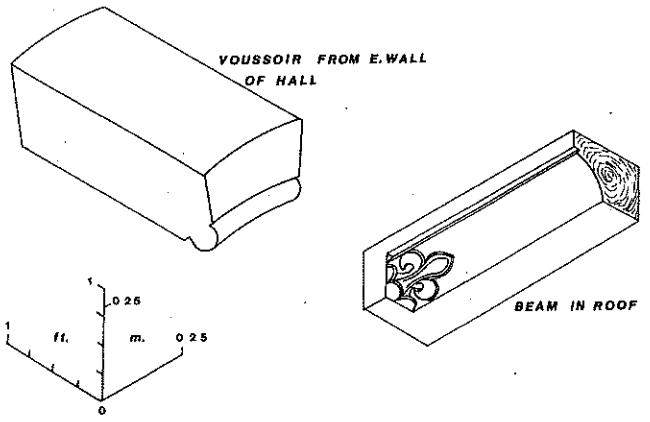
VOUSSOIR FROM E. WALL OF HALL
BEAM IN ROOF
1 0.25
1 ft. m. 0.25
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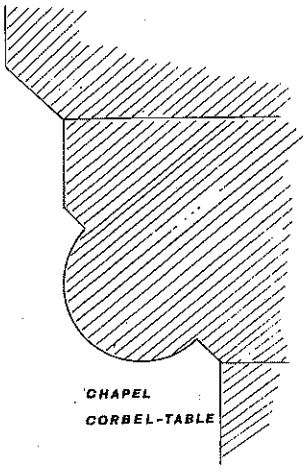
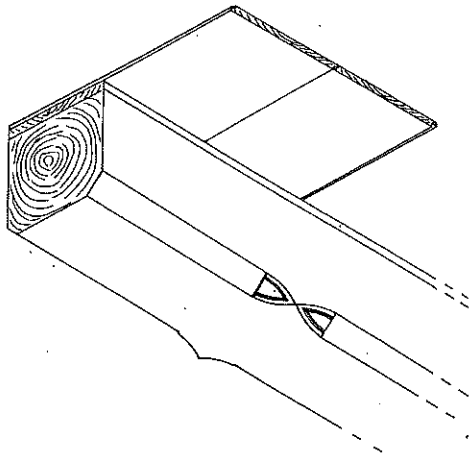
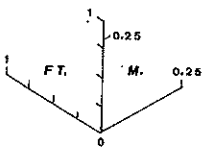
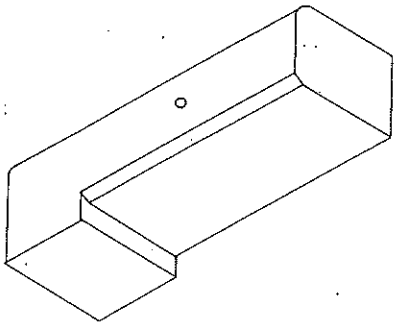

CHAPEL CORBEL-TABLE

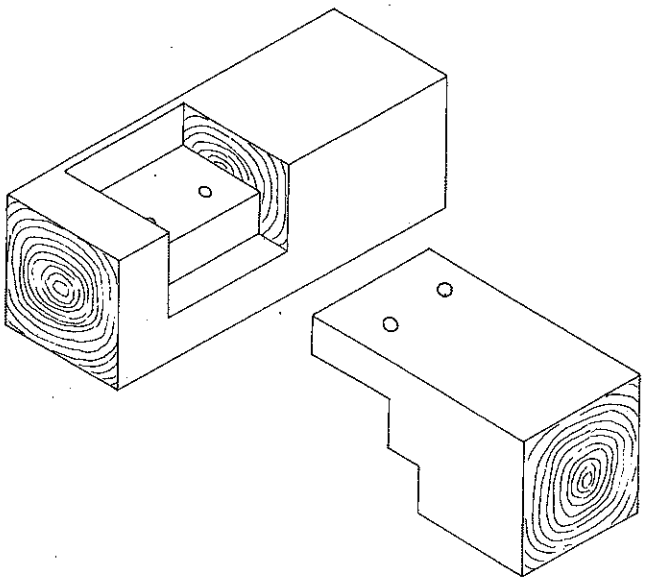


JOIST WITH LEVELLING BOARD, FLOOR BOARDS & CENTRAL STOPS

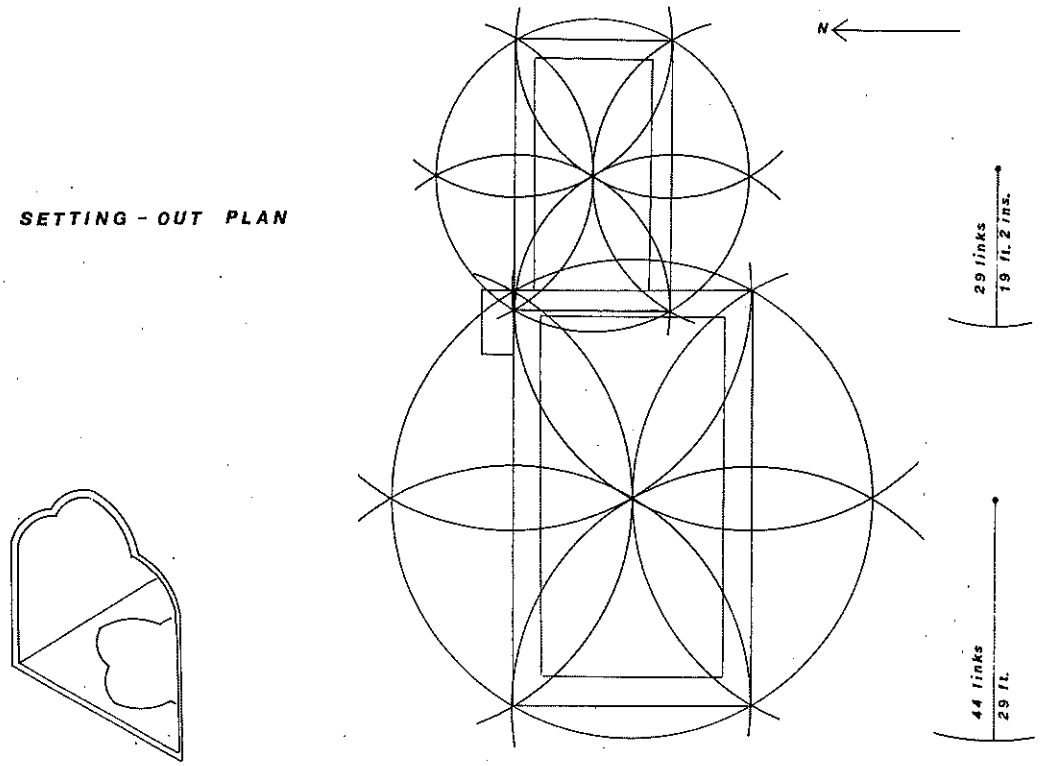




MASONRY REUSED AS STEP

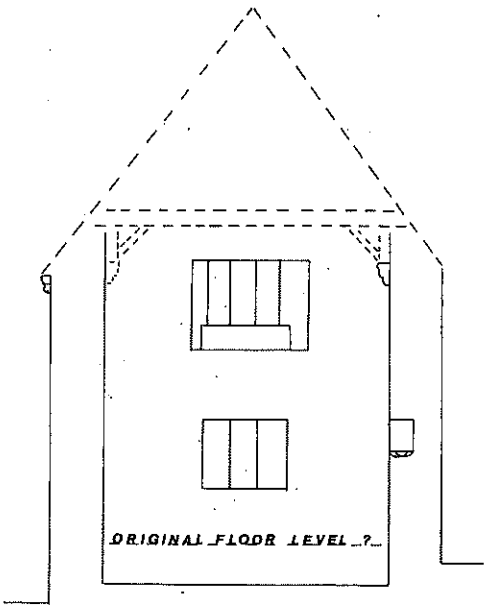


JOIST TRIMMER JOINT IN UNDERCROFT

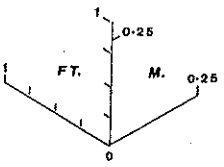


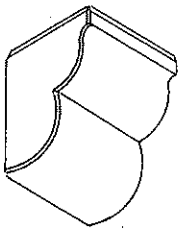
SETTING - OUT PLAN

PISCINA

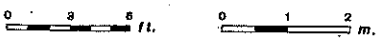


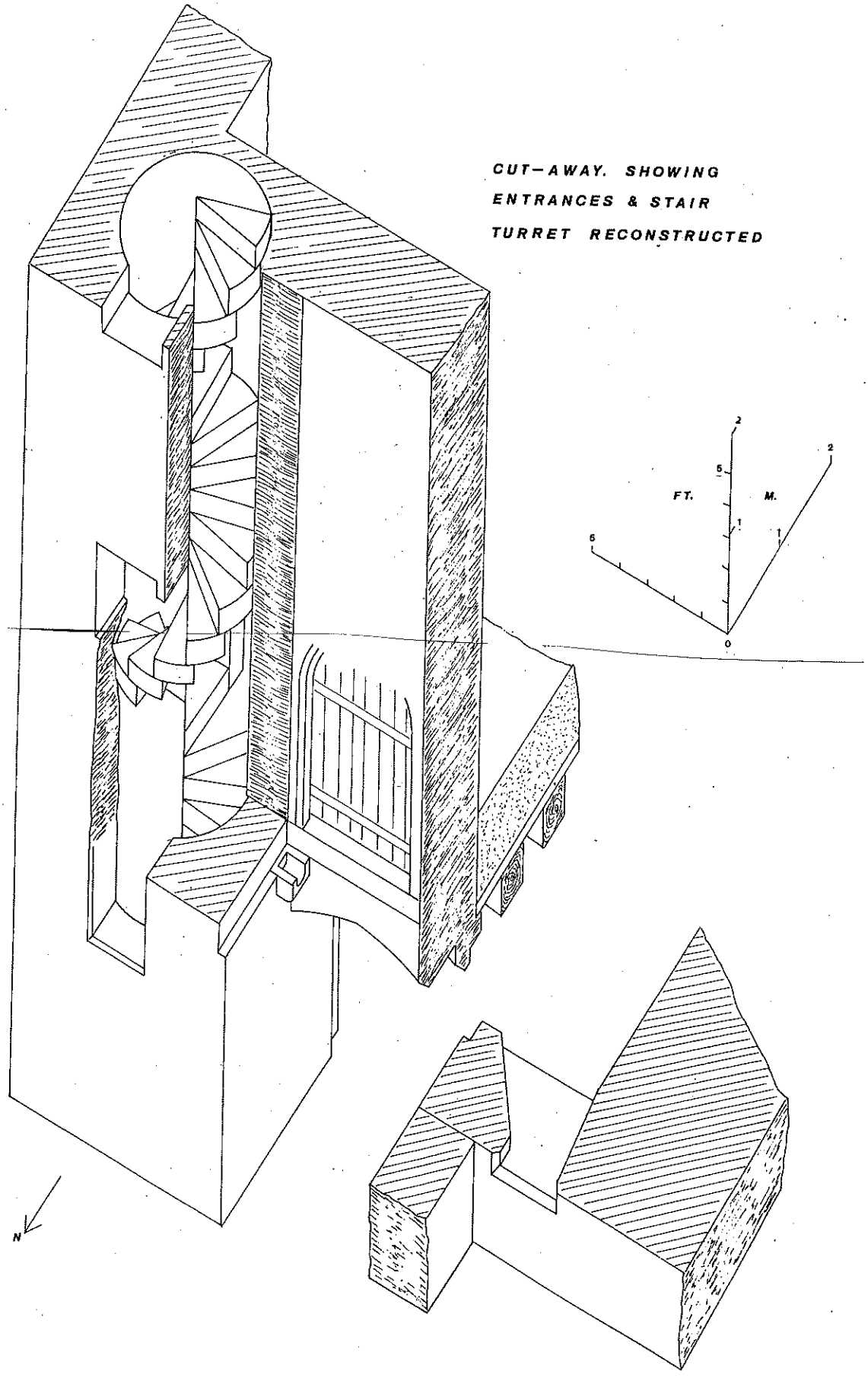
SECTION C — C

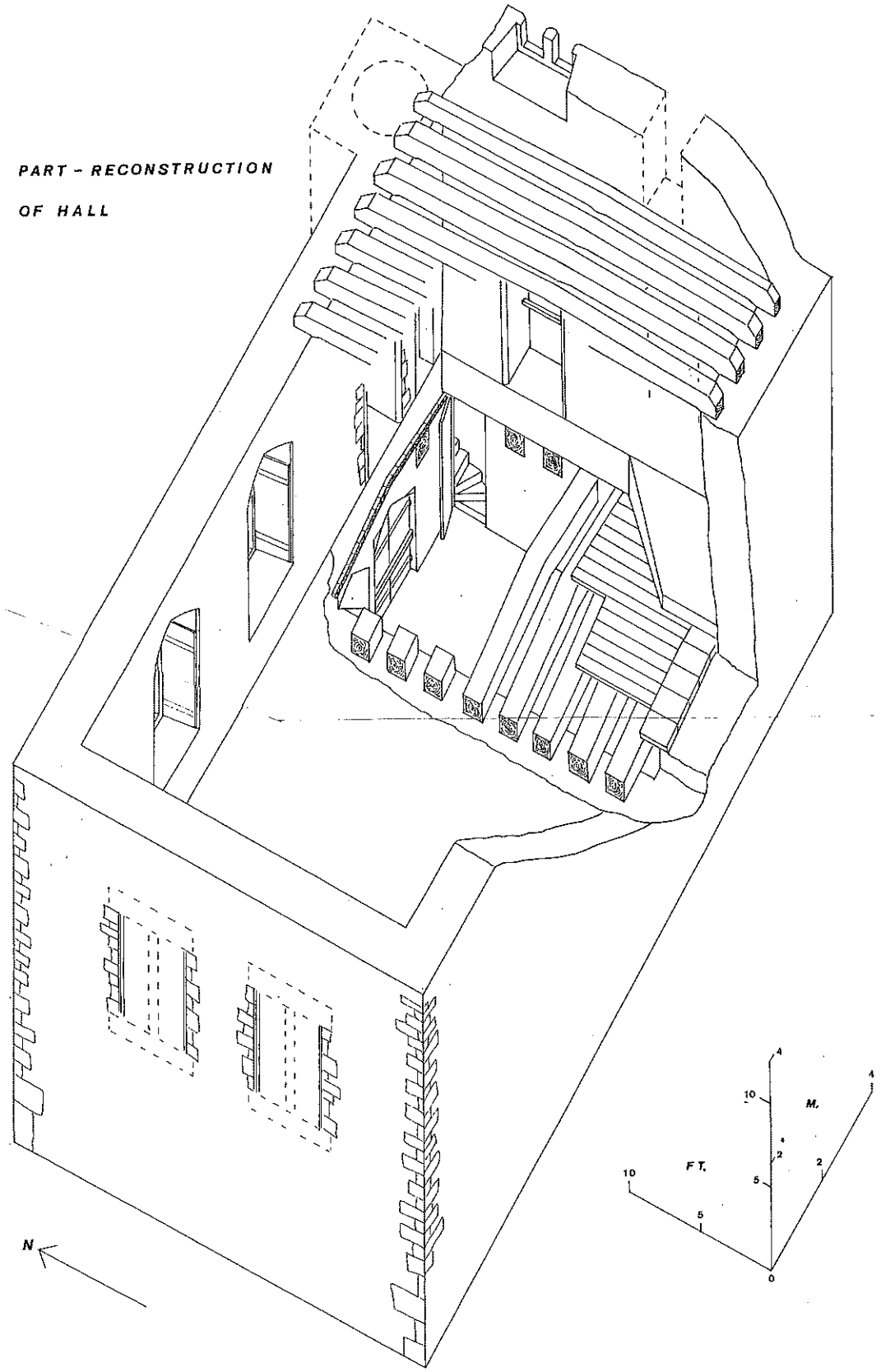




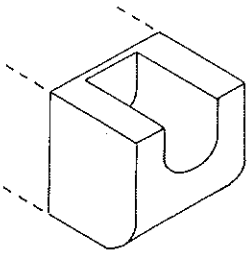
CORBEL IN CHAPEL



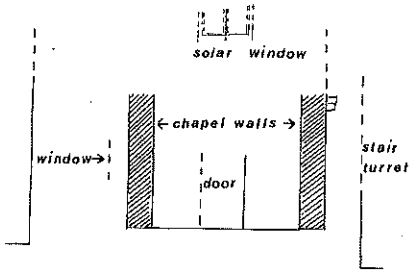

CUT–AWAY. SHOWING
ENTRANCES & STAIR
TURRET RECONSTRUCTED
FT.
M.
N


PART - RECONSTRUCTION
OF HALL
N
FT.
M.

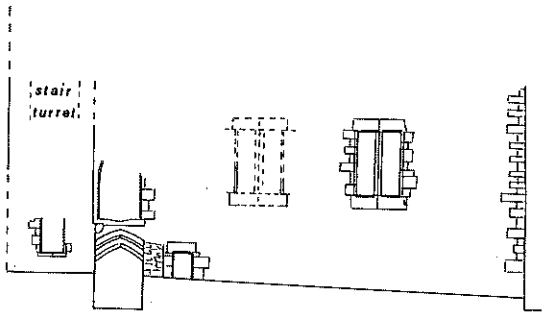
GREAT OXENBOLD, SHOWING EXTERNAL MEDIEVAL REMAINS OF HOUSE



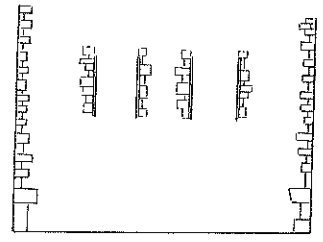
DRAWBRIDGE PIVOT CORBEL (N.T.S.)



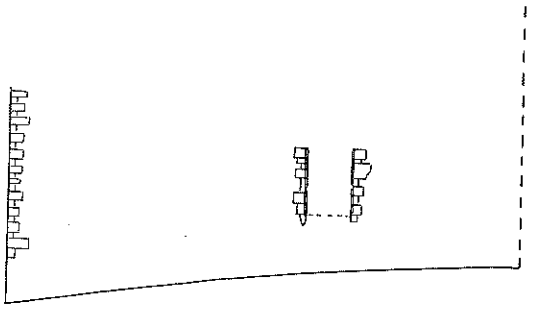
E. ELEVATION (BEHIND CHAPEL)



N. ELEVATION

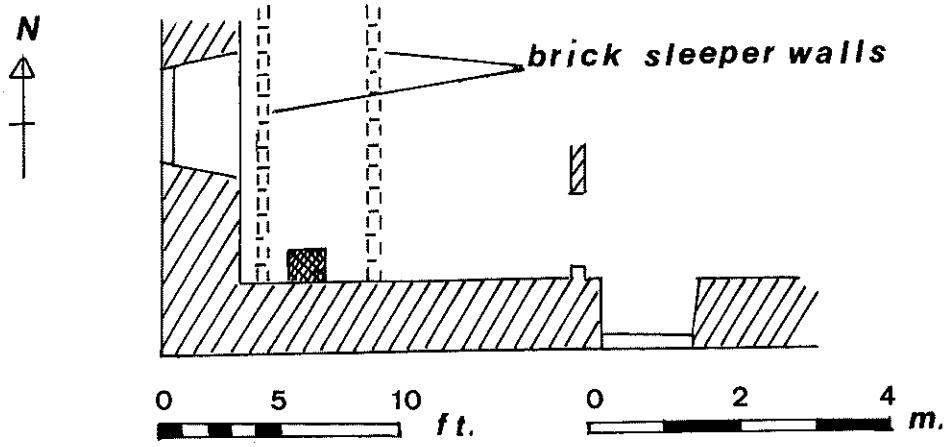


W. ELEVATION



S. ELEVATION

Plan showing location of excavation in S.W. corner of hall



REFERENCES

1 I wish to thank Mr Tom Barker and his wife Rachel for their kind permission to examine and record Great Oxenbold; for their tolerance of the many return visits with various 'experts'. Special thanks go to Eric Mercer, Dan Miles, Paul Stamper and Henry Hand for their involvement. Henry Hand was responsible for most of the drawings and many of the conclusions

2 J Morris (ed), *Domesday Book* (Shropshire), 1986, 4,21,4; *VCH. Salop*, **2**, 1973, 40

3 E Ekwall, *English Place Names*, 1960, 355

4 W F Mumford, *Wenlock in the Middle Ages*, 1977, 18–21, 53

5 It may be argued that the structure is not a 'hall' in the accepted sense, but, for convenience, that term is used in this report

6 D H Cranage, 'The Monastery of St. Milburge at Much Wenlock', *Archaeologia*, lxxii, 1922, Fig 1; I am grateful to Dr. D Cox for this reference. See also M Wood, *The English Medieval House*, 1965, 351

7 Pers. Comm. from Rachel Barker; W F Mumford, *op cit* 53. It is recorded that Prior Gosnell paved and glazed the great hall in the 1520's. The 'crazy paving' may relate to this work and lie above the slabs which are visible from the undercroft. Similar stone slabs were uncovered at Easthope Cottage Farm in 1987

8 L F Salzman, *Building in England down to 1540*, 1967, 147

9 I am grateful to R A Meeson for information on the French examples. He found several in the area between Poitiers and Bordeaux, but they are probably widespread and of 18th and 19th century date. The English examples appear to be earlier. Examples may be seen at Hampton Court, Skipton Castle, Aston Hall, Hardwick Hall, Buckland Abbey, etc. See P D Brears, Kitchen Fireplaces and Stoves, *Country House Kitchen*, 1995 (forthcoming). I am grateful to P Sambrook for this reference

10 J Munby, M Sparks and T Tatton-Brown, 'Crown-post and King-strut Roofs in S.E. England', *Med Archaeol*, **27** 1983, Fig 2, 126. (The 'Table Hall' of Christ Church, Canterbury, assumed to have been completed before *c.* 1285.)

11 E Gee, 'Heating in the Middle Ages', *Trans Anc Mon Soc*, **31**, 1987, 94

12 This section attempts to synthesise the opinions of Eric Mercer, Peter Smith, Bob and Jean Meeson, Henry Hand, Sarah Pearson, Ian West, Tony Baggs, Fred and Irene Powell, Rachel Barker and the author. I am grateful to all concerned

13 H E Forrest, *Old Houses of Wenlock*, 1915, 70, *et al*

14 J Harvey, 'Geometry and Gothic Design', *Anc Mon Soc Trans*, **30**, 1986, 48

15 R A Meeson, *Madeley Court: Interim Report*, 1978–9, Telford Development Corporation

16 H Turner & J H Parker, *Some Account of Domestic Architecture in England*, **1**, 1851, plates after 154; M Wood, *op cit*, *passim*

17 *VCH. Salop*, **4**, 1989, 43

18 *VCH. Salop*, **2**, 1973, 43

THE PALMERS' GUILD WINDOW, ST. LAWRENCE'S CHURCH, LUDLOW:

A STUDY OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF GUILD IDENTITY IN MEDIEVAL STAINED GLASS

By CHRISTIAN LIDDY

The mid-fifteenth-century Palmers' guild window, located in St. John's Chapel in St. Lawrence's Church, Ludlow (fig 1), south Shropshire, has received relatively scant attention from medieval historians and art historians. Apart from Ganderton and Lafond's discussion of the window within a wider examination of the array of stained glass to be found in Ludlow Parish Church written over thirty years ago,[1] very little has recently been written about the significance of the window. While the glass has been of some interest to local historians and has figured in local guides to both the town of Ludlow and the church of St. Lawrence,[2] it is perhaps curious that in the most widely researched history of Ludlow through the Middle Ages, the Palmers' guild received a whole chapter, while the window itself is not mentioned once.[3] In as much as the window tells the story of King Edward the Confessor's giving of his ring to St. John the Evangelist as alms, scholars interested in the late medieval cult of St. Edward the Confessor and in visual representations of the legend of the ring have explored this aspect of the window's imagery.[4] But while the Palmers' window represents one of only two surviving narrative cycles of St. Edward's Life in glass,[5] this article will argue that the window is primarily a representation of the guild's ancient foundation and legendary associations rather than of St. Edward the Confessor's chastity and holiness.

Evidence for the dating of the window is largely circumstantial, but certain stylistic features of the window, in particular the design of the canopy above each light, indicate a fifteenth-century date (Plate 1). We can see that the eight canopies conform exactly to the basic canopy formula of the fifteenth century, namely three-sided structures decorated with turrets and pinnacles, with arches opening to reveal a vaulted roof.[6] Other factors relating to the construction of the church suggest a more specific context in which the window was installed. Between 1433 and 1471 a massive rebuilding programme was undertaken at St. Lawrence's Church, Ludlow. One of the results of this intensive building activity was the substantial rebuilding of St. John's Chapel which left only the lower parts of the north and east walls remaining from the first rebuilding of the church in 1199.[7]

The window was restored between 1875 and 1878 by Hardman's of Birmingham as a wedding present to the Rector of Ludlow, the Reverend E F Clayton, at a cost of £245.[8] The cost alone would suggest that the window was subject to a high degree of restoration, but no cartoons of the window have been found and in written correspondence between Hardman's and the Restoration Committee of St. John's Chapel the only dialogue consisted of a discussion of the nature of the arms of Ludlow which now occupy the tracery of the Palmers' window.[9] According to J T Irvine, the clerk of the restoration works in 1859–60, 'With the exception of the upper light on the left hand, of which only the top of the canopy was preserved, very little of the glass in the restored window is new. Four of the lights are filled with the same glass as before; and the remaining three in great part with glass removed from the place it was wrongly occupying in the north-east window of the chapel'.[10] In the absence of restoration charts, this description offers the greatest insight into the extent of the nineteenth-century restoration to the Palmers' window. If certain lights in the window had been in other windows within the church, the incomplete nature of the Palmers' window prior to restoration might also explain the absence of antiquarian drawings of the window.[11] Without close examination of the physical construction of the glass in the Palmers' window, the degree of restoration remains subjective. Nevertheless, as

an example of image-making in stained glass the Palmers' guild window provides an invaluable opportunity to study the way in which a guild sought to represent itself in one particular medium.

The audience of the Palmers' guild window will be one of the issues to be addressed in this article. Two contexts are immediately suggestive. The first is the donors' desire for commemoration and for intercessory prayers.[12] In the late medieval church there was a reciprocal nexus, in which the doctrine of purgatory ensured a constant circular flow of pious provision between the living and the dead,[13] and pious folk, whether individually or corporately, gave glass in order that they be remembered by future generations who would say prayers for their souls. The donors of the mid-fifteenth-century Palmer's guild window in St. John's Chapel in Ludlow Parish Church were inspired by the same motive. Indeed, in this instance the memory of parishioners and guild members would have been activated by two factors. Firstly, the window is visually impressive because although the enormous western piers of the tower make the window's visibility from the nave difficult, the window dominates the view from the north aisle due to its prime position at the east end of St. John's Chapel (fig 1). Secondly, the panel below the extreme right light on the bottom row bears the words, *fenestram fieri fecerunt.* The space under the other lights is blank, but a comparison with a central light in a guild window in the north aisle of the Roos church of All Saints in Holderness suggests that the original inscription would have read something approximating to: *Orate pro animabus Fratrum et Sororum Gildae Palmiorem. Qui hanc fenestram fieri fecerunt.*[14]

The window's position in the guild chapel suggests that it had a private as well as a public audience. Numerous scholars writing about late medieval guilds have commented upon the common desire among guild members to separate themselves from the rest of society.[15] According to Gervase Rosser, guilds were held together by 'their shared, self-conscious desire to distinguish themselves in some way or another as a group from the wider mass of humanity'.[16] The window can also be seen as an attempt to promote the exclusivity of the Palmers' guild for, as we shall see, the window mythologised the guild's history and connections, providing a potent corporate identity for the guild's members.

However, the most interesting questions about the window and the questions which this article seeks

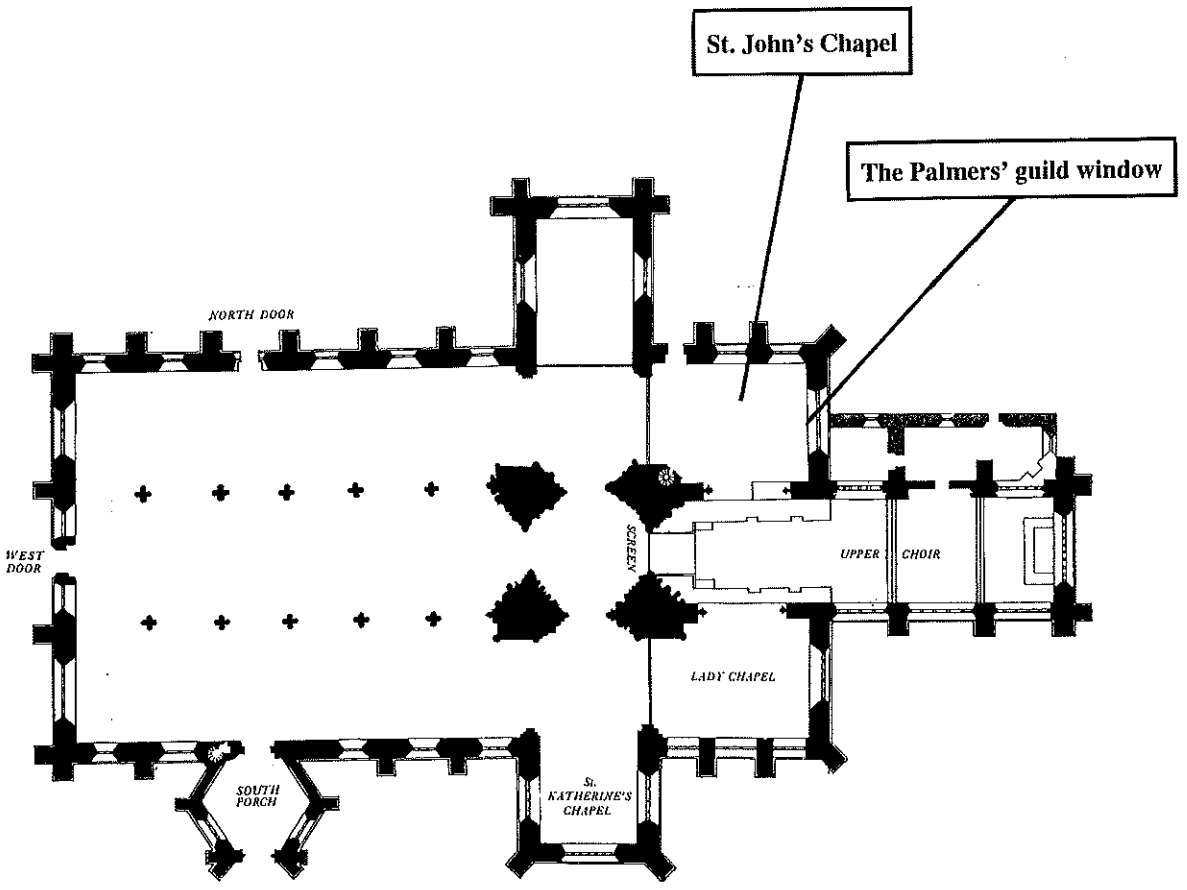


FIGURE 1 PLAN OF ST. LAWRENCE'S CHURCH, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SHOWING THE POSITION OF ST. JOHN'S CHAPEL AND THE PALMERS' WINDOW FROM A PLAN OF THE CHURCH IN E.W. GANDERTON AND J. LAFOND, *LUDLOW STAINED AND PAINTED GLASS* (LUDLOW, 1961), P.VI.

primarily to explore relate to the images that were chosen to represent the guild. How and why did the guild represent itself in the way that it did?

As a guild window the Palmers' window is not unique. While craft guilds are 'poorly represented in surviving glass' in England, there are numerous examples of surviving glass from religious fraternities.[17] In York alone, for example, J A Knowles counted six surviving windows which had been donated by religious guilds.[18] The most common means by which a guild, collectively or individually, chose to record its donation of a window was through the representation of the saint under whose patronage the guild placed itself either as a single image or as a series of episodes from the saint's life.[19] In contrast, what is unusual about the Palmers' window is the guild's exploitation of a narrative legend about itself.

The overall icongraphic scheme of the window is based upon the legend of Edward the Confessor and the ring. According to the life of St. Edward in Caxton's *The Golden Legend*, Edward the Confessor had once been approached by an old man demanding alms. Edward gave his ring to the beggar who, unbeknownst to the king, was in fact St. John the Evangelist in disguise. St. John then met two pilgrims who had lost their way in the Holy Land and gave them the ring, telling them to return the ring to Edward and to inform him that St. John would meet him again in heaven within six months. The pilgrims returned to England and duly told Edward the news and the king died as St. John had foretold.[20]

The guild's relationship with this particular legend is worthy of comment. Firstly, the popularity of the cult of St. Edward the Confessor was shortlived in the Middle Ages. Already by 1300, the confessor had been surpassed as a national patron saint by St. George.[21] In fact, the cult's brief popularity was located firmly within the confines of Westminster, for the promotion of the cult of St. Edward was due entirely to King Henry III and his courtiers and took place within the context of the patronage of Westminster Abbey. In the rebuilding of Westminster Abbey, Paul Binski has identified 'a somewhat deeper and more specialized process in the formation of the English royal state: the process whereby the state, the government, and the persona and mythology of the king, obtained a location'.[22] Similarly, the twelfth- and thirteenth-century Lives of St. Edward emphasised Edward's role as the founder of Westminster Abbey.[23] Given the Westminster-centred character of this cult literature, it is, therefore, hardly surprising that Edward's cult spread to only a few places outside of Westminster including Fécamp in Normandy and Faversham in Kent. Richard II showed considerable interest in the saint, particularly in the mid-1390s when he started to impale his arms with those of the Confessor, and the representation of St. Edward on the Wilton Diptych emphasises this personal devotion. But the saint remained a saint of Westminster rather than of the nation as a whole.[24]

The date and circumstances in which the Palmers' guild came to associate itself with the legend of Edward and the ring are, therefore, particularly interesting. The story first appeared in Aelred's *Vita sancti Edwardi*, written *c.* 1161, owing its incorporation into the corpus of cult literature to the patronage of Westminster Abbey where it added 'devotional weight and significance to the Abbey's relics, since a ring on St. Edward's finger was noted at the first opening of Edward's tomb in 1102, and was removed at the translation of 1163 for the devotions of Abbot Lawrence'.[25] The story of the ring was certainly the most popular of all the legends associated with the saint, and the ring became the main symbol with which the king was represented in medieval art.[26] It is probable that the guild owed its name if not its inspiration to a contemporary awareness of the legend of the pilgrims and the ring. According to its surviving 1389 guild return, the guild had been founded in 1284 as the 'Gild of the Palmers'.[27] Unfortunately, the guild ordinances do not provide an explanation as to the origin of the name. The word 'palmer' had various meanings in the medieval period.[28] While it was used occasionally to describe a professional pilgrim who travelled itinerantly from shrine to shrine and later was simply an equivalent of 'pilgrim', in origin, the denotion 'palmer' had a specific meaning. A palmer was a pilgrim who had been on pilgrimage to the Holy Land and who returned with a palm-branch or palm-leaf as evidence of his destination. It has been suggested that the Palmers' guild was founded by a crusader returning from the 1248 crusade of the French king, Louis IX, a crusade in which the Ludlow annalist took particular interest.[29] That crusading was a form of pilgrimage and that crusaders did see themselves and were seen by contemporaries as pilgrims is suggested by the experiences of crusaders on the first crusade who baptised themselves in the river Jordan in 1099 and collected their palms before their return.[30] If this interpretation is correct, the name of the Ludlow guild might have been particularly appropriate to the crusader's own experiences.

But it can be no coincidence that the guild appeared at approximately the same time as the 'Golden Age' of the cult of St. Edward the Confessor.[31] Moreover, the links between the Palmers' guild and actual pilgrimage to the Holy Land are uncertain. The guild's ordinances of 1284 contain no reference to pilgrimage of any sort, let alone foreign pilgrimage. In contrast, the 1389 guild returns of two Hull guilds, the guild of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the guild of the Resurrection, make specific provision for members wishing to go on pilgrimage to the Holy Land.[32] According to the foundation deed of the guild of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 'if any brother or sister of the gild wishes, at any time, to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, then, in order that all the gild may share

in his pilgrimage, he shall be fully released from his yearly payment until his return'.[33] So how did the Palmers' acquire their name? We can only speculate, but they could have learned of the story of Edward and the pilgrims from a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey. There is a representation of the shrine in the illuminated mid-thirteenth-century Anglo-Norman verse life of St. Edward, *La Estoire de Seint Aedward le Rei* (Cambridge University Library, MS Ee.3.59). It is debatable whether this image depicted the real shrine, particularly as St. Edward was in the process of being translated to a new, then incomplete, shrine when *La Estoire* was produced.[34] But pilgrims visiting such a shrine would have been highly conscious of the statues of St. Edward with the ring and of St. John elevated on columns on either side of the tomb. Perhaps the founders of the Ludlow guild did participate in a crusade to the Holy Land, but the timing of the guild's foundation, coinciding as it did with the promotion of St. Edward's cult, suggests that they adopted the story of Edward the Confessor and the pilgrims as an emblem of their own corporate identity.

The incorporation of the legend of the ring in the Palmers' window is unsurprising. The guild did, however, have other potential means of self-representation. The guild appears to have been dedicated to a number of saints. In late thirteenth-century deeds the guild is called 'the Palmers' Gild of the Brotherhood of the Blessed Mary',[35] and the earliest record of the guild assigned rents from the property of certain Ludlow inhabitants 'for the perpetual maintenance of a chaplain for God and the *blessed Mary*, serving in the church of Lodelawe'.[36] In 1329 letters patent issued to the guild granting a charter of incorporation included St. John the Evangelist among the guild's dedications for the first time,[37] while in the 1377 will of William de la Vilde of Ludlow the guild is also referred to as the brotherhood of St. Andrew. According to the will, de la Vilde leaves *fraternitati Sti. Andre de ludelowe quae vocatur palmargylde tenementum meum apud ludelowe*.[38] The guild's dedications were fluid and allowed the Palmers various modes of representation. What is significant is that the guild clearly believed that the legend of the ring, unlike a conventional life of St. John or the Virgin Mary or St. Andrew, had some kind of currency which could be exploited to the benefit of the guild.

The source for the representation of the legend in the Palmers' window is a Life of St. Edward, probably drawn from the 1438 *Gilte Legend*. William Caxton's version of *The Golden Legend* in 1483 includes a Life of St. Edward, aspects of which, as we shall see, bear strong similarity to the Palmers' window. Although Caxton's edition postdates the insertion of the window and a Life of St. Edward is not included in the early Latin texts of *The Golden Legend*, Caxton's main source for the new legends of the English saints was the 1438 *Gilte Legend*, an English translation of *The Golden Legend* which added a large number of English saints to the existing hagiographical literature.[39]

How did the guild manipulate the legend and how did it hope to be viewed as a result? On the top row of the window, the first light on the extreme left depicts two pilgrims, identified by their pilgrims' hats, sailing to the Holy Land and praying for a safe journey (Plate 1). The light has clearly been subject to much restoration and perhaps only the canopy is original. The helmsman's green tunic is a much duller colour than the green foliage in the following two lights, while both the eastern-style castle in the background and the ship are coloured grey, in sharp contrast to the white glass prevalent in the rest of the window. Given the paucity of the sources concerning the restoration of the window, it is impossible to tell whether this light was restored in the 1870s as an exact copy of the original. As it stands today, however, it can reveal much about the ambitions of the window's donors.

The Golden Legend is vague regarding the origin of the two pilgrims, saying only that they are 'two pilgrims of England'.[40] The ship in the first light of the Palmers' window bears the flag of St. George and is conventional in this respect. However, the style and colour of the clothing of the two pilgrims directly identifies the men with the Palmers' guild of Ludlow. In other visual representations of the legend from the period the pilgrims are dressed humbly according to their vocation. In the Life of St. Edward contained in the early fourteenth-century stained glass in the Lady Chapel at Fécamp in Normandy the pilgrims who receive the ring from St. John the Evangelist are recognisable by the scallop-shell badge on their purses.[41] Images of St. John begging alms in the guise of a pilgrim are also revealing. In a large mural painting of the Confessor and the Pilgrim in Faversham Church in Kent, for example, the pilgrim is shown barefoot, wearing a sheepskin garment, with a pilgrim's hat over his shoulder and a staff in his hand (Plate 2).[42] In the window in Ludlow Parish Church, the two pilgrims wear long blue gowns which, from a comparison with the scene in the final light on the bottom row of the window, must represent the guild's distinctive livery. The donors were establishing that the pilgrims who were central to the legend were members of their Palmers' guild, and only the presence of the traditional palmer's hat indicates that the two men are pilgrims.

Perhaps more fundamentally, the choice of subject matter in the first light made a strong statement about the way in which the guild viewed itself in relation to the legend. In written and visual sources, the story always commences with the king giving his ring to a beggar. According to *The Golden Legend*, the sequence begins when the king gives his ring to 'a fair old man', and the 'two pilgrims of England' who 'went into the holy land to visit holy places there' only do so 'within certain years after'.[43] Chronologically, the pilgrims only enter the

picture after Edward's act of alms-giving, whereas in the Palmers' guild window the narrative sequence starts with the voyage of the two pilgrims to the Holy Land. By changing the conventional order of events, the Palmers ensured that the focus of the legend was not so much Edward the Confessor but their Ludlow guild.

The final three lights on the top row of the window are entirely conventional in content, faithfully retelling in pictorial form the story of Edward's meeting with the beggar, St. John's encounter with the two pilgrims in the Holy Land, and the pilgrims' return of the ring to the king at his court (Plate 1). These three lights are the only ones in the window for which other representations survive and some of the details are remarkably similar. In the third light, for example, the pilgrims are clearly shown in the middle of a wood, the winding path creating a maze-like effect visually expressive of the description in *The Golden Legend* about how the pilgrims 'had lost their way . . . and dreaded sore to be perished among wild beasts'.[44] One of the key differences between *The Golden Legend* and the Palmers' window is the portaiture of St. John the Evangelist. In the third light of the window, St. John, the central character, is dressed in a long blue gown, wearing a pilgrim's hat. His appearance matches exactly that of the two pilgrims flanking him on either side. In contrast, according to *The Golden Legend*, St. John is one of a 'company of men arrayed in white clothing'.[45] Thus, in the Palmers' guild window St. John is being presented as a Palmer, a depiction which makes perfect sense bearing in mind that from 1329 onwards he was the subject of one of the guild's dedications. Ultimately, by identifying itself so closely with the legend and its saintly participants in the top four lights, the Palmers' guild was trying to appear as an institution of importance and prestige.

The bottom row of lights contains the most interest in terms of the guild's representation of itself in the window (Plate 1), for the bottom left light depicting the pilgrims in the middle of a religious procession marks the point at which the window departs from the conventional legend as represented in *The Golden Legend.* While the bottom four lights are part of the continuing, albeit self-constructed, narrative of the legend, they can also be read on their own as independent images. In the processional light, a cross is carried by the leader of a procession who is followed by acolytes carrying tapers and a holy water sprinkler, chanters with their books, choristers and the Palmers. What is the meaning of the procession and how does it relate to the rest of the window? The conventional interpretation of this light sees the Palmers involved in a procession to a religious service to celebrate their safe return from the Holy Land.[46] How then should we view the light second from the left depicting the two Palmers receiving from King Edward a sealed document, probably the foundation charter of the Palmers' guild? The Palmers could be processing to the king to receive their charter, but it will be argued here that the religious procession shown in the bottom left hand light climaxes in the welcome extended at the town gates shown in the third light on the bottom row. This reading is supported by a comparison between the canopy traceries of the two central lights on the top row of the window and those of the scenes showing the reception of the charter and the civic reception which indicate that the original order of the two bottom lights has been reversed since as the window now stands the tracery design does not follow down the transom (Plate 1).

On one level, the scene of the procession is part of the general narrative of the window showing the two pilgrims in the midst of a procession celebrating their return from the Holy Land (Plate 3). Thomas Wright, a nineteenth-century antiquarian, suggested that the pilgrims were on their way to a service, but the pilgrims are clearly not processing to a church for the crenellated building just below the canopy is a castle. Its greyish colour and the absence of an arcade pillar suggest that it is a later insertion probably dating from the late nineteenth-century restoration. The castle could represent Ludlow Castle and its addition to an existing building a deliberate attempt to further localise the window, something which the restorers must have believed the original had not done. Below this castle is another crenellated building, either a castle or a walled town. In the procession, only two Palmers are visible and they appear in the left-hand margin, raising doubts that the procession in question is a guild procession.[47] However, a closer examination of the clasps of the chanters' robes shows that they bear the images of St. John the Evangelist and the Blessed Virgin Mary on either side of a cross. The clerical figures in the foreground, therefore, appear to be in the service of the guild, an impression confirmed by the guild's records. Around ten chaplains were employed by the guild in the mid-fifteenth century, necessitating an extension of the guild's college to house its chaplains.[48] In 1546, when the chantry commissioners made their report on the 'Palmeres Guyld within the paryshe churche of Saynt Laurence', two singing men and six choristers were also in receipt of an annual salary from the guild.[49] The light in the Ludlow window emphasised two aspects of the guild's ceremonial: the processional, but also through the procession's participants, the guild's financial support of chaplains who provided services within St. Lawrence's Church.

The next scene shows the two pilgrims being welcomed on their return to Ludlow by a civic official at the town's gates (Plate 4). The man's scarlet gown indicates that he is not the guild warden and his position at Ludlow's gates symbolises his status as a civic office-holder. In narrative terms, the scene represents the conclusion of the procession from the castle to the gates. However, the light also operates on a symbolic level because documentary and archaeological evidence show that Ludlow did not exist as a town until the twelfth

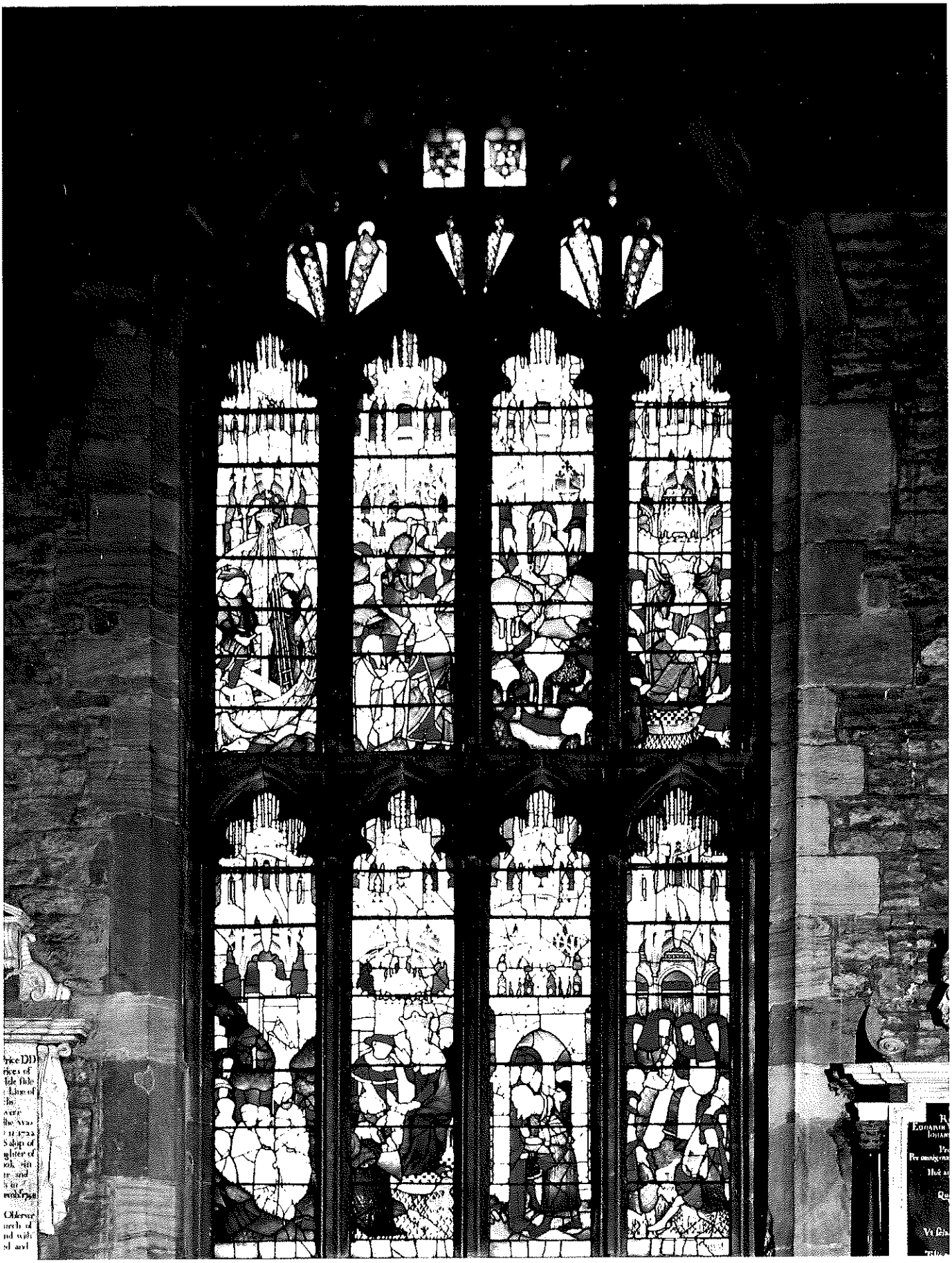


PLATE I LUDLOW, ST. LAWRENCE'S CHURCH: THE PALMERS' WINDOW

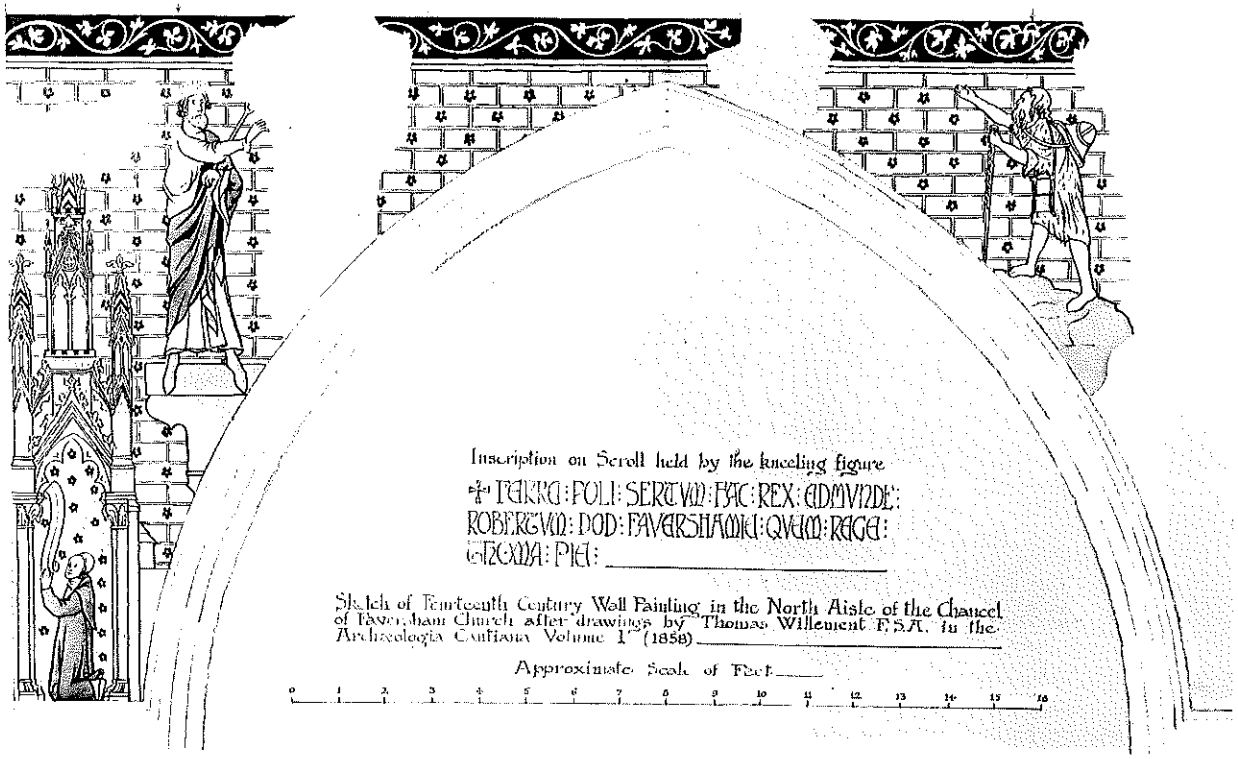


PLATE 2 FOURTEENTH-CENTURY WALL-PAINTING OF EDWARD THE CONFESSOR AND THE PILGRIM, FAVERSHAM CHURCH, KENT (BY PERMISSION OF THE CONWAY LIBRARY, COURTAULD INSTITUTE OF ART)

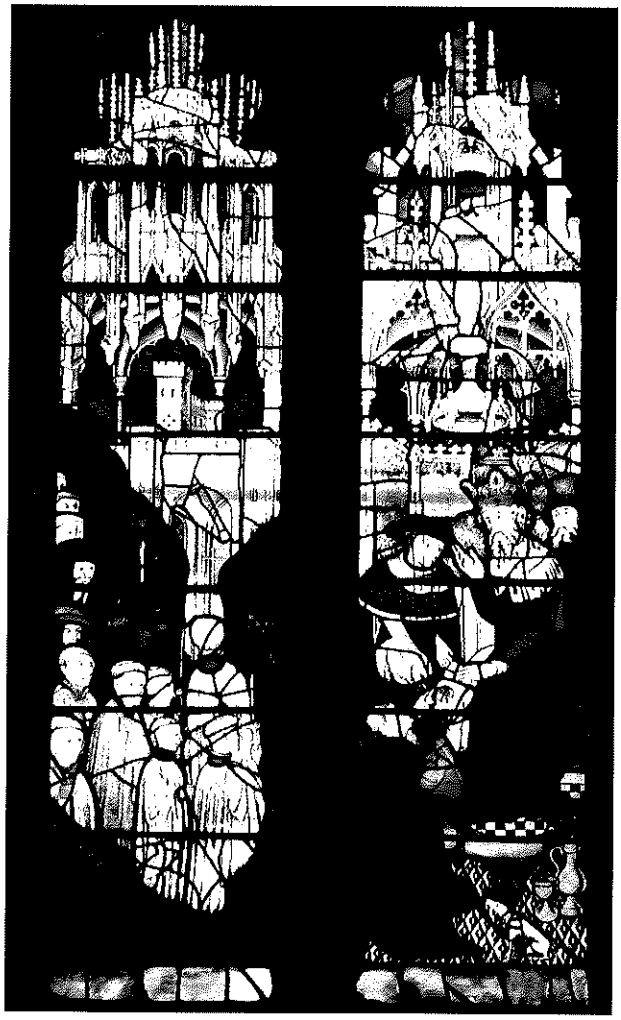


PLATE 3 THE PALMERS' WINDOW: LOWER LEFT LIGHT

PLATE 4 THE PALMERS' WINDOW: LOWER CENTRAL RIGHT LIGHT

PLATE 5 THE PALMERS' WINDOW: LOWER CENTRAL LEFT LIGHT

PLATE 6 THE PALMERS' WINDOW: LOWER RIGHT LIGHT

PLATE 7 *BALDACHINO* IN ST. JOHN'S CHAPEL, ST. LAWRENCE'S CHURCH, LUDLOW

century and that the town's gates were not built until the thirteenth century.[50] The scene is an invention of the donors' imagination.

Why, then, does the welcome take place at Ludlow's gates and why does it require the presence of the leading official of the town? Why is there such interest in the Palmers' return? The returning pilgrims seem to be the object of much interest and excitement and together with the image of the town's gates, a symbol of urban identity and independence, the number of people visible behind the chief magistrate's shoulder reveals the guild to be a source of immense civic pride to the town as a whole. Perhaps more significantly, the imagery is expressive of the guild's political connections with the town. The physicality of the embrace between the town's magistrate and one of the pilgrims, as well as the involvement of such a civic dignitary in the first place, is a symbolic representation of the actual relationship between the guild and the civic elite of Ludlow. Surviving civic records suggest that there were close connections between the institutions of town and guild in Ludlow, particularly in terms of personnel. In the later medieval period, Ludlow was governed by a two-tier conciliar structure consisting of the Twelve and Twenty-Five.[51] In a list of the members of the Twelve and Twenty-Five from 1308, half were guild officers, donors or regular witnesses in grants to the guild, while in 1470, it is known that eight of the twelve members of the guild council had been members of the Twelve and Twenty-Five.[52] Office-holding in the guild may have formed part of the *cursus honorum* of civic office in Ludlow. Gervase Rosser has argued that in some cases religious guilds acted as *de facto* town councils in their own right.[53] In Ludlow, the guild and the urban community were close, but they were not identical. In the Palmers' window, the two institutions are close enough for a kiss of *pax* to be exchanged, but they are also distinguishable by their different liveries. This light is a pictorial representation of the intimacy between the guild and the town of Ludlow in the mid-fifteenth century, emphasising the harmony within the urban community and displaying the elevated status of the guild within the town.

In my proposed new order, the light depicting the Palmers' reception of a charter from Edward the Confessor becomes the penultimate scene in the window and just as the Palmers have received endorsement from civic officialdom, they now gain authorisation from the king (Plate 5). It is highly doubtful that the guild was founded in the eleventh century. Although the guild's ordinances were first produced in 1284,[54] guild records include an undated register of donors of rent charges on properties in Ludlow probably dating from the 1270s, whose names suggest an earlier mid-thirteenth-century origin of the guild.[55] Nevertheless, the guild was only formally incorporated in 1329. The guild was an old foundation, but only Leland's commentary in the 1530s intimates that it predated the thirteenth century. Describing the extensive role played by the Palmers' guild in the rebuilding of Ludlow Parish Church, the sixteenth-century antiquarian wrote of the guild that, 'The originall thereof was (as the people say there) in the tyme of K. Edward the Confessor'.[56] By the early sixteenth century, the supposedly ancient origin of the guild was part of popular local myth, and it is probable that the window itself was a major agency in this development. The guild had tried to assert its antiquity in the window and Leland's remarks in the following century indicate that the attempt had been successful.

The final light is of a guild feast in which members of the Palmers' guild, dressed in their livery, are entertained by a minstrel (Plate 6). According to Ganderton and Lafond, the two pilgrims are seated in the bottom left-hand corner of the light,[57] but neither can be positively identified. While the two pilgrims had previously been central to the unfolding of the narrative, their presence, in this instance, does not seem to be important. On the one hand, the scene is part of the continuing narrative of the window, in which the fraternity of Palmers is celebrating with music the acquisition of a charter. At the same time, the festal imagery is so rich that the light can be viewed in its own right, requiring little reference to the preceding lights. The scene is a celebration of the guild's collective identity at the highlight of its social calendar, the guild feast day.[58] It is curious that the light does not contain images of feasting and drinking, two of the characterisitics of the communal meal,[59] but the presence of entertainment in the form of a harpist indicates that the occasion is not a guild meeting but a feast.[60] The feast day was 'the event which above all gave it (the guild) visible definition',[61] and as everyone at the Palmers' feast is dressed in the guild livery, namely a blue gown and a scarlet hood, the guild is clearly portraying itself as a separate and demarcated entity. Hierarchical divisions, which have also been seen to characterise the guild feast, are evident in the Palmers' feast. Not only are the guild officers distinguished from the other guild members by their slightly different livery (each is wearing a white stole in addition to the blue gown), but the arrangement of the seating in the guild hall positions the elders at the dais end and the four guild elders are depicted on a larger scale than the ordinary members. In part, therefore, the festal imagery served to enhance the status of the individual office-holders within the guild.

In a more subtle way, the light is also a representation of the guild value of social brotherhood. If we look closely at the four men in the background, we can see that a reconciliation is taking place between members of the guild council. The warden of the guild, who is identified by his red and white sash, appears to be taking the hand of one of the men and placing it into that of another. It is possible that the holding of hands represents oath-taking by the guild officers and that the scene symbolises the ritual of oath-taking. Oath-taking by office-

holders and new members held a special importance in fraternities, serving to strengthen the bonds of guild solidarity.[62] But the image of the hand-clasping should be understood in a less specific context. While the guild feast day was essentially an occasion of conviviality, there was also a solemnity attached to the feast, a sobriety which can be seen in the faces of the Palmers' guild officers. The language of brotherly love is a constant feature of the surviving guild returns of 1389, illuminating each guild's concern to maintain harmony among its members.[63] It was the feast, in particular, which was the occasion for the promotion of love and charity. According to the ordinances of the guild of the Holy Cross in Stratford-upon-Avon, for example, the aim of the communal meal was to promote a fraternal spirit and end 'evil-speaking'.[64] This aspect of the feast is also depicted in the Palmers' window.

Another feature of this festal scene, namely the curious image of a white greyhound in a profile position, deserves consideration.[65] The white greyhound was one of the badges of the Neville family.[66] It has been suggested that the device belonged to Richard Neville, the Earl of Warwick, who was with Richard, Duke of York, at Ludlow Castle in 1455 as the Yorkist faction mobilised itself on the eve of the Wars of the Roses.[67] Whether his connections with Ludlow extended to membership of the Palmers' guild, however, is unknown because the guild membership registers are incomplete for the mid-fifteenth century. There was, however, another Neville who had a much stronger association with Ludlow and the Palmers' guild. In 1438, Cecily Neville joined the Palmers' guild along with her husband, Richard, Duke of York,[68] as part of Richard's attempt to set up an administrative centre in Ludlow to establish control of his newly acquired Marcher and Welsh estates.[69] However, the Nevilles, like other armigerous donors, were usually represented in stained glass by their shield of arms.[70] Furthermore, such heraldry was conventionally placed in the tracery or border of a window and not within the main lights.[71] The position of the white greyhound in the Palmers' window is, therefore, in an informal setting and it is highly doubtful that it is an heraldic device.

In the Middle Ages the dog had various symbolic meanings, one of which was fidelity.[72] The dog is often to be found on late medieval tombstones at the feet of high status women and has been interpreted as a symbol of marital fidelity.[73] In the festal scene in the Palmers' window, however, the imagery is not domestic but fraternal. The greyhound is in the centre of the light at the feet of the guild members and its inclusion in this scene could symbolise guild values of friendship and loyalty. Moreover, since the dog appears to have been one indication of noble status in medieval art,[74] the greyhound might also represent the guild's aristocratic patronage. One of the new features of the guild in the mid-fifteenth century was the extension of the guild's membership beyond the town of Ludlow to include the local nobility and gentry.[75] Not only did the earls of March, the lords of the manor of Ludlow, maintain close links with the guild, but the guild also cultivated royal connections, so that in 1461, more than fifty of Edward IV's household were admitted as members.[76]

Within the framework of a narrative story, therefore, the Palmers' guild was representing itself in many different ways. Through its identification with the legend of St. Edward the Confessor and the ring, for example, the guild obviously hoped to appropriate for itself a glorious and ancient past. In this context, the light of the two pilgrims receiving a charter was simply a more definite statement about the guild's antiquity. The final two lights, however, were even more pertinent to the guild's fortunes in the mid-fifteenth century, and the Palmers were presented as an extremely prestigious guild rich in ceremonial with a high public profile. The manipulation of a royal legend regarding its origin meant that the guild now had a visual history to match the social status of many of its members. But the window did not represent the guild as a whole. We have already commented upon the hierarchical divisions within the guild which are in evidence in the festal scene. More noticeable is the complete absence of women from the window because this omission does not reflect the guild's actual membership. The guild's ordinances of 1284 make provision of a dowry for 'any good girl of the guild, of marriageable age' without means to enable them to enter a religious house or to marry and records of admissions to the guild show that women did join the guild both in their own right and as wives.[77] The window, however, portrayed the guild as an institution dominated by a male elite.

The immediate context for the donation of the window was the major rebuilding of Ludlow Parish Church in the fifteenth century which provided both the opportunity and the motive for the guild to express its current prestige in a suitable window. Evidence from the accounts of the guild and of the churchwardens reveals the enormous contribution made by the Palmers to the fabric of the church. In 1446–47 the guild bought one hundred wainscot boards at Bristol for the choir stalls and the first entry in the churchwardens' accounts of 1469 is for 6s. 8d. from the stewards of the guild for the 'kariag of stones' for the construction of the tower.[78] Colin Platt has described a division of interest in parish churches in which the nave, porch and tower were the responsibility of the parishioners and the chancel the charge of the parish priest.[79] In St. Lawrence's Church, Ludlow, this notion was only partially true. By the late fourteenth century the church was semi-collegiate; although there was a college to house the priests, the chaplains were employed not by the parish church but by the guild. Indeed, in the later fifteenth century the chaplains so employed numbered between eight and ten.[80] Primarily these priests administered the chantries endowed by the guild, but they also made a significant

contribution to the development of music in the church,[81] leading the guild to finance choir stalls for these priests. Thus, the window would have acted as a visual reminder to the parishioners of St. Lawrence's Church of the guild's pious provision. Specifically, the Palmers' window 'was there to remind the faithful of the virtues of the departed and to call upon each of them for prayers'.[82]

It is probable that the window was designed as much for the benefit of the guild members as for non-members. The usual procedure on the guild feast day was for mass to be celebrated at the guild altar, followed by a feast in the guild hall at which the new guild officers would be elected. At mass in St. John's Chapel the eyes of the Palmers' would have been drawn to the window above their altar, where they could see for themselves the story of their guild's history. At their feast in the guild hall, the retelling of this story could also have formed part of the entertainment. Gervase Rosser suggested that the Palmers' window 'shows the perpetual reenactment of such a heroic narrative at a festive gathering of the Palmers' guild' as the two Palmers 'regale the brotherhood with their story' of their encounters with St. John the Evangelist and King Edward the Confessor.[83] Allowing the guild members to share this collective mythology could only have reinforced their feeling of self-importance within the wider community.

To appreciate more fully the likely impact of the window upon guild members and parishioners alike, we need to place the window within the context of the development of the guild's chapel. The installation of the window represented only the first stage of the Palmers' decoration and embellishment of their chapel. Among the surviving records of the Palmers' guild there is an indenture for carving work between the warden of the guild, Richard Downe, and a 'kerver', Robert Watkynson of Lilleshall, dated 31 January, 1525.[84] The contract is at once frustratingly detailed and vague, but it would appear that the agreement is for the carving of a reredos at the east end of St. John's Chapel, positioned above the altar and below the Palmers' window. There is no indication of the material to be carved, but given the increasing availability of alabaster in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the reredos is likely to have been made from alabaster.[85] The reredos has not survived, probably destroyed, like most altarpieces, at the Reformation, but certain features of the contract suggest that the reredos would have been both highly decorative and fashionable. The work was to cost £10, a figure which was ten times the average cost of alabaster altarpieces in the fifteenth century.[86] One reason for this relative expense was the elaborate design of canopied niches ('storres') which were to be 'voltid over with trayles crestes and richemountes joyned with knottes'. Another reason was that the commission was for a two-tiered reredos, an innovation for the alabaster altarpiece in the later fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.[87] But whereas many reredoses consisted of carved alabaster figures mounted in a wooden frame which stood on the altar itself or was hung on the wall behind,[88] the reredos in St. John's Chapel was fixed directly on to the wall. Indeed, at the turn of the twentieth century the Reverend D.H.S. Cranage noticed that, 'Below the east window the wall is thinner, apparently in consequence of some internal fitting, now removed'.[89]

The most interesting aspect of the contract for the reredos is the space which it gives to the carving of the images of the Palmers receiving the ring from St. John the Evangelist and then returning the ring to King Edward the Confessor (fig 2). The other representations in the reredos were to be of saints, with each saint occupying a niche. That the Palmers were deemed worthy to be included in the reredos alongside such saints in the first place is instructive of the guild's belief in its own self-importance. Equally illuminating is the context in which the Palmers appeared. While the other figures were simply static images, the Palmers appeared in a narrative sequence, albeit a condensed version of the events portrayed in the window. A reference in the carving contract to the carver's 'paper' in relation to the design of the images of the Palmers suggests that the Palmers' guild was particularly concerned with its self-image. Presumably before the agreement was finalised the carver had been instructed to develop a design for the incorporation of the legend of the pilgrims and the ring into the reredos. Once completed the reredos would have acted as the perfect complement to the more detailed story in the window above.

Balancing the reredos below the window was the *baldachino* (Plate 7). A *baldachino* was a canopy whose main purpose was to adorn the altar.[90] The *baldachino* in St. John's Chapel was a carved oak canopy, adorned with three angels, Tudor roses and pomegranates, suggesting an early sixteenth-century date. What is interesting about the design of Ludlow's *baldachino* is the way in which it frames the window. Francis Bond also noticed how, 'At Ludlow the side canopies are of the usual 'tester' or flat form; in the centre, however, the canopy is carried in an arch round the window head; thus the stained glass reredos is not obstructed'.[91] The *baldachino* was principally meant to embellish the altar, but in St. John's Chapel, it also served to give more prominence to the events depicted in the window.

It has been argued by Gervase Rosser that, 'Membership of a medieval guild . . . bestowed a status in society', and that it was this desire for exclusivity which explains a guild's concern to maintain the 'public reputation' of its members so evident in the guild ordinances of 1389.[92] Brief mention has already been made of John Leland's impressions of Ludlow when he made a visit in the 1530s, but it is worth citing his comments in full:

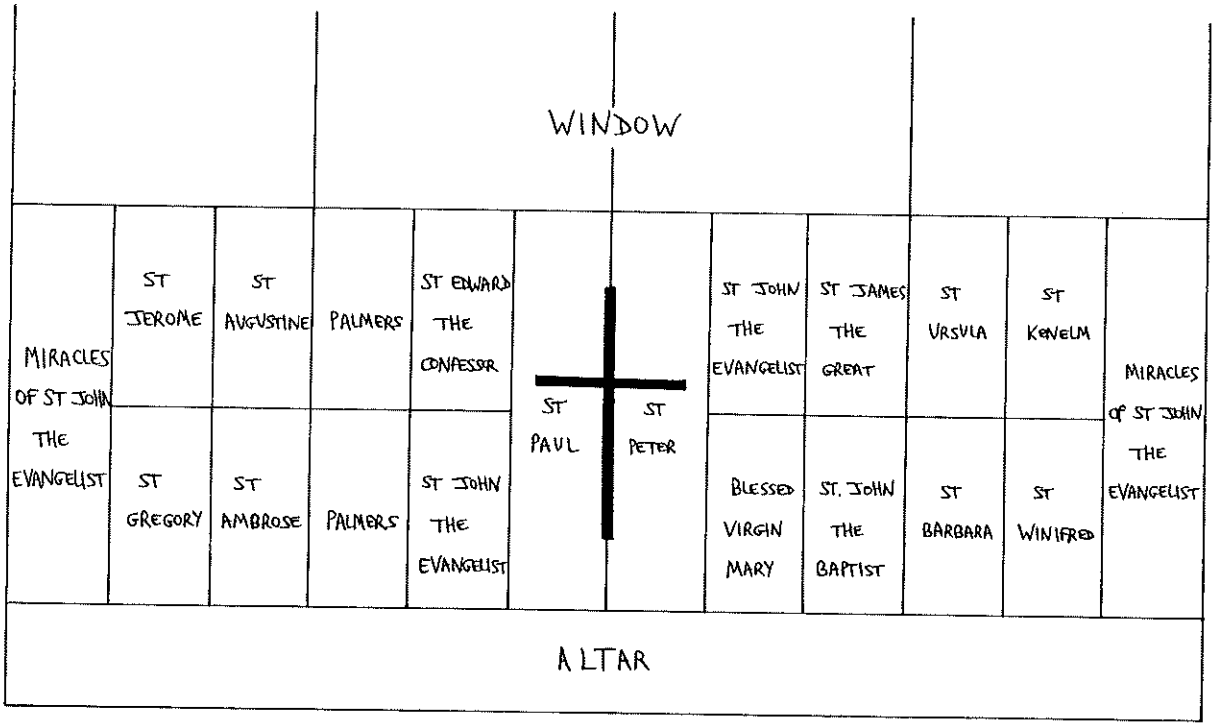


FIGURE 2 CONJECTURAL PLAN OF THE REREDOS IN ST. JOHN'S CHAPEL, ST. LAWRENCE'S CHURCH, LUDLOW BASED ON THE 1525 CARVING CONTRACT (SRRC LB/5/5/3)

'There is but one paroche churche in the towne, but that is very faire, and large, and richely adornyd, and taken for the fayrest in all those quartars. . . Thise churche hathe bene much avauncyd by a brothar-hode therein foundyd in the name of St. John the Evangeliste. The originall thereof was (as the people say there) in the tyme of K. Edward the Confessor; and it is constantely afirmyd there that the pilgrimes, that browght the ringe from beyond the se as a token from St. John thevangelist to Kynge Edward, were inhabitaunts of Ludlow'.[93]

The guild's reputation was at its height at this time, never to be surpassed, for within twenty years the guild was dissolved. It is interesting to speculate once more on the role of the Palmers' window in the creation of this local tradition because while the window reflected the reality of the guild's status in the mid-fifteenth century, it also served to shape a particular identity for the guild.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Richard Marks, David Smith and Lisa Howarth for their comments on an earlier draft of this article and David Lloyd for sharing his knowledge of St. Lawrence's Church, Ludlow.

APPENDIX

SRRC LB/5/5/3: 1525 contract for carving work between the warden of the Palmers' guild, Richard Downe, and Robert Watkynson of Lilleshall, "kerver"[1]

Watkynson promised to make at the east end of the Chapel of St. John the Evangelist

. . . three substanciall storres[2] that is to witt on the North side of the awter there one substanciall story accordyngly to his paper that is to be knowen Seynt John Evangelist stondyng be nethe yn a goodly story and the Palmers receyvng the ryng of hym and over hym Seynt Edward yn a goodly story resevyng the ring of the palmers and every story voltid over with trayles crestes and richemountes joyned with knottes and on the other side of the auter on the southe side too substanciall storres our lady be nethe yn the one story goodly and welfafurly made stondyng yn a goodly story and Johannis over our Lady in another story and yn the other story joynyng to the same Seynt John Baptist be nethe in a story and Seynt James the More over hym in another story and further more the principalles next to the auter on every side the seid auter on the sowthe side

Seynt Petur and on the Northe side Seint Powle with Seint Barbara Seint Ursula Seint Wenefrede Seint Kellem[3] and the foure Docturs of the Churche with other dyvers Seyntes suche as he thyngkithe best with too or three miraculs of Seynt John Evangelist . . .

Appendix notes

[1] In order to preserve the ambiguities of the original text which allow the indenture to be subject to various readings, I have kept editing to a minimum. I have expanded all of the suspensions and contractions where known, but I have not modernised the punctuation, spelling or use of capital letters.
[2] Or storr*is*. All subsequent words in the text ending in *-es* could also be spelt *-is*.
[3] More conventionally known as St. Kenelm, an early ninth-century prince of a Mercian royal family.

Article notes

1 E W Ganderton and J Lafond, *Ludlow Stained and Painted Glass*, 1961
2 D Lloyd, *The Parish Church of Saint Laurence: A History and a Guide*, 4, 9; D Lloyd, *Historic Ludlow*, **3**
3 M Faraday, *Ludlow, 1085–1660: A Social, Economic and Political History*, 1991
4 See, for example L E Tanner, 'Some Representations of St. Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey and elsewhere', *Jnl Brit Archaeol Assoc*, 3rd ser **XV**, 1952, 1–12
5 The other series is in early fourteenth-century stained glass at Fécamp in Normandy, discussed in M Harrison, 'A Life of St. Edward the Confessor in early Fourteenth Century Stained Glass at Fécamp in Normandy', *Jnl Warburg and Courtauld Inst*, **XXVI**, 1963, 22–37
6 R Marks, *Stained Glass in England during the Middle Ages*, 1993, 176–77
7 The main phases of the church's growth are examined in D H S Cranage, *The Churches of Shropshire*, **i**, 1901, 105–40
8 Hardman's records are now in the archives department of Birmingham City Library. For the financial records of the restoration, see MS 175/36/10: Hardman Glass Rough Day Book, 48
9 For letters of 15–16 November 1877 to Hardman's, see Hardman 3/1877: Glass Letters V-W. It would appear that the arms of Ludlow were not originally in the tracery of the window. J T Irvine's *Handbook to Ludlow: containing a descriptive account of Ludlow Church* had numerous editions in the course of the second half of the nineteenth century, but only in an edition of 1878, on the completion of the restoration to the Palmers' window, is there a reference to the arms of the town of Ludlow as well as those of Edward the Confessor (Irvine, *op cit*, 40). Among Hardman's visual material now in the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery there are over twenty panels of medieval glass from the various windows which the company restored. In panel number twenty there is an heraldic shield of unusual design consisting of two scallop shells above a white heart on a red background. Although there is no evidence that the Palmers' guild had a charter of arms like some of the wealthy London merchant companies it is possible that the shells, as a symbol of pilgrimage, represented the heraldic arms of the Palmers'. In which case, the original tracery would have consisted of the heraldic arms of the Palmers' and those of Edward the Confessor
10 Irvine, op cit, 39
11 Travelling through south Shropshire in 1684 with Henry Beaufort, the Lord President of the Council in Wales and Lord Warden of the Marches, Thomas Dinely commented that, 'Ludlow Church is very fair, famous for painted ancient glass windows of curious artifice'. But the only window to gain a mention was the East Window which contained the history of St. Lawrence, the patron saint of the church. See *The Account of the Official Progress of His Grace Henry the Duke of Beaufort through Wales in 1684*, C Baker, ed, 1864, 57
12 C Platt, *The Parish Churches of Medieval England*, 1981, 127
13 C Burgess, ''A fond thing vainly invented': an essay on Purgatory and pious motive in later medieval England', in S J Wright, ed, *Parish, Church and People: Local Studies in Lay Religion, 1350–1750*, 1988, 66–7
14 G Poulson, *The History and Antiquities of the Seigniory of Holderness*, **ii**, 1840–1, 97
15 See, for example E Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, c.1400–c.1580*, 1992, 150–51
16 G Rosser, 'Communities of parish and guild in the late Middle Ages', in S J Wright, ed, op cit, 37
17 Marks, op cit, 6
18 J A Knowles, 'Gild Windows', *Jnl Brit Soc Master Glass Painters*, **VII**, 4, 1939, 164
19 See, for example P E S Routh, 'A Gift and its Giver: John Walker and the East Window of Holy Trinity Goodramgate, York', *Yorks Archaeol Jnl*, **LVIII**, 1986, 109–121. John Walker had been a rector of Holy Trinity as well as a member of the St. Christopher and St. George guild and the prestigious Corpus Christi guild. The window is carefully balanced, showing, from left to right, St. George, St. John the Baptist, the Corpus Christi (the Trinity with God carrying the body of Jesus), St. John the Evangelist and St. Christopher. In St. Neot in Cornwall, the young men of the parish gave a window illustrating the legend of St. Neot, a saint to whom they were presumably dedicated. See Duffy, *op cit*, 150
20 Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend, or Lives of the Saints as Englished by William Caxton*, F S Ellis, ed, **vi**, 1931, 26–8 (Hereafter cited as *The Golden Legend*)
21 P Binski, 'Reflections on *La estoire de Seint Aedward le Rei*: hagiography and kingship in thirteenth-century England', *Jnl Med Hist*, **XVI**, 4, 1990, 349
22 P Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets: Kingship and the Representation of Power, 1200–1400*, 1995, 4
23 Ibid, 6
24 Ibid, 200, 53
25 Ibid, 55–6.
26 Tanner, op cit, 2, 4

27 *English Gilds: The Original Ordinances of More Than One Hundred Early English Gilds*, J T Smith and L T Smith, eds, Early English Text Society, Orig ser **XL**, 1870, reprinted in 1963, 193
28 *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary*, 1971, n. 'palmer' (1); *The Middle English Dictionary*, 1956–, n. 'palmer' (a)
29 Faraday, op cit, 77
30 J Sumption, *Pilgrimage: An Image of Mediaeval Religion*, 1975, 137–38, 173
31 The expression is Binski's in *Westminster Abbey*, 52
32 *English Gilds*, 157, 177. The ordinances of the Fullers' guild in Lincoln include a proviso for members going on pilgrimage to Rome. See ibid, 180
33 Ibid, 157
34 Binski, *Westminster Abbey*, 60–1.
35 Faraday, op cit, 80.
36 W C Sparrow, 'The Palmers' Guild of Ludlow', *Trans Shrops Archaeol Soc*, Orig ser **I**, 1878, 340. The italics are mine.
37 Ibid, 361
38 Ibid, 339
39 C D'Evelyn, 'English Translations of Legenda Aurea', in *A Manual of The Writings in Middle English, 1050–1500*, J Burke Severs, ed, **ii**, 1970, 433
40 *The Golden Legend*, **vi**, 27
41 Harrison, op cit, 31
42 Tanner, op cit, 6
43 *The Golden Legend*, **vi**, 27
44 Ibid
45 Ibid
46 T Wright, *An Historical and Descriptive Sketch of Ludlow Castle and the Church of St. Lawrence, Ludlow*, 1901, 69–70
47 For a description of a guild procession led by guild members in their livery, see B R McRee, 'Religious Gilds and Regulation of Behaviour in Late Medieval Towns', in J Rosenthal and C Richmond, eds, *People, Politics and Community in the Later Middle Ages*, 1987, 116–17
48 *VCH, Salop*, **ii**, 136
49 *English Gilds*, 198
50 Faraday, op cit, 1–2
51 The most detailed description of Ludlow's governing body is in ibid, 26–8
52 *VCH, Salop*, **ii**, 135
53 G Rosser, 'The Town and Guild of Lichfield in the late Middle Ages', *Trans South Staffs Archaeol and Hist Jnl*, **XXVII**, 1987, 45
54 *English Gilds*, 193
55 Faraday, op cit, 79
56 *Leland's Itinerary in England and Wales*, L T Smith, ed, **ii**, 1964, 76
57 Ganderton and Lafond, op cit, 51
58 For the most recent discussion of the content and significance of the guild feast, see G Rosser, 'Going to the Fraternity Feast: Commensality and Social Relations in Late Medieval England', *Jnl Brit Studies*, **XXXIII**, 4, 1994, 430–46
59 Ibid, 431
60 Details of the costs of the guild's annual pentecostal feast are provided in the Stewards' Account Rolls in the Shropshire Records and Research Centre (SRRC). In the accounts for 1446–47 (SRRC LB/5/3/28), there is this payment: *Et in stipendio Symonis harper existentis cum Gilda in eodem festo ijs. vjd.* In earlier rolls, the only payments were for victuals, so it would appear that musical entertainment was a feature of the guild's feast from the mid-fifteenth century onwards
61 Rosser, 'Going to the Fraternity Feast', 431
62 *The Records of the Guild of the Holy Trinity, St. Mary, St. John the Baptist and St. Katherine of Coventry*, G Templeman, ed, Dugdale Society, **XIX**, 1944, 25–31
63 Lucy Toulmin Smith made this point in her introduction to *English Gilds*, xl
64 Ibid, 217
65 There is also a white greyhound in the lower central left light showing the Palmers' reception of a charter from Edward the Confessor, but this animal is not part of the original glass. See Ganderton and Lafond, op cit, 9, 50
66 The use of the white greyhound as an heraldic device by the Nevilles and later the Tudors is discussed in H Stanford London, *Royal Beasts*, 1956, 39–41
67 H T Wyman, *The Glass in Ludlow Church*, 1905, 15
68 *VCH, Salop*, **ii**, 136
69 P A Johnson, *Duke Richard of York, 1411–1460*, 1988, 15. Admission to a guild, particularly one as powerful as the Ludlow Palmers' guild, provided 'a potentially valuable entrée to the world of urban politics'. See Rosser, 'Going to the Fraternity Feast', 442
70 See, for example the glazing of the hall and college of Fotheringhay Church in Northamptonshire which was inspired by Cecily Neville and whose iconographical programme has been reconstructed by R Marks, 'The Glazing of Fotheringhay Church and College', *Jnl Brit Archaeol Assoc*, **CXXIX**, 1976, 101–8
71 Marks, *Stained Glass*, 10–20
72 For the many emblematic usages of the dog in the medieval period, see B Rowland, *Animals with Human Faces: A Guide to Animal Symbolism*, 1973, 58–66, esp. 62–3
73 E Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting: Its Origins and Character*, **i**, 1964, 203
74 The concept of the dog as a symbol of the nobility of its owners is discussed briefly in C Harbison, 'Sexuality and Social Standing in Jan van Eyck's Arnolfini Double Portrait', *Renaissance Quarterly*, **XLIII**, 2, 1990, 270

75 The later fifteenth century also saw similar developments in the membership of the Corpus Christi guild in York. See D J F Crouch, 'Piety, Fraternity and Power: Religious Gilds in Late Medieval Yorkshire, 1389–1547', University of York, unpublished D Phil dissertation, 1995, 251–311
76 For the guild's patronage by the aristocracy and gentry and for the recruitment of members throughout Wales and the south-west, see Faraday, op cit, 86–9
77 *English Gilds*, 194; see, for example SRRC LB/5/1/1: Register of Admissions, 1412–1422 and SRRC LB/5/3/1: Riding Book, *c*.1460
78 SRRC LB/5/3/28: Stewards' Account Roll, 1446–47; L. Jones, 'Churchwardens' Accounts of the Town of Ludlow, 1468–1749', 1, reprinted from *Trans Shrops Archaeol Soc*, 2nd ser **I–II, IV–V**, 1889–90, 1892–93
79 Platt, op cit, 97
80 *VCH, Salop*, **ii**, 136
81 Ibid
82 Platt, *op cit*, 127
83 Rosser, 'Going to the Fraternity Feast', 445
84 SRRC LB/5/5/3: Contract for carving, 1525. See Appendix
85 F Cheetham, *English Medieval Alabasters*, 1984, 31
86 SRRC LB/5/5/3
87 Cheetham, op cit, 44
88 Ibid, 21, 23
89 Cranage, op cit, **i**, 124
90 F Bond, *The Chancel of English Churches*, 1916, 24
91 Ibid
92 Rosser, 'Communities of parish and guild', 37. See also McRee, op cit, 108–22
93 *Leland's Itinerary*, **ii**, 76

LLOYDS ENGINE HOUSE, IRONBRIDGE

By RICHARD HAYMAN

Introduction

Lloyds Engine House is situated within Lloyds Coppice, on the north side of the River Severn, at NGR SJ 6895 0303 (fig 1). The area, also known as Madeley Wood, is approximately 1.5km east of Ironbridge and is characterised by its steep sloping woodland and its unstable geology. The remains of the engine house stand on the north side of a minor road between Ironbridge and Coalport, adjacent to a footpath through Lloyds Coppice.

Lloyds Coppice is owned by Wrekin Council and leased to the Severn Gorge Countryside Trust. In 1996 Wrekin Council undertook a programme of repairs to the engine house and associated structures with funding from English Partnerships. Although the remains of the engine house are neither listed nor scheduled, their archaeological significance has long been recognised and full archaeological recording of the site was written into the repairs brief. This work was undertaken by the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust Archaeology Unit between April and September 1996.[1]

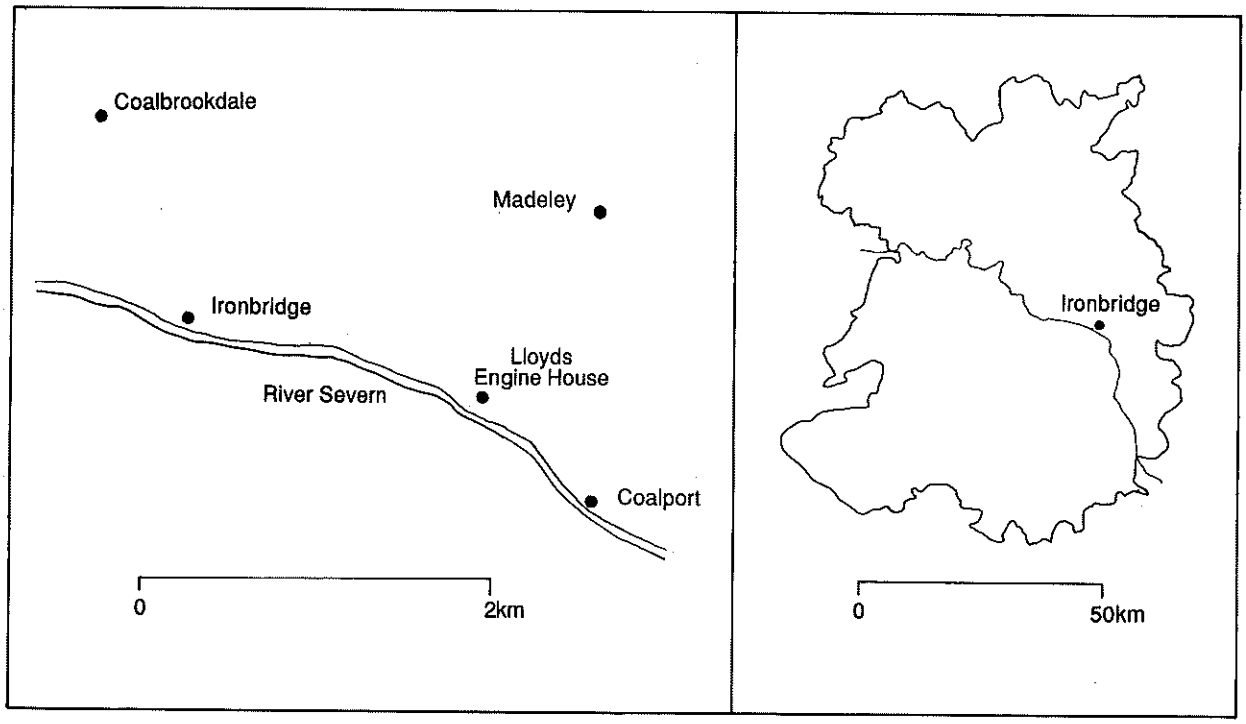


FIGURE 1 LOCATION PLAN

Previous Work

Previous historical accounts have placed Lloyds Engine House in the context of mining in Madeley Wood. A steam pumping engine was built in the Lloyds in 1719, only seven years after the first recorded use of an engine for pumping mines, and pumping continued until at least 1912.[2] There are several important seams of coal, ironstone and fireclay in the area and it has been suggested that water was pumped from a depth of approximately 85m, the level of the lowest coal and ironstone seams (Little Flint coal and Crawstone ore).[3]

The documentary evidence for the site has been used to argue that a Newcomen-type steam engine remained in use throughout its working life, and that water was channelled from the top of the shaft to a pool on the east side of the engine house. The archaeological evidence will be used to challenge both of these arguments. A valuable, and until recently the only record of the engine house was made by a team of volunteers in 1970.[4] Their drawings, photographs and written account demonstrate the extent of damage caused by cutting down the pump spear for safety reasons in the 1980s.

Historical Background

Large-scale coal mining in the East Shropshire Coalfield began in Madeley Wood in the later sixteenth century, stimulated by the down-river coal trade and the relative accessibility of the coal seams. The success of these early mines, however, was limited by the serious problem of drainage. To overcome this, a steam engine for pumping water was erected in the area in 1719.[5] The general location of this engine is confirmed by a reference in 1726 to 'Smiths Gin pitt situate and being in the Lloyds where ye Fire Engine now stands'.[6] The further growth of mineral exploitation was led by successive lords of the manor of Madeley: in 1745 J U Smitheman invested in a 'new engine in Madeley Wood' to improve the drainage of the mines and in 1757 he became a principal shareholder in the new Madeley Wood (better known as Bedlam) ironworks, 1.2km west of the Lloyds Engine House.[7]

The 1745 engine was built in the Lloyds and is well documented in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[8] After 1757 it was acquired by the Madeley Wood Furnace Company, who held extensive mineral leases in the area. In 1776 it was sold to Abraham Darby III of the Coalbrookdale Company, along with Bedlam and the minerals leases of Madeley Wood. The Coalbrookdale Company retained the use of the Lloyds engine until 1794 when, together with the Madeley Field mines and Bedlam furnaces, it was sold to William Reynolds and William Rathbone for £14,000.[9] William Reynolds died in 1803, and his concerns at Madeley were henceforth continued by the Anstice family under the name of the Madeley Wood Company.

In 1795–6 William Reynolds consulted Boulton & Watt about modifications to the engine. Although the surviving correspondence and a portfolio of drawings consistently referred to it as the 'Madeley Wood Engine', the drawings clearly show a Newcomen-type pumping engine, of which only two were operated in the area (fig 2).[10] The other was at Bedlam where water was raised from the River Severn to feed the waterwheel for a blast furnace. However, Reynolds' drawing shows boilers either side of the engine house, whereas at Bedlam they were in front. Therefore the drawing must be considered as the Lloyds.[11] Certainly the dimensions of the drawing match the extant Lloyds engine house better than the Bedlam engine house, and the same configuration of a boiler either side of the engine house is shown on an early nineteenth-century lease plan (plate 1).

The configuration of the boilers in the drawings strongly suggests that the engine house was built in 1745 and is not the 1719 engine house with a new cylinder, since documented examples of the earliest Newcomen engines show the boiler placed directly beneath the cylinder. The concentric rings shown in William Reynolds' plan are the brickwork of the boiler settings and are built into the engine house wall, a common practice by the mid eighteenth century.[12]

Boulton & Watt proposed an engine with a separate condensing cylinder, a factor of considerable significance to the archaeologist because the power cylinders were mounted on a solid core of brick, which is not easily destroyed, unlike the Newcomen engine in Reynolds' drawing, whose cylinder was supported by wooden beams. However, Boulton & Watt's engine could not have been installed in the extant Lloyds Engine House without certain alterations: in February 1796 they observed that 'we have supposed the engine house can be increased in height either upwards or downwards to accommodate the proposed engine'.[13]

There is no documentary evidence that the modifications were ever made. In August 1796 William Reynolds wrote to Boulton & Watt informing them that he had 'not made the proposed alteration at Madeley Wood'.[14] Nor does the Madeley Wood account book for the period 1790–97 mention such an alteration. However, changes to the pumping arrangement are recorded in March 1797, when Adam Heslop was allowed two quarts of ale for the men who had completed the installation of new pumps.[15]

A lease plan of the early nineteenth century does not clarify the point because although it shows the engine

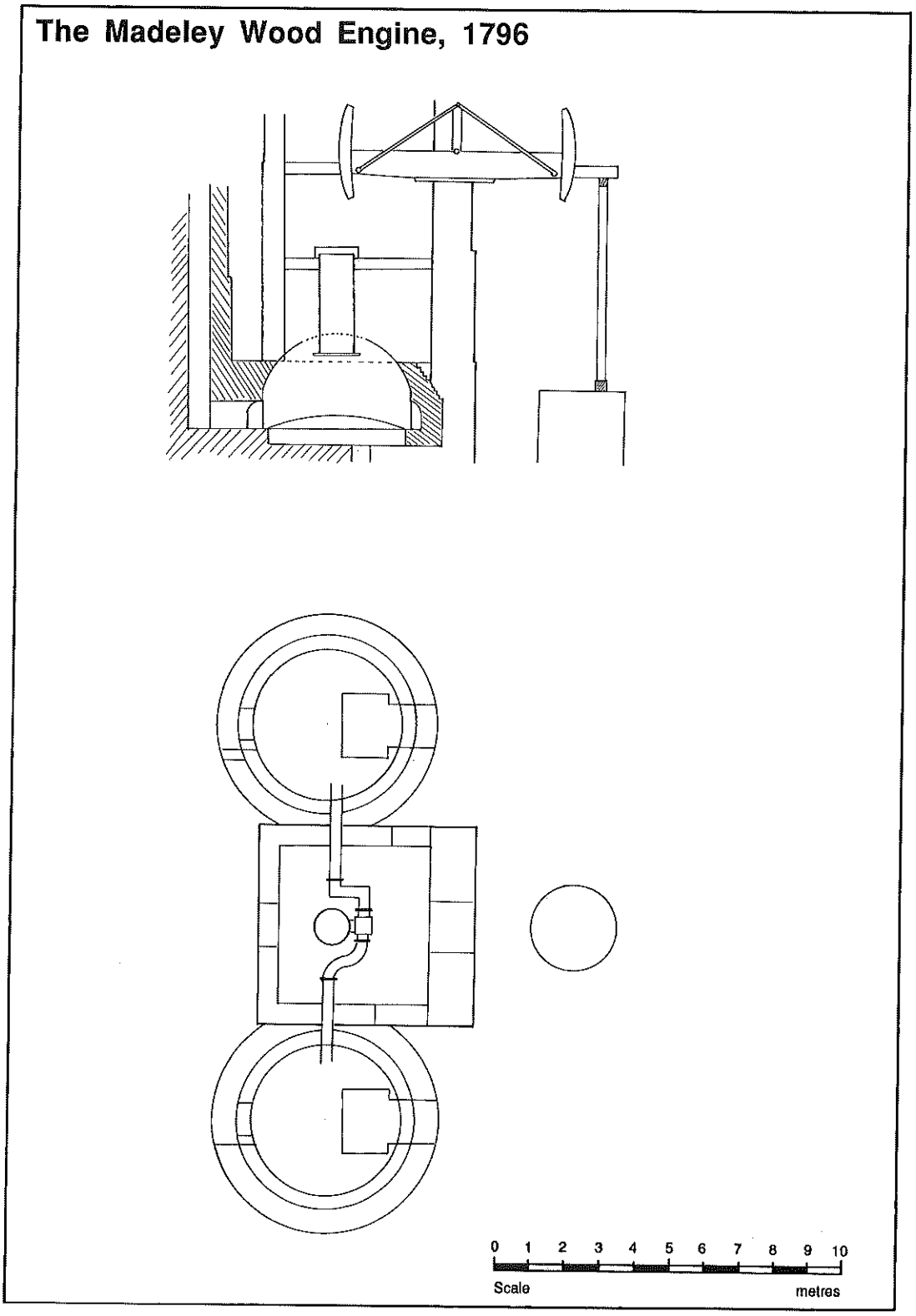


FIGURE 2 WILLIAM REYNOLDS' DRAWING OF THE MADELEY WOOD ENGINE, 1796 (REDRAWN AFTER BOULTON AND WATT COLLECTION, PORTFOLIO 574)

and boilers (but omits the pump shaft) in the same configuration as William Reynolds' 1796 drawing, Boulton & Watt had not recommended any changes to the boilers (plate 1). The plan also shows a pool to the east of the engine house, the curved perimeter of which suggests turf banks rather than a brick or stone wall.

Further references to the engine appear in the Madeley Wood Company's annual accounts for the period 1826–1913. In 1839 a new boiler was installed, and in 1840 the engine was given new spring beams 'and other

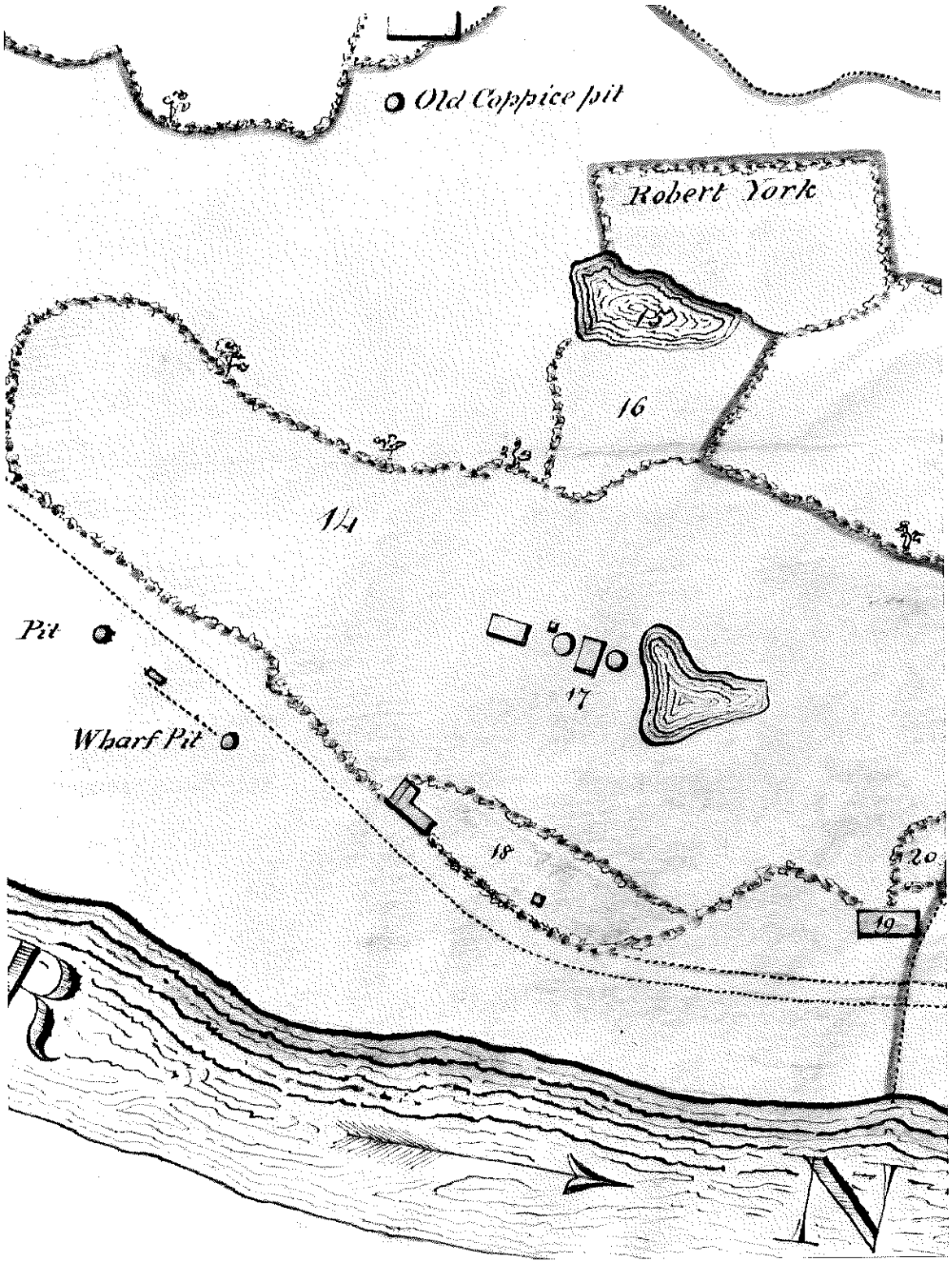


PLATE 1 EARLY NINETEENTH-CENTURY PLAN OF LAND LEASED TO WILLIAM REYNOLDS, SHOWING LLOYDS ENGINE HOUSE (17) AND NEARBY WHARF PIT (IGMT 1970/66/5)

extensive repairs'.[16] In 1846 a new engine was installed at a cost of £950/17/7 spread over three years.[17] Significant changes at the site are in fact indicated on the 1847 Tithe Map of Madeley (plate 2). Two boilers are shown on the west side of the engine house, which presumably related to the installation of a new boiler in 1839. The extensive repairs referred to in 1840 may have included the pool, since by 1847 the south and west sides appear to have been walled.

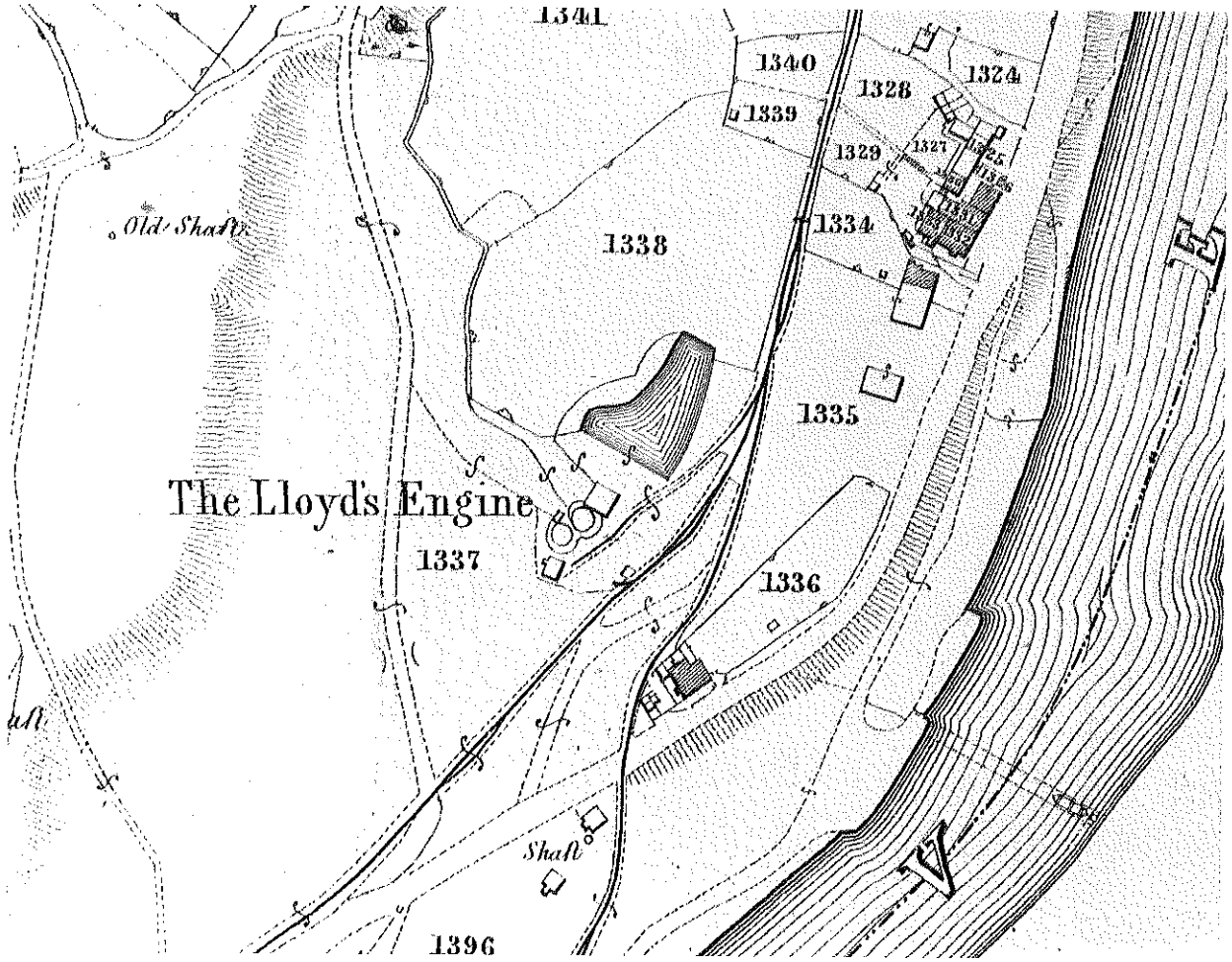


PLATE 2 MADELEY TITHE MAP, 1847 (IGMT)

PLATE 3 LLOYDS ENGINE, PUBLISHED IN THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE *POWER* IN 1912

Another new boiler was installed in 1858 at the rear of the engine house, where it is shown in a photograph published in 1912 (plate 3).[18] The photograph was accompanied by an account of the engine which gives the only known description of the pump barrels and the depth of the shaft:

> The engine is used solely for pumping, and three boilers, two of the haystack and one of the egg-ended type, supply it with steam . . . The engine has an open-top steam cylinder 26 inches in diameter, and has an 8ft stroke. The beam is of cast iron and has a working length of 20ft, the 'main gudgeon' being 10ft from each end. At the water end of the engine are two working barrels, each of 9¾ inch bore, working from a depth of 300ft, the lift accomplished by each barrel being 150ft. The two haystack boilers are 16 x 14ft and the egg-ended boiler is 6ft in diameter by 28ft long . . . The equipment is approximately 115 years old.[19]

PLATE 4 LLOYDS ENGINE C1912

The description, apparently provided by the Madeley Wood Company's chief engineer, is informative but in some respects demonstrably untrue; it also partly contradicts the archaeological evidence discussed below. Another early twentieth-century photograph shows the front of the engine house and the framework above the shaft for lifting the pump barrels (plate 4). These were raised by means of a capstan which is on the extreme left of the picture.

The engine is last referred to as working in 1913 and probably ceased operation shortly after. The Madeley Wood Company's cash books for the period 1915–20 make no mention of the engine, and indeed during this period only Kemberton Pit and Meadow Pit were worked.[20] Kemberton Pit was 3km north east of the Lloyds engine, Meadow Pit 1.4km north west.

Site Description

The site consists of the remains of an engine house and pump shaft, the lining of a former pool on the east side and a small brick air shaft to the south west (fig 3). The site was covered with dense vegetation which was cleared before the repair works and archaeological recording began. Rubble was also cleared from the site, during which whole bricks were reclaimed for use in the repairs. It was suspected before the work began that there was a condenser pit within the engine house; this was soon confirmed and clearance continued to establish its depth. The main components of the engine house and pump shaft are identified here by feature numbers in round brackets.

The engine house is constructed of hand-made bricks, of which the north, south and east walls survive only at the present ground level (figs 4, 5). In the north wall are the jambs of a former opening, inside which a cast iron plate is fixed into the wall and infilled with brickwork (52). There are cavities in the east and west walls at ground level (2, 3), and a further cavity in the east wall at the base of the condenser pit (27). The thicker south wall (the bob or lever wall) rises above ground level and has a partly infilled opening in the centre. At its north-west angle is an iron pintle set into a rebated masonry block. The foundations of the wall are exposed at the base of the condenser pit, beneath which a void was found. This void appeared to extend beneath the entire bob wall.

The interior comprises a brick engine bed and condenser pit. The engine bed (8) is of hand-made bricks, but not bonded to the walls of the engine house. The upper surfaces of the bricks are mortared, indicating that the

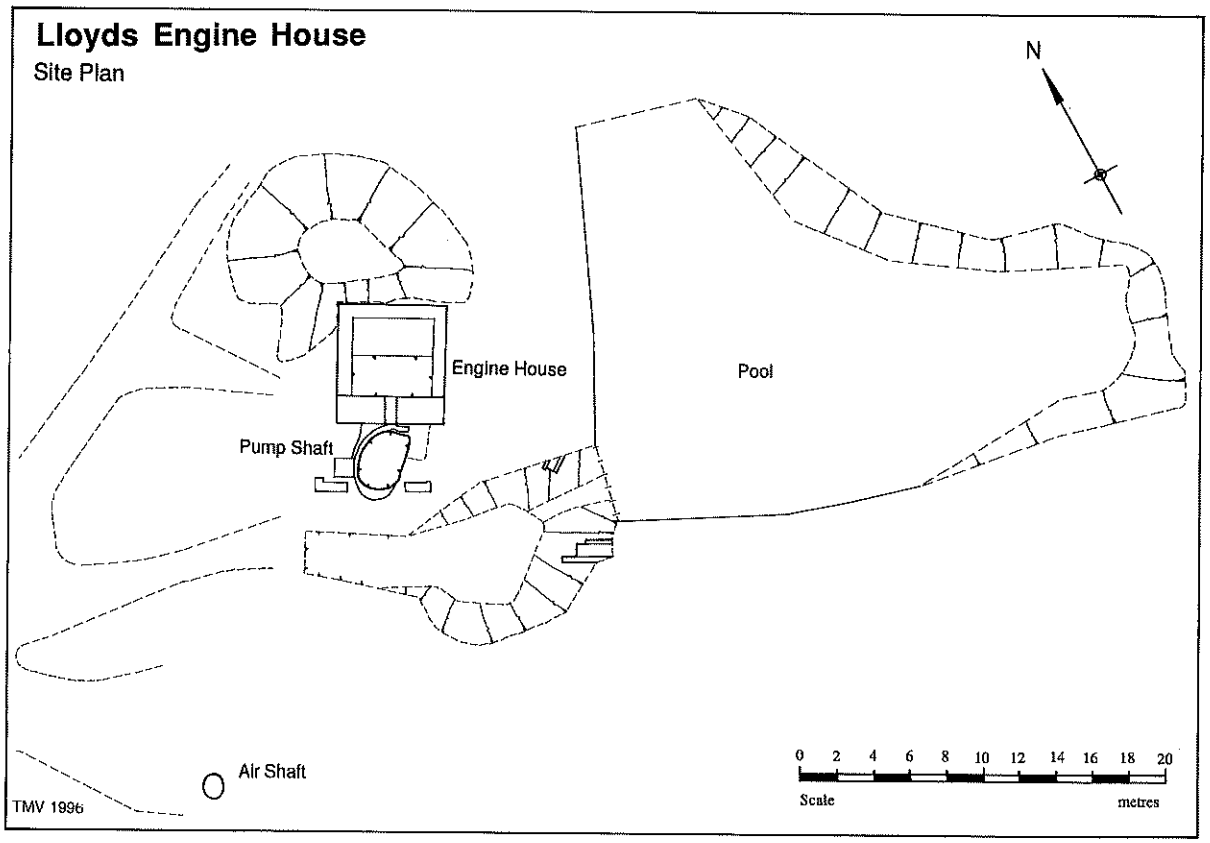


FIGURE 3 SITE PLAN

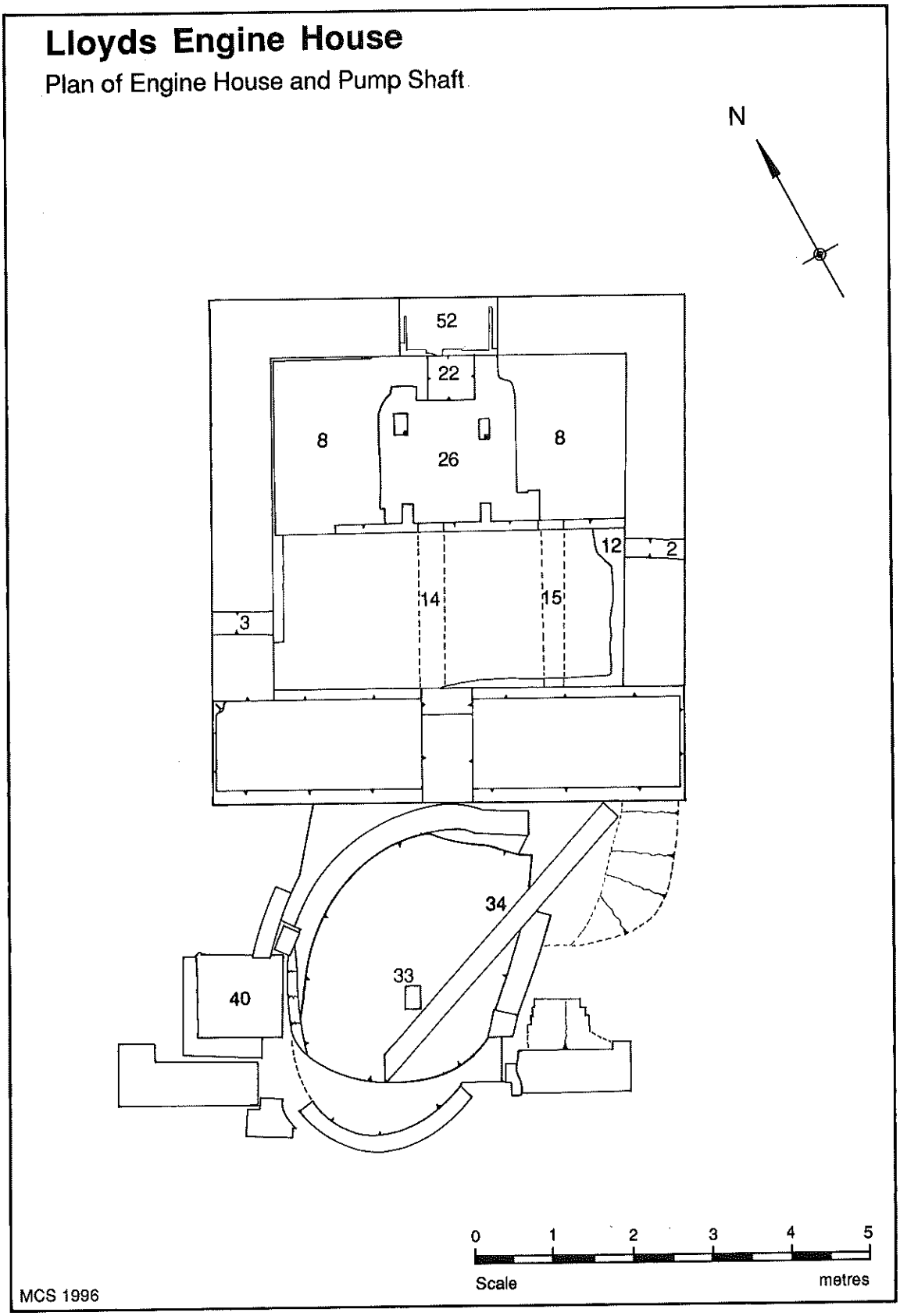


FIGURE 4 PLAN OF THE ENGINE HOUSE AND PUMP SHAFT

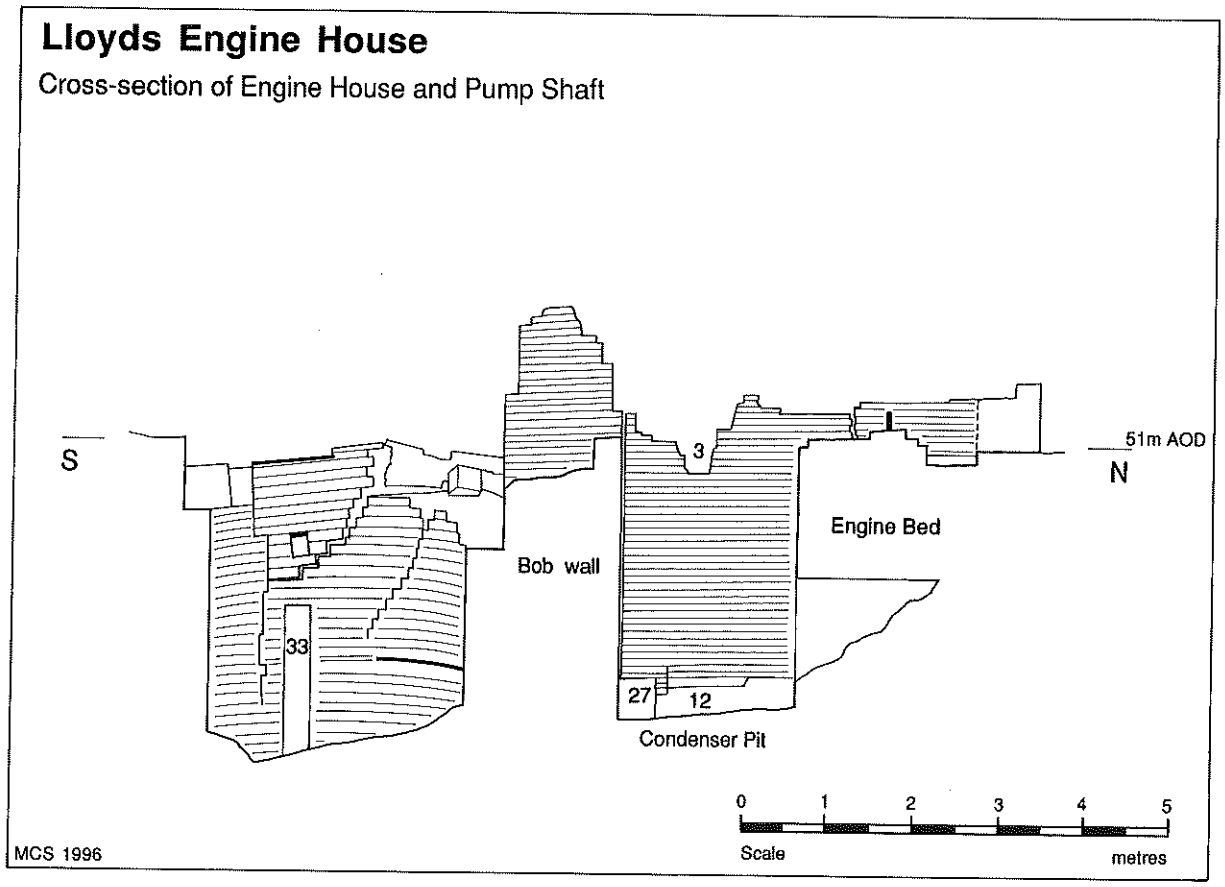


FIGURE 5 CROSS-SECTION OF THE ENGINE HOUSE AND PUMP SHAFT

bed originally rose to a higher level (plate 5). The brickwork in the centre (26) is clearly of a different phase to the remainder of the engine bed, and within it two threaded holding down bolts remain *in situ*; the position of two others is marked by rebates in the brickwork. This central section is defined by a break in the course work and a wide mortar joint. Behind the holding down bolts is an access shaft (22), infilled with broken brick, mortar and soil. Beneath the holding down bolts is a tunnel, the jambs of which butt against the engine bed core. The tunnel is infilled with brick rubble and was not cleared.

The condenser pit is a maximum of 3.5m deep below the walls of the engine house. It was cleared to its base, which is an average of 0.4m below the foundations of the engine house walls (12). In the north face of the condenser pit much of the brick face of the engine bed is decayed. At the base of the engine bed the brickwork is stepped out, at the level of which are a cavity and the remains of a timber beam. These correspond with two sockets, each with traces of timber, in the foundations of the bob wall (14, 15).

The pump shaft is constructed primarily of refractory firebricks, and is sub-circular in shape, approximately 3.2m in diameter (plate 6). It is a maximum of 3.5m deep; the remainder of the shaft is infilled with brick rubble. In the centre of the shaft the timber pump spear (33) is *in situ*. The top of the shaft is mostly missing on the east side, but survives intact on the west side, at the top of which is a cast iron plate (40) laid on a bed of bricks. Immediately to the south of this, but not butting against it, is a brick wall running east to west, with a return to the north. The top surface of this wall is mortared. On the south side of the shaft is a curved wall of red bricks set back from the face of the shaft. On the east side of the shaft is the remains of a brick wall, with a large coping stone lying nearby.

The lining of the shaft reveals considerable shearing and displacement. A sheared cast iron band graphically demonstrates the magnitude of this. At the bottom of the pump shaft were large sections of timber and ironwork, and laid across the shaft was a broken length of timber pump spear 4.38m long (34), all of which was removed. The detached section of pump spear has been retained on site; the ironwork was removed from the site, but the remaining timber was too decayed to salvage.

The former pool is to the east of the engine house and covers an area of approximately 480 square metres. The north and east banks are of earth, while its south and west walls are of random rubble. The west wall stands a maximum of 1.94m above the current ground level. A brick-lined culvert is built into the west wall and can be seen behind the wall where it emerges in a brick-lined channel.

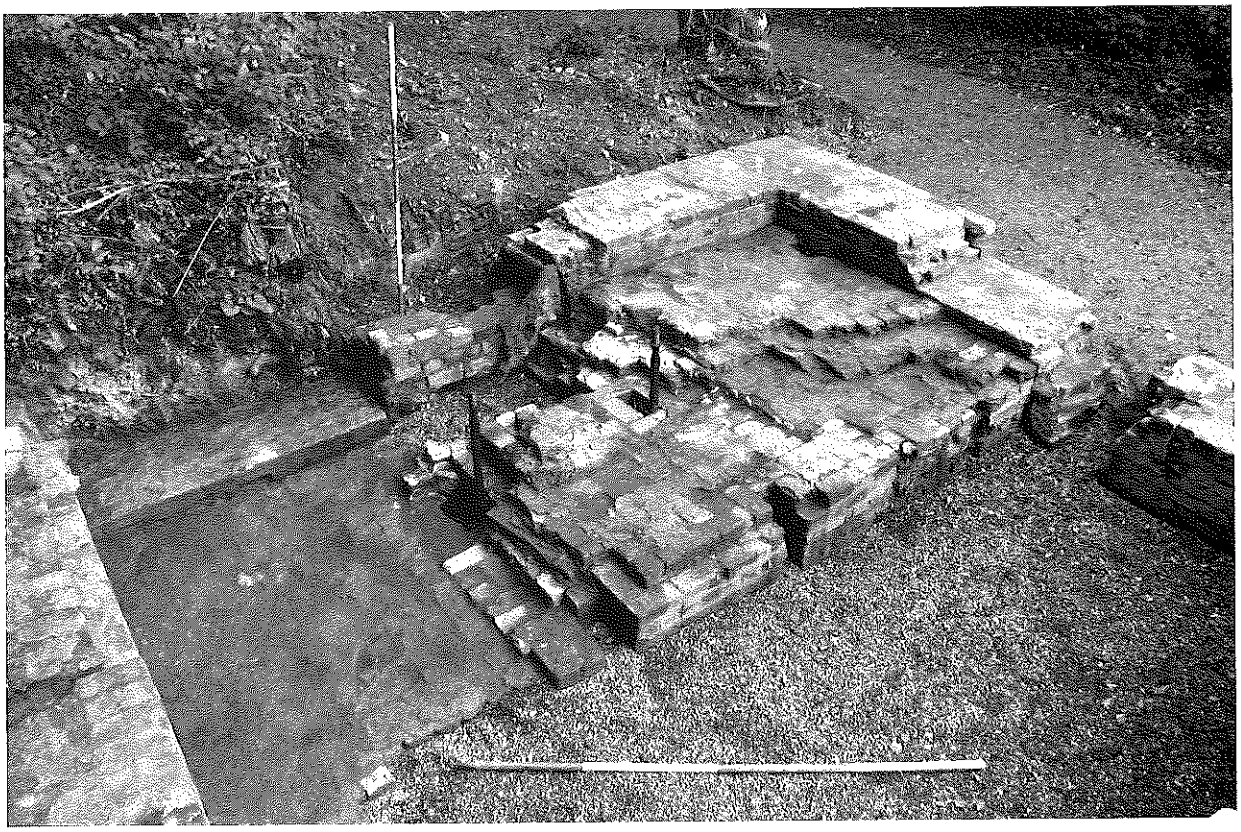


PLATE 5 THE ENGINE HOUSE AFTER BACKFILLING OF THE CONDENSER PIT, SHOWING THE ENGINE BED WITH HOLDING DOWN BOLTS *IN SITU*

PLATE 6 THE PUMP SHAFT AFTER CLEARANCE OF VEGETATION

Interpretation

The engine house and pump shaft are interpreted first. The pool will be dealt with separately and then integrated into the interpretation of the site as a whole.

The earliest phase consists of the four walls of the engine house. The engine bed inside the structure was clearly added later as it butts untidily against the engine house walls, while the pump shaft is of machine-made refractory bricks and clearly later than the hand-made bricks of the engine house walls. These walls are therefore all that survives of the 'new engine in Madeley Wood' first mentioned in 1745. It has already been doubted that this could be the site of the 1719 engine in the Lloyds, and no archaeological evidence became apparent to alter that opinion.

The archaeological evidence for openings in the original building is consistent with William Reynolds' drawing of 1796 (fig 2). In the west wall of the engine house is the pintle for a door hinge set into a rebated masonry block in the bob wall. In this same position William Reynolds' drawing indicates a doorway. On the north side of the engine house the remains of a cast iron pipe were clearly inserted into an original opening (52), the jambs of which are clearly visible. This opening is also shown on the Reynolds drawing and was probably a window.

There is no evidence that any significant changes were made to the site by 1797. The next phase of archaeological evidence is the engine bed and condenser pit within the engine house. It is known that a new engine was installed in 1846, but the extant engine bed reveals two distinct phases. The central section of the bed (26), incorporating the two holding down bolts and the rebates for two others, is not integral with the remainder of the bed (8) and must therefore be later (plate 5). The documentary evidence requires that one of these phases be dated 1846. The argument preferred here is that the engine bed was first constructed soon after 1797 for an engine similar to that proposed by Boulton & Watt, and in 1846 its central section was altered to accommodate the new engine installed during that year (26). Although there is no direct evidence to support this argument, there is no hint in the accounts of a new cylinder at any time after 1846. Even if an engine was installed soon after 1797, it would not be possible to show that it was the Boulton & Watt engine designed in 1796. However there is one point of agreement between the archaeology of the engine bed and Boulton & Watt's recommendations, since the engine bed extends down to the foundations of the original building. At the base of the engine bed are sockets for the timber beams (14, 15), with corresponding sockets in the foundations of the bob wall, which supported the condensing cylinder. Just as Boulton & Watt had suggested, a new engine was installed by underbuilding the original engine house.

The existence of the beams for a condensing cylinder demonstrates unequivocally that the engine described in 1912 was not 'of genuine Newcomen type'. Within the engine bed, the beam sockets are both situated at the base of the original brickwork, and one of them appears to be integral with the engine bed itself. The other represents two phases since one of its jambs was rebuilt, although this suggests nothing more than the replacement of the original beams.

Within the second phase of the engine bed (26) is the extant tunnel beneath the holding down bolts. Access to this tunnel was initially provided by the shaft at the rear of the engine house (22). Although two sides of this are integral with the second phase of the engine bed, the west side indicates the previous existence of such a shaft.

In the east and west walls of the engine house are cavities which were probably made by the removal of pipes. Either of the two cavities at ground level (2, 3) could have carried condenser feed and outlet pipes. The cavity at foundation level (27) in the west wall possibly held a condenser outlet pipe for the original atmospheric engine, which may have connected with the original boiler on this side of the building.

In 1858 a new boiler was installed, probably on the north side of the engine house. In the centre of the north wall of the engine house is an iron plate with a curved upper profile, suggesting that it carried a steam pipe from the boiler to the engine. Indeed the steam pipe must have entered the building through this north wall when the boilers were positioned on this side. Later this iron plate was bricked in (52), and the steam pipe entered the building at a higher level (plate 3).

The extant pump shaft is lined with machine-made firebricks, suggesting that it dates from the latter half of the nineteenth century. The pump spear itself (33) is essentially undateable. The interpretation of the pump shaft depends upon the interpretation of the pool, since it has hitherto been assumed that water was channelled to the pool from the shaft. However, it could not have worked in such a way. There is no watercourse extant between the pump shaft and the pool. A small culvert west of the pool could not have carried the water from the pump shaft because the opening in the pool wall is 0.98m below the coping course. Therefore, it clearly was not used to channel water into the pool, but to let water out.

The bed of the pool varies and has no doubt silted up, but its lowest point is 49.32m AOD, while the highest point of the extant coping course is 51.26m AOD. Water would have been drawn up the shaft to the top of the highest pump barrel, which was probably fixed below the bottom of the timber pump spear. At the top of the shaft, on the west side, is a large cast iron plate (40) to which cross-beams were originally fixed. Photographs

taken in 1970 show the timber pump spear to have rested on the cross-beams by means of flanges, and although the upper section was cut down in the 1980s the remaining section of pump spear (33) is supported more or less in its original position by the debris in the shaft. The bottom of the pump spear extended below the rubble fill inside the shaft, the lowest measurable point of which was 47.78m AOD. It can therefore be shown that the top of the pump barrels was considerably lower than the lowest point of the pool. The difference suggested by levels taken in 1996 was at least 1.54m.

A possible alternative is that a pump barrel surrounded the pump spear itself. This is inherently unlikely, however, since its removal would have been problematical without also removing the pump spear. Also, an outlet would have been required to carry water to the pool but the shaft lining was intact at this level in 1970 with no opening visible. In addition, a watercourse would have been required from the pool to the River Severn, a very impractical idea, and none of the maps which depict the pool show such a watercourse.

Water could not have flowed from the pump shaft to the pool, which means that a culvert must have carried water from the top of the pump barrel to the River Severn. In the nineteenth century water could be raised using a suction or force pump, but all the evidence at the Lloyds suggests that the suction method was in use.[21] The pump spear, usually made of fir (or 'mast timber'), descended in the centre of the shaft and was guided by two cross-beams to keep it in the correct vertical alignment. These cross-beams were attached to the top and at intervals in the lining of the shaft. At the bottom of the pump spear an inverted Y-shaped length of iron (known as a shank) was fixed. The prongs of the inverted Y were attached to the upper and lower pump rods. The level of the shank determined the level at which the water could be raised.

The pump rods had buckets attached to their lower ends and worked inside a column of iron pipes known as the pump barrel. The lowest section of the mechanism was the wind-bore, which drew water from a sump by suction up to a cylindrical core known as the clack-piece, at the top of which was the clack valve, through which water entered the pump barrel proper. When the pump rods descended valves in the buckets opened, then closed again when the power stroke of the engine raised the rods, thus raising a solid column of water.

In 1912 the Lloyds Engine was said to have two working barrels of 150ft each. The lower of the barrels would have raised the water to a certain level where it was allowed to run off into a cistern. The upper barrel would then pump the water up from this cistern, with a wind-bore at the bottom as before. At the top of the upper barrel the water would run off into a culvert, from where it flowed to the River Severn.

If, as seems certain, this was the method of raising water at the Lloyds, what was the purpose of the pool? It is first mentioned in connection with the sale of the Madeley Wood Furnace Company to Abraham Darby in 1776, when an itemisation of the company's buildings included 'one Fire Engine in the Lower Lloyds or Morris's Coppice, with Smith Shop, 1 Dwelling House, Garden & Pool contiguous thereto – for the use of the said Fire Engine'.[22] Given the argument outlined above, the pool must have provided water for the boilers, even though atmospheric engines conventionally had subsidiary pumps to draw up water from the pump shaft to supply the condenser and the boilers. The brick-lined culvert on the west side of the pool probably took water to the boilers in the mid nineteenth century.

However, this is insufficient to explain the pool's existence. The early nineteenth-century lease plan in fact shows two pools in the vicinity of the engine (plate 1). It is argued here that the pools are related to each other, and the presence of one of them adjacent to the engine is coincidental. The pool to the north of the engine house is not shown on the 1847 Tithe plan and must presumably have dried up, although the pool adjacent to the engine was maintained. This suggests that the pools are earlier than the engine house and relate to earlier mining activity in the area. Early mining in the Lloyds is at present little understood from an archaeological perspective, but if opencast methods were used in the seventeenth century it may account for the two pools as flooded opencast pits. An alternative explanation is that the pools were linked and formed ponds for a waterwheel which could have worked drainage pumps before the engine was installed. However, these are speculations, since there is no evidence as yet to lend weight to either argument.[23]

The Lloyds engine ceased working by or at the onset of the 1914–18 war. The engine was probably removed although the pump spear remained *in situ*. Although this was subsequently cut down, photographs taken in 1970 show the spear to have been flanged, causing it to rest on the cross-beams at the top of the shaft. This explains its preservation *in situ* but does not mean that the pump barrels also survived. These could have been removed easily without affecting the pump spear itself.

There is evidence that the engine house was deliberately knocked down. Excavation of the condenser pit yielded large quantities of bricks from the upper level of the engine house, suggesting that the pit was deliberately infilled for safety reasons. Also, the relatively level surfaces of the extant walls of the engine house do not suggest spontaneous collapse of the building. There has also been considerable ground movement since the dismantling of the engine. The pump spear would have been on a centre line with the holding down bolts for the engine – it is now out of alignment by 0.49m. The pump shaft itself is now misshapen, with large fault lines visible. This ground movement also accounts for the void beneath the bob wall.

Conclusion

The pool represents the earliest activity at the site. It is not currently well understood, but may have originated as a flooded opencast working; its location adjacent to the engine has no direct connection with the pumping operation. Although a pumping engine was erected in the Lloyds in 1719, no evidence was found to suggest that it was on the site of the present engine house.

The extant engine house was built in 1745. It originally housed a Newcomen-type atmospheric engine, with boilers positioned either side of it. William Reynolds consulted Boulton & Watt about replacing this engine in 1795–6 but there is no direct evidence that their proposals were carried out. However a new engine was probably installed between 1797 and the early years of the nineteenth century, the evidence for which is the engine bed inside the engine house.

Various running repairs are recorded in the historical record, but it seems that in 1840 substantial works were carried out, which perhaps included the walling of the south and west sides of the pool. This had certainly been done by 1847. In 1846 a new engine was installed, for which changes to the engine bed, including the extant holding down bolts, provide archaeological confirmation. This engine was said to have had a 26-inch cylinder, which is plausible in terms of the archaeological evidence. In 1858 a new boiler was installed on the north side of the engine house. By the early twentieth century there were two haystack boilers and one large wagon boiler.

In 1912 the pump shaft was said to be 300ft (91.5m) deep, and pumped water using two barrels. The extant lining of the pump shaft belongs to the later nineteenth century. The engine is last known to have worked in 1913. After closure the engine and boilers were removed and the engine house was demolished. Ground movement in the Lloyds area subsequently caused the distortion and cracking of the pump shaft lining.

This reinterpretation of Lloyds Engine House is the product of routine archaeological techniques, and hopefully it has shown how archaeology can contribute to our understanding of the industrial period. Archaeology was initially slow to turn its attention to monuments of the industrial revolution, which were championed first by historians and enthusiasts, but it is increasingly apparent that archaeological techniques can have a decisive effect on our interpretation of the evidence. Even a small project such as this has seen unexpected evidence emerge in the form of the origin of the pool, which offers a glimpse of how limited our understanding of the area's mining landscapes are – despite its designation as a World Heritage Site and the confidence that status engenders. The Ironbridge Gorge has been well served by its historians, and there is ample scope for a similar contribution from archaeology.

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Notes

1 IGMTAU, *Lloyds Engine House, Ironbridge*, 1996, Ironbridge Archaeological series 64
2 *VCH Salop*, **xi**, 46–7; I J Brown, 'The Lloyds, Ironbridge, Shropshire: Some aspects of a nineteenth century mining community', *Industrial Archaeology Review* **xiv/1**, 1991, 9–16; M.W. Flinn, *The History of the British Coal Industry*, **ii**, 1984, 119
3 Brown, 'Lloyds', 11
4 *Excavation at Lloyds Coppice, Ironbridge, September 1970*. Unpublished report in IGMT library
5 *VCH Salop*, **xi**, 46–7
6 Shropshire Records and Research Centre (SRRC) 2280/3/9; B Trinder, *The Industrial Revolution in Shropshire*, 1981, 94
7 SRRC 6001/331, Coalbrookdale Company Cash Book, 1732–1749, fo 89; IGMTAU, *Bedlam Furnaces, Ironbridge*, 1996, Severn Gorge Repairs Project Report 12, 6–7
8 By the end of the eighteenth century it was generally known as the Wharf Engine. For example, in 1800 George Potts of Norwich drew small parts for a 'Warf Water Engine' (IGMT 1994/528, 1994/529)
9 IGMT CBD/59/82/3, Coalbrookdale Company Minute Book 1789–1797, fo 73
10 Boulton and Watt Collection, Birmingham Central Library (B&W), Portfolio 574
11 This has been argued more fully in IGMTAU, *Bedlam*, 14–15, 99–100
12 This feature can be seen at the Upper Forge in Coalbrookdale, where an engine was installed in a new engine house in 1785
13 B&W Letterbook 66, fo 119, J Southern to W Reynolds, 27 January 1796

14 B&W 3/10/20, W Reynolds to Boulton & Watt, 26 August 1796
15 SRRC 271/1, Madeley Field and Madeley Wood Furnace Reckoning 1790–7, fo 303
16 Staffordshire Record Office (Staffs RO) D876/ADD/3/1, Madeley Wood Annual Settlement, 1826–1851, fos 146, 158
17 *Ibid*, fos 228, 240, 254
18 Staffs RO D876/ADD/3/2, Madeley Wood Annual Settlement, 1852–1876, fo 76
19 J Leese, 'Old English Power Plants', *Power* **36/4**, 1912, 108–9
20 Staffs RO D876/178, Madeley Wood Company Cash Book 1915–1917; D876/179, Madeley Wood Company Cash Book 1918–1920
21 This account is based on that given in J Farey, *A Treatise on the Steam Engine: Historical, Practical and Descriptive*, **i**, 1827, 214–19
22 SRRC 1987/60/1, 'List of buildings etc at Madeley Wood'
23 Evidence from the seventeenth century and early eighteenth century shows that the coal was worked by means of adits (*VCH Salop*, **xi**, 46), but our knowledge of digging for clay is rudimentary

'SIMPLICITY WITHOUT MEANNESS, COMMODIOUSNESS WITHOUT EXTRAVAGANCE'
THE NON-CONFORMIST CHAPELS AND MEETING-HOUSES IN SHREWSBURY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

by Janice V Cox

INTRODUCTION

The period before 1800

In common with most of the larger English towns in the latter half of the seventeenth century, Shrewsbury had a substantial spread of nonconformist belief. Although Shropshire was, from a national point of view, a relatively weak area for religious dissent,[1] there were Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists and Quakers in the town in the decades following the restoration of Charles II.[2] Despite a certain degree of intermittent persecution which lasted until 1686,[3] they were able to form themselves into permanent societies, two of them building their own meeting houses. At the beginning of the eighteenth century the Presbyterians, the strongest national nonconformist denomination, were the largest of the Shrewsbury congregations with an estimated 400 'hearers' in 1715,[4] and a membership of 103 in 1741.[5] Like many Presbyterian congregations in England, the Shrewsbury society gradually drifted towards – and eventually became – Unitarian during the course of the century. This was accompanied by a progressive loss of members, so that by 1799 the number of attenders was estimated to be only 100.[6] The Independents in 1715 had about 150 'hearers' at their services,[7] but by 1741 membership had fallen to 23.[8] In that year, the Independents decided to form a joint congregation with the Presbyterians having been left without a minister when the Revd. John Dobson moved to Walsall. The union of the two societies was to their mutual benefit as both had an ageing and declining membership.[9] This reflected a nationwide loss of membership: from their numerical peak in 1700 the number of dissenters in England declined by about half by about 1750.[10] A separate congregation of Independents was re-formed in 1766 following a split in the joint congregation over the appointment of a new minister with Arian views. The orthodox seceders (a majority of the joint congregation) built their own chapel on Swan Hill in 1767. They caused an inscription to be engraved on the front of the new chapel which read 'This building was erected in the year 1767 for the public worship of God, And in defence of the rights of majorities in Protestant Dissenting Congregations to choose their own ministers'.[11] By the end of the century they had supplanted the Presbyterians/Unitarians as much the largest of the 'old dissenting' congregations in the town, with an attendance estimated at 200.[12] The Baptists, the smallest of the 'old dissenting' congregations in Shrewsbury, had about 50 'hearers' in 1715,[13] and a membership of 26 in 1718.[14] They had a chequered history during the eighteenth century and always had considerable difficulty in attracting and keeping ministers. There were several serious disputes between ministers and the predominantly particular membership. In 1794 the congregation had been without a minister for five years, and was so dispirited as to have closed the chapel door for a year.[15] However, by the end of the century the Baptists were established on firmer ground than ever before, revived by the leadership of their new minister, the charismatic evangelist John Palmer. The Baptists were a striking example of how an almost moribund society could be revived by an individual minister.

The Quakers, the most openly defiant and persecuted of the dissenting groups in Shrewsbury in the later seventeenth century,[16] gradually declined in number during the course of the next century and by 1800 were only a small society,[17] reflecting a steady diminution in the number of Quakers nationally.[18]

In addition to the four long-established denominations described above, the eighteenth century witnessed the foundation of a major new denomination in England, the Wesleyan Methodists, who originally began as a reforming, evangelical movement within the Established Church. They grew rapidly throughout England from the 1740s onwards. They are first mentioned in Shrewsbury in 1744 and in 1781 erected their first purpose-built chapel. The Methodists as a whole, of which the Wesleyans were the major part, went on to become the strongest nonconformist group in the town by the middle of the 19th century.[19] The Evangelical Revival not only brought the Wesleyan Methodists to Shrewsbury but also by 1800 the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists, Moravians and Sandemanian (or Scotch) Baptists. The Welsh Calvinistic Methodists were the only one of these three end-of-century arrivals who survived in the town into the twentieth century. In addition to these new societies there had been at various times during the course of the eighteenth century, a small number of meeting-house registrations by societies whose religious affiliation is not always known. They met in private houses or buildings not specifically designed for religious worship, and do not appear to have lasted for any length of time.[20]

In 1799 when the Archdeacon of Salop made his visitation, he said of the parish of St.Chad, 'In this parish alone [in Shrewsbury] are there [dissenting] places of worship'.[21] All the chapels and meeting-houses at that time were in the centre of town within a short distance of one another, in an area between the High Street, Hills Lane and the top ends of St. John's Hill and Swan Hill. The other parts of the town centre and the suburbs of Coleham, Abbey Foregate, Castle Fields and Frankwell lacked any dissenting chapels or meeting-houses. In the next one hundred years twenty-one new congregations were established. Half met in the town centre (i.e. within the loop of the river) and half met in the suburbs. This reflected not only the continued appeal of the town centre as a place to meet and to erect chapels, but also the growth of population in the suburbs and the increased evangelical zeal of the nonconformists to serve them.

The first thirty years of the nineteenth century

Owing to the vigorous evangelism of the Methodists, Baptists and Independents the number of their congregations and their membership nationwide[22] were growing rapidly, whilst the Unitarians and Quakers, who were not evangelical, were stagnating. The Unitarians continued as a small intellectual elite both nationally and locally, but they, with the Quakers, enjoyed a political and economic influence in the country at large quite disproportionate to their numbers. In Shrewsbury in the first three decades of the nineteenth century nonconformity grew steadily. There were increasing attendances at nonconformist services but only three new congregations were set up, two of which were very small. In 1804 the Wesleyan Methodists established a small cottage meeting in Coleham, a suburb of the town which had never had a nonconformist society meeting there, although there had been dissenters living in Coleham and Abbey Foregate since the late seventeenth century.[23] Very little is known about this group, and it may not have lasted very long. At the same time the Wesleyan Methodists rebuilt their town centre chapel on a new and better site. The building was large, handsome and expensive and, as it had a street frontage, highly visible. By 1815, attendance at the Wesleyan Methodist chapel was estimated to be the biggest at any chapel in town (at seven hundred)[24] and ten years later the building had to be enlarged. The Quakers also rebuilt their meeting house in 1807–9.

These rebuildings were two early examples of a number of such reconstructions in Shrewsbury during the course of the century. All the early nonconformist meeting places in the town in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had been situated out of sight in gardens or shutts, which caused some congregations during the course of the nineteenth century to make their chapels more visible by demolishing buildings or walls in front of them, or even moving to a new site, as the Wesleyan Methodists did. Being in full view of the street came to be seen as of prime importance in attracting new members, although sites with street frontages in the centre of town could not always be obtained. The situation in the suburbs was different as chapels could be built where all could see them.

The Wesleyan Methodists were not the only society enjoying a period of success at this time, for the Baptists were too. Under the Revd. John Palmer's leadership they were expanding rapidly.[25] The capacity of their chapel was doubled in 1810 and two premises near the Castle were licensed for religious meetings. The Revd. John Palmer's activities were not limited to Shrewsbury for he was instrumental in establishing Baptist congregations elsewhere in Shropshire and also conducted preaching tours in Wales where he was known, not surprisingly, as 'John the Baptist'.[26] His death in 1823, followed by the appointment of a new minister and the continued overcrowding in the chapel, precipitated a crisis in the Baptist congregation. A group broke away in 1827 and formed a second Baptist cause and soon built a chapel in the populous suburb of Castle Foregate. The breakaway group wished to evangelise that area of the town which they felt had been neglected hitherto, and the location of the new chapel, being so far from Claremont Street, helped to minimise any potential conflict.

Attendance at the Independents' services also increased and in 1815 they were said to have had congregations equal in size to the Baptists.[27] However, the number of Independent congregations in the town did not increase in this early period, coming much later (in 1843 and 1862) than was the case in the rest of England and Wales. This was possibly due to the attraction of the popular and long-serving minister of Swan Hill Chapel, Thomas Weaver, who held office from 1798 to 1852.

The three smallest congregations in existence in Shrewsbury in 1800 (none of which had its own chapel at that time) had different experiences in the decades to 1830. The Moravians (whose history and origins went back to the fifteenth century in Bohemia and Moravia) first appeared in England in 1723. They had close connections with both the Wesleyan Methodists and the Church of England, and, unlike all other 'dissenting' groups, were non-separatist and believed in supporting the established church. They had three kinds of groups, viz.: 'Societies', 'Congregations' and 'Settlements'; the 'Societies' (of which Shrewsbury must have been one) being the smallest. Details of the Moravians' establishment in the town are not known, nor is its history certain beyond 1808, and the society may have ceased by 1815. The Sandemanian Baptists originated in Scotland in the mid-eighteenth century subsequently spreading to various towns in England. They were one of a number of sects, such as the Brethren and the Churches of Christ, who believed in the equality of all their members. They disliked the clericalism of the existing churches and rejected all authority except that of Jesus and his Apostles and preferred to call themselves only 'Christian'.[28] The circumstances of their arrival in the town are not known, but during the first decade of the century they flourished, and, after a period of renting accommodation, built their own chapel in 1811. However, a split between the minister and a large part of the congregation soon followed and thereafter the society declined, and by 1837 was almost extinct. The Welsh Calvinistic Methodists grew slowly and steadily from their beginnings in 1797 until they were strong enough first to rent and then to buy the former Wesleyan Methodist chapel in Hills Lane and then rebuild it in 1826.

Apart from the Wesleyan Methodist cottage meeting in Coleham, there were just two new congregations set up in the first thirty years of the nineteenth century. Nothing is known about the group meeting in the house of Thomas Roberts in Abbey Foregate in 1824. However, the arrival of Primitive Methodist missionaries preaching in the streets in 1822 marked the start of what was to become a large congregation in the town. The Primitive Methodists were a breakaway group from the Wesleyan Methodists, originating in the Burslem area of northern Staffordshire in the years leading up to 1812. Energetic evangelism, particularly amongst working class people, spread the new movement rapidly throughout the Midlands and into Shropshire by the early 1820s. Within four years of their arrival in Shrewsbury they had bought the former Sandemanian Baptist chapel as a permanent meeting place. In common with many other successful new congregations, the initial period of renting accommodation was followed by the building or purchase of a chapel. The smaller or less successful societies hired rooms or buildings on a temporary basis, moving their meeting places as circumstances dictated or allowed.

The years 1830–1870

In the four decades immediately following 1830 there was not only a continued national expansion in the Methodist, Independent and Baptist causes nationwide (although the growth rates slackened after 1840) but also a proliferation of small sects. Shrewsbury had its share of them. Although forming only a small proportion of nonconformist adherence both nationally and locally, these sects could still attract enough people to form viable congregations – even if only for limited periods of time. They catered specifically for those who found the Established Church and the existing nonconformist denominations unsatisfactory and, indeed, unscriptural. The diversity of congregations accommodated not only religious differences but also a variety of social and cultural ones too. In the 1830s the Anglican Church was – belatedly – starting to expand its provision of churches in rapidly growing urban areas, but the long delay had allowed the dissenting community to become entrenched in England and Wales. Despite the very considerable growth in the number of nonconformist congregations and chapels and the creation of new parishes by the Church of England the 1851 Census of Religious Worship revealed that many people did not attend any place of worship at all; much to the dismay of those contemporaries who did. In Shrewsbury it is estimated that 47% of the population did not attend any church or chapel on census Sunday, a somewhat better figure than the national average of 60%. Although the census shows that only 14% of Shrewsbury's population attended a nonconformist chapel or meeting place,[29] there were at that time eighteen different congregations that any individual could have attended, ranging from the rational and intellectual Unitarians on the one hand to the small fundamentalist New Testament sects such as the Brethren and the Churches of Christ on the other. There were also two Independent, two Baptist, four Wesleyan Methodist, one Wesleyan Reformers, one Methodist New Connexion, one Primitive Methodist, one Quaker, one Mormon and two Welsh congregations (Calvinistic Methodist and Independent) which between them catered

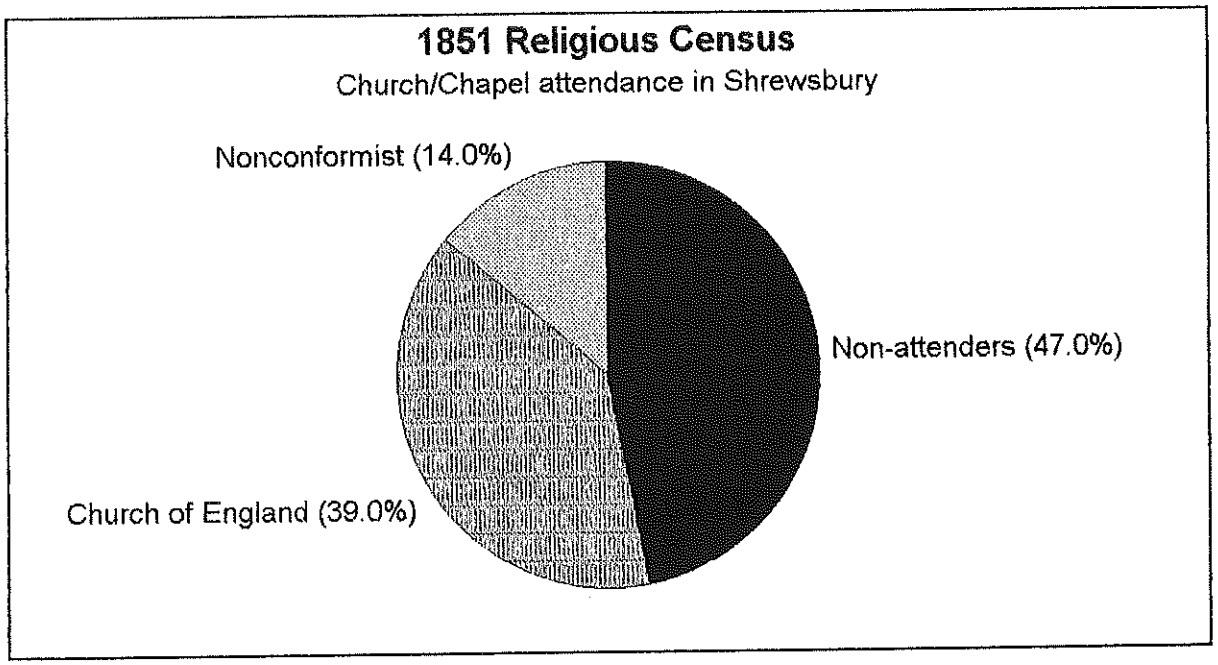


FIGURE 1 1851 RELIGIOUS CENSUS, PERCENTAGES OF CHURCH, CHAPEL AND NON-ATTENDANCE IN SHREWSBURY.

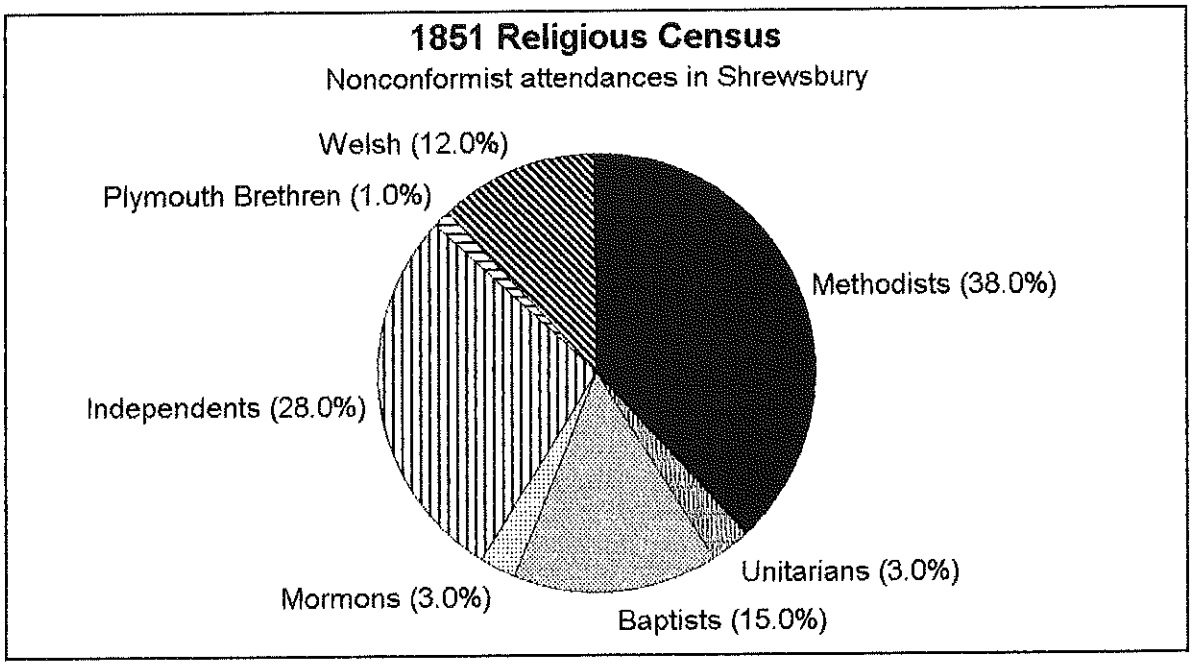


FIGURE 2 1851 RELIGIOUS CENSUS, PERCENTAGES OF DENOMINATIONAL AND SECTARIAN ATTENDANCE IN SHREWSBURY.

for a variety of religious beliefs and practices and enabled Salopians to choose a congregation with which they felt socially and spiritually comfortable. The Anglican Church expanded its mission into the town's suburbs and built three new churches there in the 1830s. St. Michael's in Ditherington, St. George's in Frankwell and Holy Trinity in Coleham were opened in 1830, 1832 and 1837 respectively,[30] and these were the only new Anglican churches, apart from All Saints, Castle Fields built in 1875/6,[31] erected in the town during the entire century.

In this period the number of nonconformist congregations in the town roughly doubled: ten became twenty-one. Some of these belonged to sects or denominations which were entirely new to the town; the others were additional meeting places, mostly in the suburbs, for those denominations which already had well-established

town centre chapels. The Wesleyan Methodists built a chapel in Castle Fields in 1837, established a congregation in Frankwell in 1846 which used rented accommodation until its own chapel was built in 1870, and set up a small cottage meeting in Coleham in the early 1850s which like its predecessor was short-lived. Of all the nonconformist denominations in Shrewsbury the Independents expanded the most successfully in this period. A flourishing new congregation was formed by a large group of former Swan Hill members in 1843, which by 1845 had built a new and handsome chapel in the classical style in Castle Gates. In its turn, Castle Gates chapel helped to form the Congregational church in Abbey Foregate in 1862, whose impressive 'memorial' chapel (one of the few in the town built in the gothic style) was opened in 1864. A third Baptist cause in the town was established in 1858/9 not by the existing congregations in the town, but by a Baptist minister from Holyhead in Anglesey. The congregation was originally set up in Coleham but built its polychrome brick chapel at the bottom of Wyle Cop in 1863. It did not flourish as much as its supporters hoped, and their plans for the extension of the building never came to fruition. The Welsh Calvinistic Methodists established a second cause in the town in 1854 for those Calvinistic Methodists who could not speak Welsh. The slow growth of both membership and fund-raising meant that its basic and unadorned chapel was not built until 1865. Among the new denominations and sects setting themselves up in the town during this period, one group, about whom nothing is known, licensed a room in the yard of the Mermaid Inn in 1832. In the following year a congregation belonging to the Methodist New Connexion (a movement formed by a break-away from the Wesleyan Methodists in 1797) established themselves in the town and within a year had built a stylish classical chapel on Town Walls. It says much for the socio-economic status of the members of this Connexion that they were able to finance such a building in so short a time. They were one of an increasing number of nonconformist societies in the town who employed professional architects rather than local masons and builders to design their chapels, reflecting a growing awareness of architectural style on the part of many congregations.

Although it is not known when or how the Plymouth Brethren formed their congregation in Shrewsbury, they had an Assembly here by 1838. This small millenarian sect, which despised worldliness and clericalism, had begun ten years earlier in Dublin and during the 1830s spread to many of the principal towns in England. Another small group – similar in beliefs to the Brethren and the Sandemanian Baptists – had been formed by 1837 by two brothers, Thomas and William Butler, who described themselves as 'The New Testament Church'.[32] They subsequently joined the Association of Churches of Christ, which was a loose association of congregations with similar beliefs which held its first general meeting in 1842.[33] The group struggled hard to maintain its membership in its early years but did survive in the town until c. 1874.[34] In 1842 a second Welsh denomination, the Welsh Independents, was established in Shrewsbury. They built a small brick chapel in an alleyway off Pride Hill in 1845 and moved to a much more prominent site in Dogpole where they built a 'memorial' chapel in 1862. By this time there were three separate congregations specifically serving the town's Welsh residents. Members of the Mormon church first arrived in the British Isles in 1837 when missionaries were sent from America. Two years later missionaries visited the Potteries and soon spread their activity into Cheshire and north Shropshire and thence to Shrewsbury. In 1847 two missionaries began recruiting people with a view to setting up a congregation in the town, and encouraging emigration to Utah.[35] The Mormons, who aroused much controversy locally, never built their own meeting house, but met in a succession of rented premises or members' houses. Due to emigration to America, membership must have been hard to maintain and the congregation may not have survived beyond the 1860s.

Despite the considerable success enjoyed nationwide by the Wesleyan Methodist movement, the period between 1849 and 1857 was a time of serious internal disputes. A breakaway group, the Wesleyan Methodist Reformers, was formed in 1849 by those who wanted changes in the way in which the church was run, and who disliked the power over Conference exercised by a small clique.[36] The split in the national movement manifested itself in Shrewsbury in 1850 with the setting up of a Reformers congregation in Castle Fields and the building of a polychrome brick chapel there in 1853. It was one of several inexpensive chapels built all in a similar style in the 1850s and 1860s of these materials. The chapel itself was at first-floor level with the vestries, meeting rooms and schoolrooms built underneath at ground floor or semi-basement level, reflecting the emphasis placed on class meetings and Sunday schools. Building the offices underneath the chapels increased the height of the chapels and so their impressiveness. It had the additional advantage of enabling the chapels to be built on smaller sites. The last new denomination to appear in Shrewsbury in the middle decades of the century was the Presbyterian church in 1865. During the eighteenth century most English Presbyterian congregations had become Unitarian and the rest Independent. Thus Presbyterianism had died out in England. Its re-introduction into England in the nineteenth century was primarily due to the influence of a growing number of Scottish immigrants who established new Presbyterian congregations and eventually in 1876 formed the Presbyterian Church of England.[37]

In addition to the new congregations and chapels set up in this period, two of the oldest congregations, the Unitarians and the Independents on Swan Hill, rebuilt their chapels, one substantially and the other totally. The

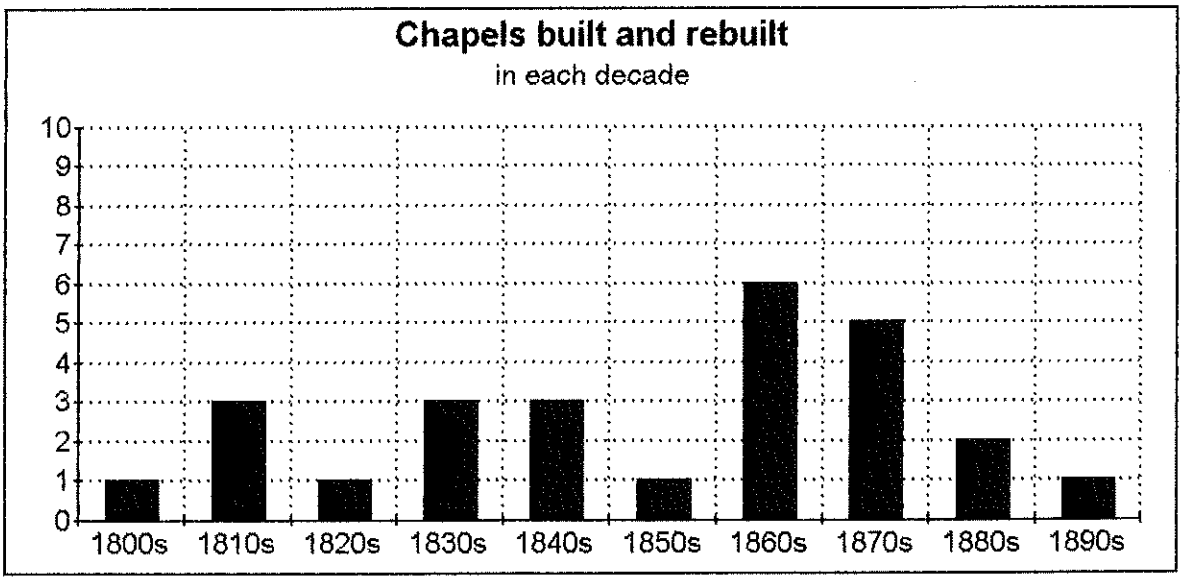


FIGURE 3 SHREWSBURY, NUMBER OF CHAPELS BUILT AND REBUILT IN EACH DECADE.

former were forced by circumstances to act because of the age of the building and the requirements of the Improvement Commissioners; the latter was probably stimulated to rebuild in the more fashionable gothic style by the erection of two modern Independent / Congregational chapels in the town. In 1863 one of the newer congregations, the Primitive Methodists in Castle Court, also rebuilt its chapel entirely and managed to keep the cost down to a low level by re-using old materials to produce a cheap, plain building of polychrome brick. Poorer congregations simply could not afford the luxury of splendid buildings even had they wanted to. All the building and rebuilding in these and the following decades represented a considerable financial outlay by the congregations. As far as is known, only one chapel or meeting house in Shrewsbury was built at the expense of one individual: the first Methodist chapel, in Hills Lane, built in 1781 was paid for by John Appleton of Roushill. The funds for building normally came from the pockets of the congregation and from loans or special efforts. Nonconformist congregations had to be self-supporting; judicious congregations added extensions such as galleries, meeting rooms etc. as and when their finances allowed. The continuous building and rebuilding demonstrates just how important their own chapels and meeting houses were to them, and how committed they were to invest such large sums of money in them. The buildings were not only a means of satisfaction to themselves but also served to attract new members. In some other parts of the country between 1,500 and 3,000 people were accommodated in very large and imposing buildings. There were no such chapels or meeting houses in Shrewsbury. Most held between two and five hundred people. Their modest size and style were appropriate to a relatively small county town of its period, where nonconformists were a minority[38] and in a part of the country which had never been strongly nonconformist.[39] As well as success in the form of new congregations and new buildings, there was also failure: the Sandemanian Baptists probably did not survive into the 1840s and the Quaker meeting had closed by 1858. This is not surprising as by this time the number of Quakers in the country as a whole had fallen to an all-time low.[40]

The last thirty years of the nineteenth century

The last thirty years of the century was for national nonconformity a period of stability and consolidation rather than expansion and proliferation. The rates of growth of the Methodists, Independents and Baptists eased, although the number of members still increased. However the population of the country as a whole was increasing at an even faster rate. So in terms of the ratio of membership to the adult population, there was a decline towards the end of the century and beyond.[41] The Presbyterian Church in England continued to expand nationally although its growth depended to some extent upon migrants from Scotland and Northern Ireland. In this period, only two new congregations are known to have set themselves up in the town. The Salvation Army came to Shrewsbury in 1886, and took over the former Baptist Chapel on Wyle Cop, part of a rapid nation-wide recruitment. The Open Brethren (a fundamentalist but non-exclusive group) gained control *c.* 1890 of a recently-erected non-denominational Gospel Hall, at a time when the Open Brethren too were enjoying a period

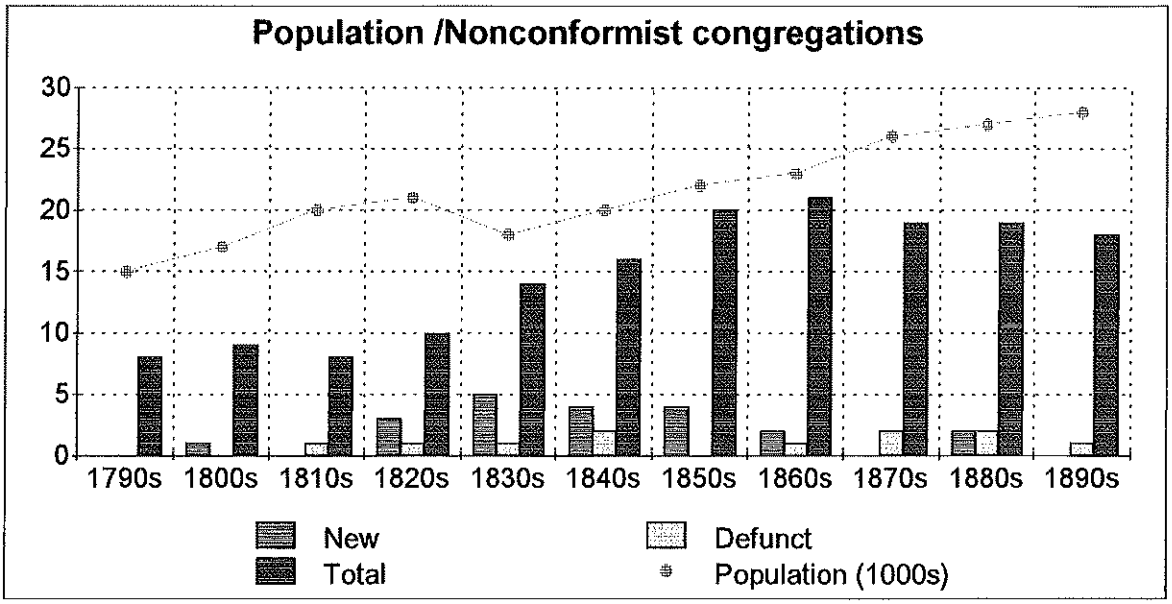


FIGURE 4 SHREWSBURY POPULATION STATISTICS AND NUMBERS OF NONCONFORMIST CONGREGATIONS IN EACH DECADE.

of considerable national expansion.[42] The 1870s continued the nonconformist building boom of the 1860s with two new chapels erected and three chapels entirely rebuilt. The Presbyterians erected an ambitious and visually dominating chapel designed in a 'modified Norman' style in Castle Gates in 1870 and the Wesleyan Methodists in Frankwell built their own modest gothic chapel in the same year. The Welsh Calvinistic Methodists rebuilt their chapel in Hills Lane in 1870 and both the Baptists in Claremont Street and the Wesleyan Methodists in St. John's Hill completely demolished their chapels and employed two well-known architects (one a chapel specialist) to design new chapels in an Italianate style for them. In the following decade the Unitarians extended the front of their chapel over the forecourt in order to increase the size of the meeting rooms behind it and at the same time give it a modern Italianate appearance. The urge to rebuild continued on into the 1890s: in 1893 the Wesleyan Methodists replaced the Castle Fields chapel with a new one.

New buildings proclaimed the vitality of these groups but others were dying. In this latter period of the nineteenth century the disintegration of the Churches of Christ congregation *c.* 1874 followed the death of one of its founders and principal members Thomas Butler. The Baptists despite a considerable revival in the early years of the century and an earlier expansion in the number of congregations were never as strong or successful in Shrewsbury as the Independents. The Second Baptist cause re-united with the Claremont Street Baptists in 1872 and the Third Baptist cause had closed by 1886 leaving just the original Baptist congregation. This is rather surprising since the two Baptist causes which closed were the only ones amongst all the ultimately unsuccessful societies which had been strong enough to build their own chapels during their heyday. They were not the only congregations to collapse during the course of the 19th century: twenty-one new congregations had been set up in the town of which eight failed to survive until the end of the century.[43] In addition, three of the congregations extant in 1800 also died; one of which, the Quakers, had been in existence for just over 200 years. Thirteen of the new societies had managed to gain and keep sufficient adherents until the end of the century and beyond, all but two of them with their own chapels. The growth in the number of chapels, however, had not been without its contemporary critics for it was alleged that they were 'not needed' and that new chapels attracted members from existing congregations rather than from those people who did not attend any place of worship.[44] It was an apparently valid criticism for in 1851 the average occupancy rate of seating in the town's nonconformist chapels and meeting houses, was, at the best attended service, 45%.[45]

The twentieth century

In the twentieth century two of the chapels were rebuilt on new and better sites – one in 1905, and the other in 1908–9 – although the former was only a temporary building and a purpose-built chapel was not erected until 1935–6. Of the nineteen chapels and meeting-houses in existence during the last century only eight are still in

use as places of worship, i.e. the Unitarian Chapel, Claremont Street Baptist Chapel, Swan Hill Independent Chapel, St. John's Hill Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, Bethesda Wesleyan Methodist Chapel in Frankwell, Abbey Foregate Congregational (now U.R.C.) Chapel, the Gospel Hall in John Street, and the former Quaker Meeting House recently used as the Kingdom Hall of the Jehovah's Witnesses. The first four of these are the four longest established congregations in the town, two beginning in the seventeenth century and two in the mid eighteenth century. The chapels of nearly all the more recently established congregations have closed. Eight chapels and meeting-houses, following closure due to drastically reduced membership and church amalgamations, are now used for other purposes: five are used as shops or offices; one is part of a school; one was used for various commercial purposes but is now empty, and the last is a tyre fitting centre. Fortunately nearly all the exteriors of these buildings are largely unaltered from their chapel days and are thus easily recognisable for what they were - places of worship. Many of them have inscriptions on the façades, which is such a typical feature of nonconformist chapels. Only three chapels have been demolished, one for the coming of the railway in the late 1840s and two which were bought by the borough council who wished to clear the sites. So, despite the three losses and the eight building conversions, Shrewsbury still has a considerable architectural heritage of nonconformist chapels and meeting-houses.

GAZETTEER

Numbers in square brackets refer to the map

Unitarian Chapel (formerly Presbyterian), High Street

Two of the Shrewsbury clergy, the Revds. Francis Tallents and John Bryan who were ejected from their respective livings of St. Mary's and St. Chad's in 1662 by the Act of Uniformity, formed a Presbyterian congregation in the town. Meetings were held, depending on the degree of persecution at the time, in private houses in the town[46] until the Toleration Act of 1689 which allowed dissenting congregations to license their own meeting places. This led directly to the building of their first chapel in the High Street in 1691.[47] [1] This chapel (measuring 50′ by appx. 29′) was built in a garden behind two houses and reached by a narrow passage under one of the houses.[48] The garden, owned by the Presbyterian Richard Price, had been used as a timber store by Thomas Oliver, a turner, who occupied one of the houses fronting the street.[49] The chapel was enlarged in 1703 by incorporating part of the two houses into it[50] but was pulled down during anti-Presbyterian riots on the 5th to 8th July 1715. The chapel was quickly rebuilt, this time with an open forecourt to the street. The builder was local mason and bricklayer Samuel Dod who built the new chapel at a cost of £429.16.0½d. which was paid by the government.[51] The building was relicensed in January 1715/16.[52] In 1816 it was said to be 'a plain building of brick neatly fitted up'.[53] The chapel, described in 1837 as '70′ by 30′, and fitted up in the heavy style of the last century'[54] was substantially renovated in 1839/40. The Shrewsbury Street Act Trustees compulsorily purchased the chapel's vestry and side passage (i.e. Dunn's Shutt) for £180 in order to widen the passage from the High Street to Princess Street to ease congestion in the Square. In the event this widening was never undertaken. However, part of the High Street was widened at this time and the fronts of ten buildings on either side of the chapel were set farther back. The chapel lost between 5′ 10″ and 7′ 9″ of its forecourt[55] which, together with the loss of the vestry and the 'dangerous condition' of the building (by then 124 years old)[56], prompted the congregation to employ local architect and builder, John Carline (1792–1862), to undertake the work which cost appx. £557, including £80 for a new front.[57] The renovated chapel built of brick with a slate roof[58] and accommodating about two to three hundred people was described in 1851 as having an interior of 'a simple and primitive appearance, the fittings are of old oak'.[59] The chapel was improved and renovated in 1884/5 to plans by local architect A B Deakin at a cost of £600 and reopened in March 1885. The old front 'somewhat heavy and sombre looking', formerly recessed about ten feet from the street, was pulled down and a 'light and handsome front entirely from stone erected in its place' and in line with the street. By enclosing the old forecourt the vestry and schoolroom were considerably enlarged. The present façade dates from this alteration of 1885. It was said at the time that 'those who were acquainted with the church prior to its restoration will be willing to admit that in place of a somewhat gloomy structure they have a building better suited to their requirements in these modern times'.[60] The old box pews however were not removed until 1903.[61] This building is still in use as a Unitarian Chapel.

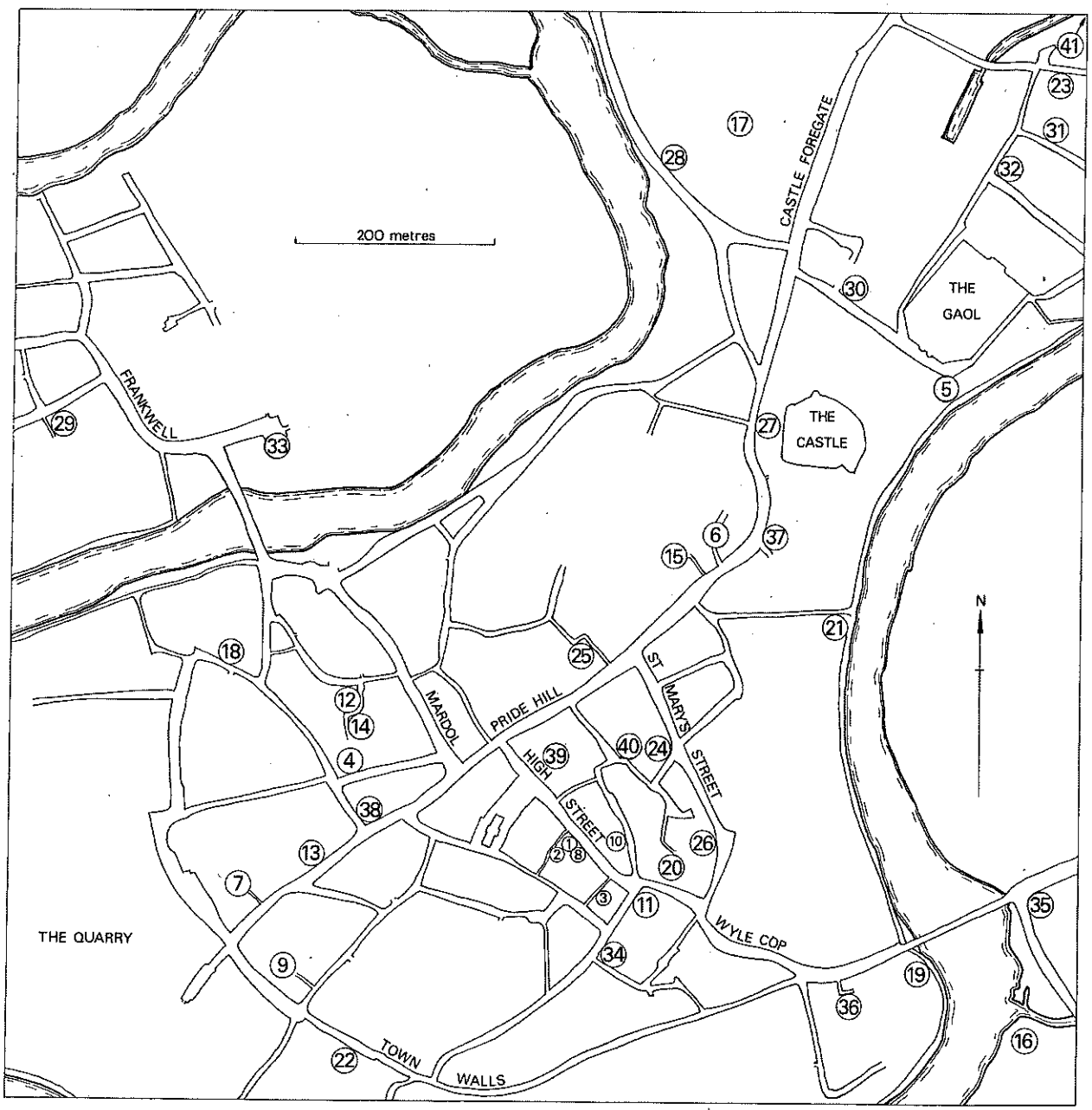


FIGURE 5 MAP OF SHREWSBURY TOWN CENTRE SHOWING THE LOCATION OF NON-CONFORMIST MEETING PLACES.

1 Presbyterian/Unitarian Chapel, High Street.
2 Baptist meeting house, Dunn's Shutt.
3 Baptist meeting house, Stillyard Shutt (now Golden Cross Shutt).
4 Claremont Street Baptist Chapel.
5 Enon Cottage, home of the Revd. John Palmer, Baptist minister.
6 Baptist meeting place, School Lane.
7 Friends meeting house, St. John's Hill.
8 Independent meeting place, King's Head Shutt.
9 Swan Hill Independent Chapel.
10 No. 1. Fish Street where Wesley first preached in Shrewsbury.
11 Shearmen's Hall, Milk Street, used by the Wesleyan Methodists 1761–1780.
12 Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, Hill's Lane, 1780 to 1805, then used as the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist chapel.
13 St. John's Hill Wesleyan Methodist Chapel.
14 Cole Hall Chapel, used by a number of nonconformist congregations.
15 Sandemanian Baptist Chapel, Castle Court, 1811–*c.* 1815. Used as the Primitive Methodist Chapel, 1826 onwards.
16 The Old Factory, Coleham, used by the Wesleyan Methodists, 1804–6, and the Mormons 1848.
17 Baptist Chapel, Castle Foregate.
18 Baptist meeting place, St. Austin Street.
19 Marine Terrace, where a small remnant of the 2nd Baptist cause met, *c.* 1875.
20 Foresters Hall, behind No. 1 Wyle Cop, used by a remnant of the 2nd Baptist cause.
21 Union Wharf, St. Mary's Water Lane, used by several nonconformist congregations.
22 The Ebenezer Methodist New Connexion Chapel, Town Walls.
23 Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, New Park Road.
24 Jones's Mansion, St. Mary's Street, where the Plymouth Brethren were meeting in 1841.
25 Jerusalem Welsh Independent Chapel, Wagon & Horses Passage (now Seventy Steps).
26 The Tabernacle, Welsh Independent Chapel, Dogpole.
27 Independent Chapel, Castle Gates.
28 Independent Chapel, Coton Hill.
29 Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, New Street, Frankwell.
30 The Butter Market, Howard Street, used by the Mormons, 1851.
31 The Linen Manufactury, Severn Street, used by the Wesleyan Methodist Reformers, 1850–1851.
32 Wesleyan Methodist Reformers Chapel, Beacalls Lane.
33 Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Chapel, Frankwell Quay.
34 St. David's Presbyterian Church of Wales, Belmont.
35 Abbey Foregate Congregational Chapel.
36 Baptist Chapel, Wyle Cop.
37 St. Nicholas's Presbyterian Chapel, Castle Gates.
38 Mermaid Inn, Shoplatch, where an unknown congregation met in 1832.
39 Fire Office Passage, 20 High Street, where the Plymouth Brethren were meeting 1880–1890.
40 2, St. Alkmond's Place. The Plymouth Brethren were meeting there 1891, 1936–40.
41 Gospel Hall, John Street, Castle Fields, where an Assembly of Open Brethren met from *c.* 1890 onwards.

PLATE 1 UNITARIAN (FORMERLY PRESBYTERIAN) CHAPEL, HIGH STREET, SHOWING THE 1885 FAÇADE. PHOTOGRAPH DOUGLAS E CAPEWELL.

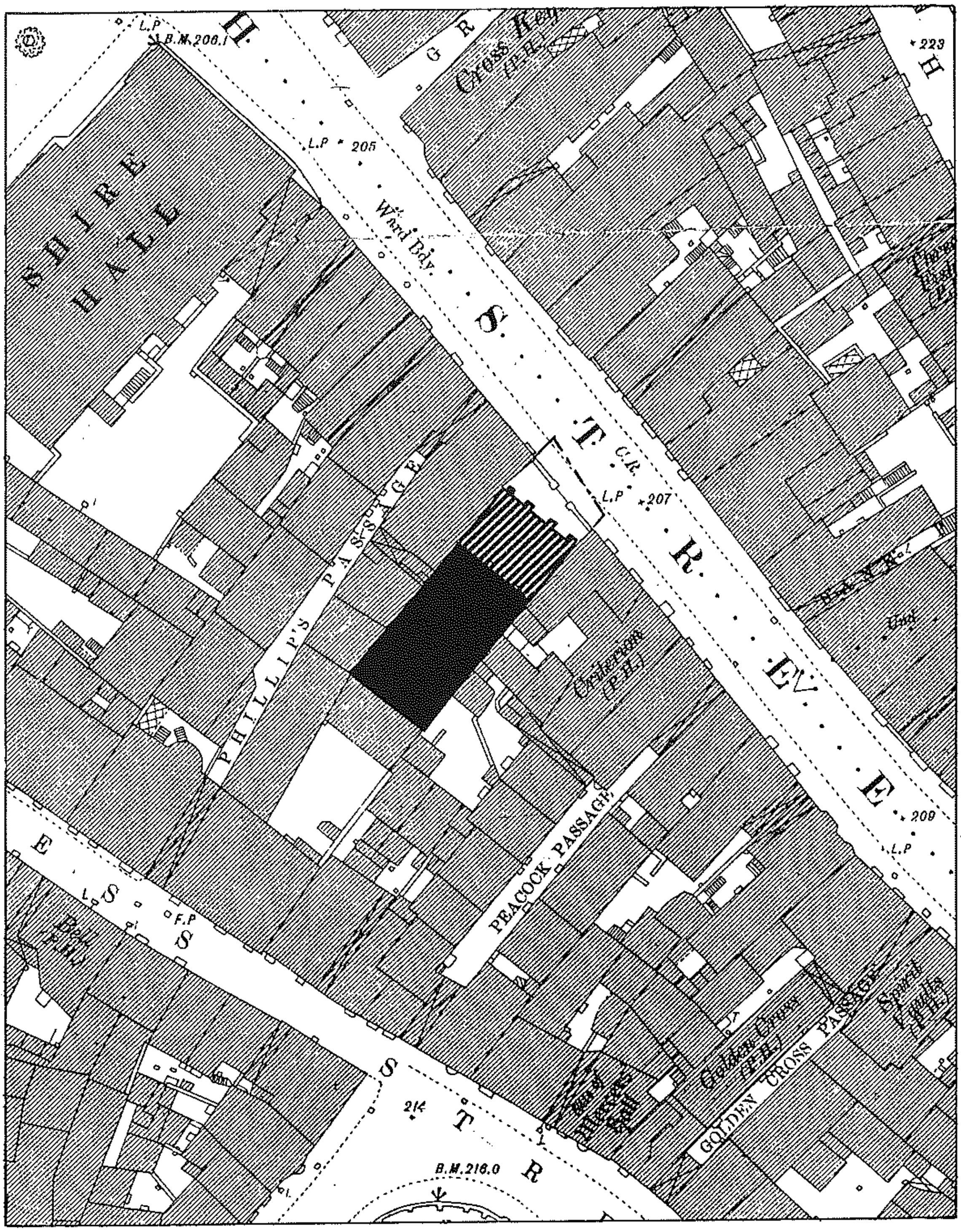


PLATE 2 MAP OF THE HIGH STREET, SHOWING PHILLIPS PASSAGE (FORMERLY DUNNS SHUTT), AND THE UNITARIAN CHAPEL WITH ITS 1840 FRONT AND FORECOURT (THE SOLID BLACK PORTION SHOWS THE SIZE OF THE 1691 BUILDING). THE BROKEN LINE OVER THE PAVEMENT IS THE PRE-1840 BUILDING LINE BEFORE THE WIDENING OF THE HIGH STREET. ORDNANCE SURVEY, SHROPSHIRE, SHEET XXXIV.10.10, 1ST. EDN, 1882, SCALE 1:500.

Baptist Chapel, Claremont Street

There were Baptists in the town in the Commonwealth and Restoration periods.[62] A group of 'Anabaptists' were presented to the town's quarter sessions in 1677[63] (although many of these are believed to have been Independents) and in 1685 an 'Anabaptist' secret conventicle held in the house of William Brown, combmaker, was raided by the borough authorities.[64] It is not known where they met in the early years of religious toleration[65] but in 1712 an empty warehouse belonging to Mr. Timothy Seymour in Dunn's Shutt [2] (adjacent to the Presbyterian Chapel) off the High Street was licensed as a Baptist meeting-house.[66] Subsequently a new meeting-house was built in Stillyard Shutt [3] (now Golden Cross Shutt) further along the High Street, and licensed on 8 October 1736.[67] This meeting-house was retained by the Baptists until it was sold in 1829,[68] although it was used after 1780 as a Sunday school and day school.[69] A new chapel, with its own burial ground was built in Claremont Street [4] in 1780 and opened on 22 September of that year.[70] In the early years of the nineteenth century the Baptists under their highly evangelical pastor, the Revd. John Palmer, also licensed two other premises. His own cottage 'Enon' [5] at the back of the Castle was licensed as a nonconformist meeting place in July 1803[71] and in July 1809 a building in School Lane [6] near the Castle Gates was licensed[72] for the purpose of a weekly lecture.[73] This site had been purchased with the intention of building a new chapel and school there but the plan was dropped due to potential opposition from the trustees, masters and boys of the Free School.[74] Due to the rapidly increasing membership the Claremont Street chapel was repaired and enlarged in 1810 to hold nearly double the congregation and schoolrooms to accommodate 150 children were constructed.[75] Despite the enlargement the chapel was still very full as the congregation at their Sunday evening service in 1815 was estimated at about six hundred people.[76] In the following year the chapel was visited by Thomas Howell who wrote 'with a well furnished interior it is, perhaps, from the awkward situation of the pulpit, and its extreme lowness, one of the most unpleasant chapels in the town, especially when crowded, which is often the case on particular occasions. It is a plain respectable brick building, and has a numerous congregation'.[77] Although membership was lost following the establishment of the second Baptist cause in

PLATE 3 CLAREMONT STREET BAPTIST CHAPEL, BUILT 1780. PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, SHROPSHIRE RECORDS AND RESEARCH CENTRE.

PLATE 4 CLAREMONT STREET BAPTIST CHAPEL, BUILT 1878. PHOTOGRAPH DOUGLAS E CAPEWELL.

1827, the overcrowding evidently did not improve for in 1841 a newspaper correspondent wrote, 'We should be glad to hear of their erecting a more commodious place of worship'.[78] The chapel was described in 1851 as 'a plain brick building'[79] and said to accommodate over 500 people.[80] The view of the chapel from the street was greatly restricted by a high brick wall, which was not taken down until the late 1860s or early 1870s.[81] In 1877 the old chapel was completely demolished and a new, spacious and more ornate chapel designed by Liverpool architect Richard Owen,[82] one of the country's leading chapel architects, was built.[83] It occupied both the old site and the adjoining one which had been acquired for £670 in 1829 after the former meeting house in Stillyard Shutt was sold.[84] The foundation stones of the new chapel which cost about £2,500, were laid in August 1877. The chapel, accommodating no more than the previous building but those more comfortably, measured 57' by 39' with a gallery at one end. It was built 'in the Italian style' of Ruabon pressed brick with Grinshill stone dressings. Behind the chapel were built two schoolrooms and a vestry.[85] The chapel which has an ornate façade but very plain sides is typical of many Victorian chapels in which the façade is the only side of the exterior to receive any ornamentation. This is the present Baptist chapel.

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) Meeting-House, St. John's Hill

The Quakers, who were much persecuted in Shrewsbury in the late seventeenth century[86] including raids by the borough authorities on their meetings in houses in Shoplatch and on the Stone bridge,[87] first purchased two messuages with their gardens on St. John's Hill [7] in 1670[88] and subsequently licensed their meeting-house with its own burial ground there on 15 January 1691/2.[89] A new meeting-house on the same site was erected in 1742 and licensed in January 1742/3.[90] The limited size of the meeting-house meant that when national meetings of the society were held in Shrewsbury in 1718, 1727 and 1748 the Market Hall was used as a temporary measure.[91] In 1793 it was said that the 'Quakers' Meeting House [is] a true resemblance of the neatness of those who frequent it'.[92] The Society in Shrewsbury had declined during the eighteenth century and when the Archdeacon of Salop made his visitation in 1799 he estimated the size of the congregation at 18, with

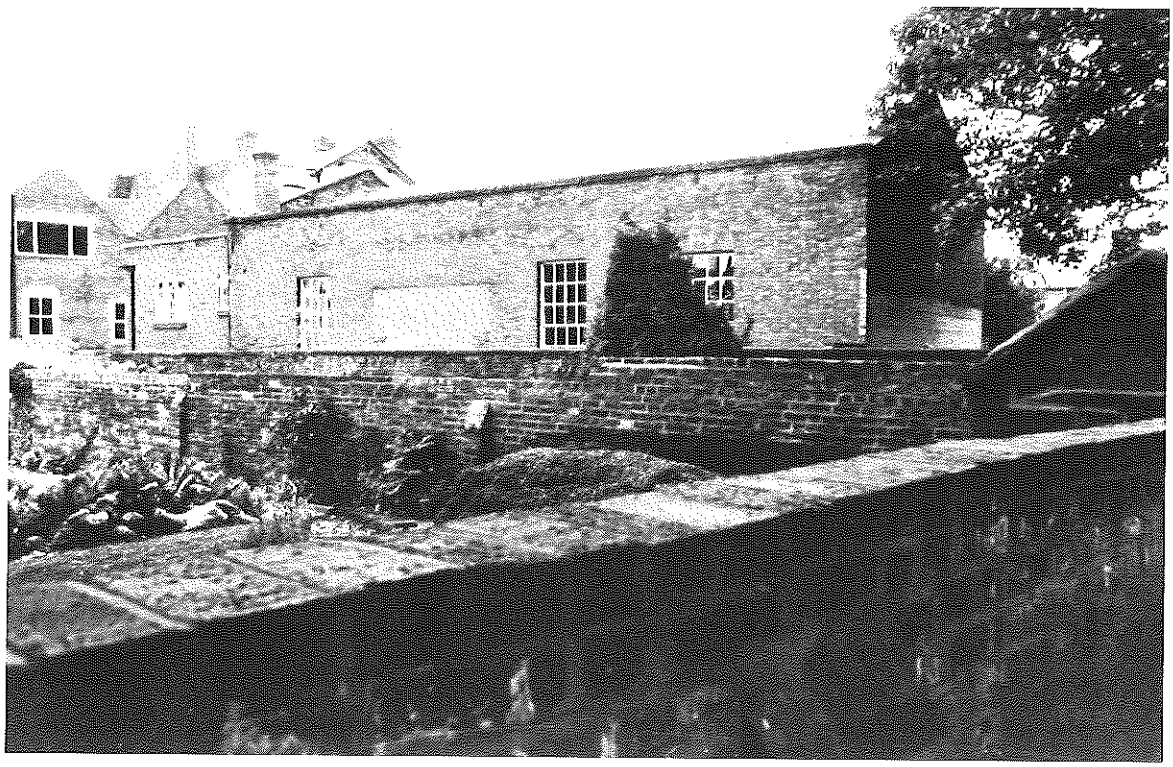


PLATE 5 FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE, BEHIND 24/25 ST. JOHN'S HILL. PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, SHROPSHIRE RECORDS AND RESEARCH CENTRE.

'numerous frequenting from a distance'.[93] The meeting-house was rebuilt in 1807–9 at the considerable cost of almost £1900 under the supervision of local architect and mason John Carline (1761–1835)[94] and the building re-licensed on 12 July 1814.[95] In 1815 it is said to have had about thirty worshippers.[96] In 1851 the meeting house was described as 'a plain brick structure fitted up with much simplicity and neatness'.[97] The building had pedimented gables to the east and west walls, and three windows in the other two walls. There was a porch on the south side and the interior was divided into two rooms.[98] The meeting-house had seating for 125 people but there were only two Friends at the meeting in 1851.[99] Due to a continued decline in membership the Society ceased to exist and in 1858 the meeting house was leased to a congregation of Baptists (see below p. 78).[100] After the Baptists left, the meeting house was leased to the Guardians of Atcham Union in 1874.[101] The building, sold by the Society sometime after 1903,[102] is situated at the rear of 24/25 St. John's Hill. It has been used for a variety of purposes in modern times including use as the Kingdom Hall of the Jehovah's Witnesses.[103] The Society in Shrewsbury was revived on 1 February 1931 with the first meeting for worship since its demise in the previous century.[104] Meetings were held in rented rooms in College Hill and Belmont until St. Catherine's Hall on Coton Hill was purchased and refurbished in 1986.[105] The society still meets there at the present day.

The Independent (Congregational) Chapel, Swan Hill

Throughout the period 1660–1686 known Independents were presented to the borough quarter sessions for non-attendance at church.[106] In 1672 James Quarrell, Independent minister, licensed the Kings Head Inn in the High Street [8] as a nonconformist meeting place.[107] In addition, meetings of the Independent congregation in 1672 were held at the house of Elizabeth Milward, and also in Frankwell, on the Wyle Cop and in the Mercers' Hall although none of these places were licensed under the King's Declaration of Indulgence.[108] In November 1691, following the Toleration Act of 1689, the Kings Head was licensed by David Jones, Independent Minister,[109] and this remained their meeting place until 1741. Then the congregation, depleted in numbers and without a minister, was attracted by the appointment of Job Orton, junior (son of Job Orton, senior, a member of the Independents) as the new minister of the Presbyterian Chapel, and so joined with the Presbyterians in the High Street.[110] This arrangement lasted for 25 years until 1766 when the joint Presbyterian/Independent congregation suffered a split due to the appointment of a new minister with Arian views. The orthodox majority of the

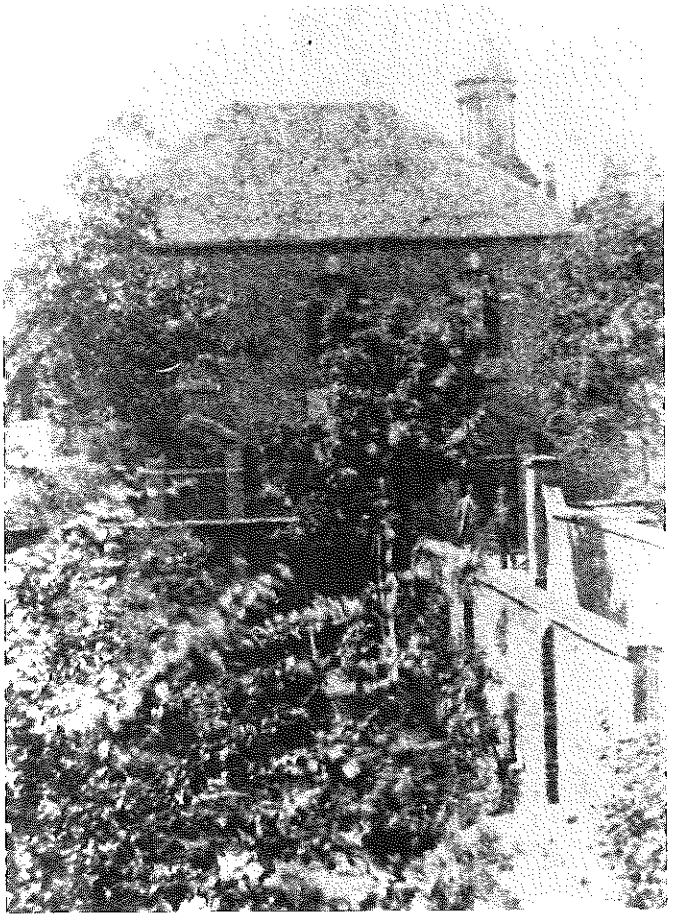


PLATE 6 SWAN HILL INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, BUILT 1767, PHOTOGRAPHED SHORTLY BEFORE ITS DEMOLITION. PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, SHROPSHIRE RECORDS AND RESEARCH CENTRE.

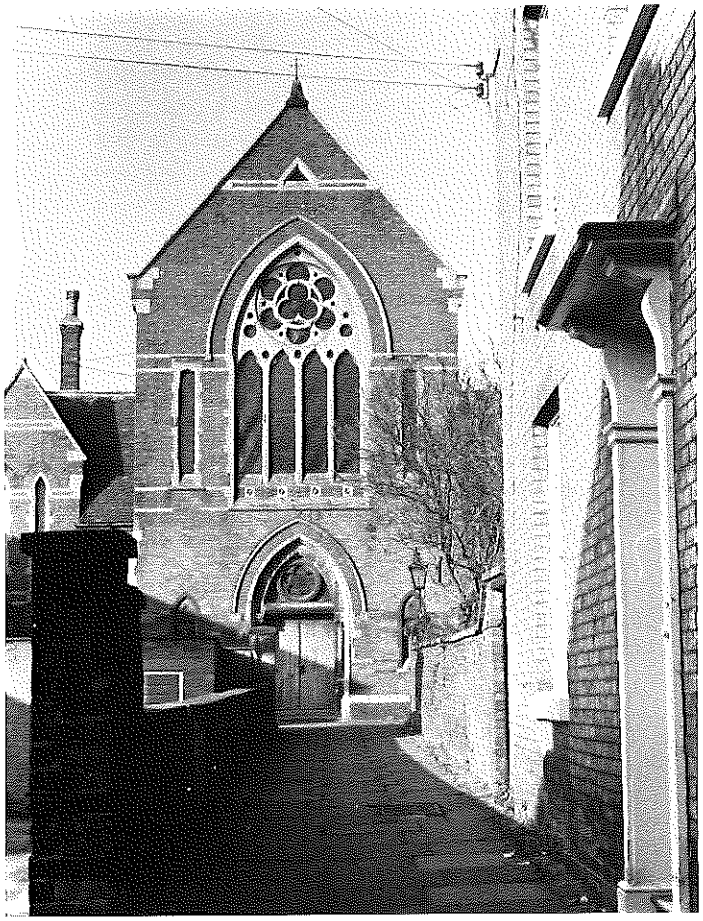


PLATE 7 SWAN HILL INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, BUILT 1868. PHOTOGRAPH DOUGLAS E CAPEWELL.

congregation seceded (and subsequently called themselves Independent) and after meeting temporarily in the ground-floor withering rooms of a malt-house which fronted the Bowling Green at Pig Hall (near Quarry Place) built a chapel with its own burial ground on Swan Hill [9] which was opened on 10 September 1767.[111] This rather square-shaped chapel was described in 1816 as 'a commodious brick erection . . . on the north side is a vestry'[112] and in 1842 as a 'plain dissenting meeting house . . . the building is a modern one and was erected about 70 years back'[113] and in 1851 as being 'a substantial brick edifice with a neatly furnished interior' with seating for about five hundred people.[114] The chapel had a front of three bays in two stages, and a pedimented doorway in each end bay.[115] By 1867 it was thought to be 'unsightly and inconvenient' and 'inadequate for the requirements of the congregation' and required 'modernising' so it was rebuilt during 1867/8. The architect chosen was George Bidlake of Wolverhampton who had designed Abbey Foregate Congregational Chapel a few years before. That chapel must have stimulated the Swan Hill congregation to look at their old chapel in a new light. The new chapel was built of brick with stone dressings in a geometric gothic style. The side walls of the original chapel were retained which meant that the rather square shape of the chapel had to be disguised by forming a nave with aisles. The nave aisles were supported on cast iron columns with decorated caps and shoulders, and the whole lit by clerestory windows. The size of the chapel was slightly increased and now measured 51′ long by 38′ wide but only accommodated the same number of people as the old chapel, half of them in the galleries situated on three sides of the chapel. The new chapel was opened on 22 April 1868,[116] and this is the building as it stands today, still in use as an Independent Chapel, the congregation having decided not to join the United Reformed Church in the 1970s. Following the sale of the Tabernacle in Dogpole, Swan Hill Chapel has also been used by the Welsh Independent congregation since 1972.

Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, Hills Lane, and subsequently of St. John's Hill

The earliest mention of a Methodist Society in Shrewsbury is in 1744.[117] In 1754 John Appleton, currier, one of Wesley's early local supporters, licensed his own house in Roushill as a nonconformist meeting place[118] and he subsequently licensed the Shearmen's Hall [11] in Milk Street in 1762[119] in time for John Wesley's second visit to Shrewsbury. Wesley's first visit had taken place in 1761 when he preached at a house in Fish Street.[120] [10] It was John Appleton who paid for the building of the first Methodist chapel in the town in Hills Lane [12] in 1781,[121] opened by John Wesley himself on 27 March.[122] Membership grew rapidly during the next twenty years, so that this chapel was only used until 1805 when an impressive new chapel was built near the bottom of St. John's Hill [13] and opened on 18 August 1805.[123] The new chapel, costing over £2,000[124] had a street frontage, whereas the old one in Hills Lane was only accessible through a passageway between the houses fronting the street. However, in 1816 Thomas Howell wrote 'Previous to the erection of a house in front of part of it, [the chapel] was a great ornament to the street. It is a neat and extensive building of an oblong form, and is calculated to accommodate a large congregation. Behind the chapel is a vestry in which are placed the stairs leading to the pulpit, which in consequence has rather a novel appearance to a stranger, no steps being visible in the chapel. The congregation is numerous and respectable'.[125] The chapel was enlarged in 1824/5 by taking down the old vestry at the back, in order to extend the chapel several feet backwards, and building the new vestry at the front.[126] In 1837 the chapel was said to be a 'handsome and spacious building' with 'windows elegantly decorated with stained glass displaying the royal arms, the four evangelists and the saviour bearing his cross'.[127] It was described in 1850 as being 'decorated in a handsome style'[128] and in 1851 as 'a commodious building . . . neatly fitted up and surrounded by galleries in which is a small organ', and held between seven hundred[129] and nine hundred people.[130] In 1878/9 this chapel was entirely taken down and rebuilt, and reopened on 31 August 1879. The Wesleyans chose an architect from outside Shropshire, G B Ford of Burslem (who also designed the Clowes Memorial Primitive Methodist Chapel in Burslem in 1878 to which it bears a considerable resemblance). He designed a chapel (with a school and vestries attached) with a bold façade, built of plain and moulded bricks with Grinshill stone dressings. The chapel measures 47′ long by 43′ wide, in front of which a vestibule gives access to the round-ended gallery, supported on cast iron pillars which extends to three sides of the chapel. There is a large carved central pulpit on the end opposite the entrance doors.[131] The building is still in use as a Methodist chapel today.

Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Chapel (subsequently Presbyterian Church of Wales), Hills Lane

This congregation began when three Welshmen held a prayer meeting in Shrewsbury on 7 January 1797. Shortly afterwards a letter was sent to Bala in north Wales requesting the services of a preacher for the numerous Welsh people living in the town. Services were held at the house of Mr. James Bates, and at a few other locations including the old Baptist meeting-house in Stillyard Shutt, with preachers being supplied spasmodically from Wales. The church was officially formed on 30 April 1801 when it had eight members which grew to 15 by 1803. When the Wesleyan Methodists moved to St. John's Hill in 1805 the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists rented the Hills Lane Chapel [12] for £10 per annum and subsequently bought it c. 1821.[132] In 1826 the chapel was described as 'ruinous and inadequate' so it was demolished and a new one designed by a Mr. Hughes of Liverpool[133] erected on its site. The chapel's opening services were held on 24 December 1826 and on Christmas day Manoah Kent (Baptist minister) and Thomas Weaver (Independent

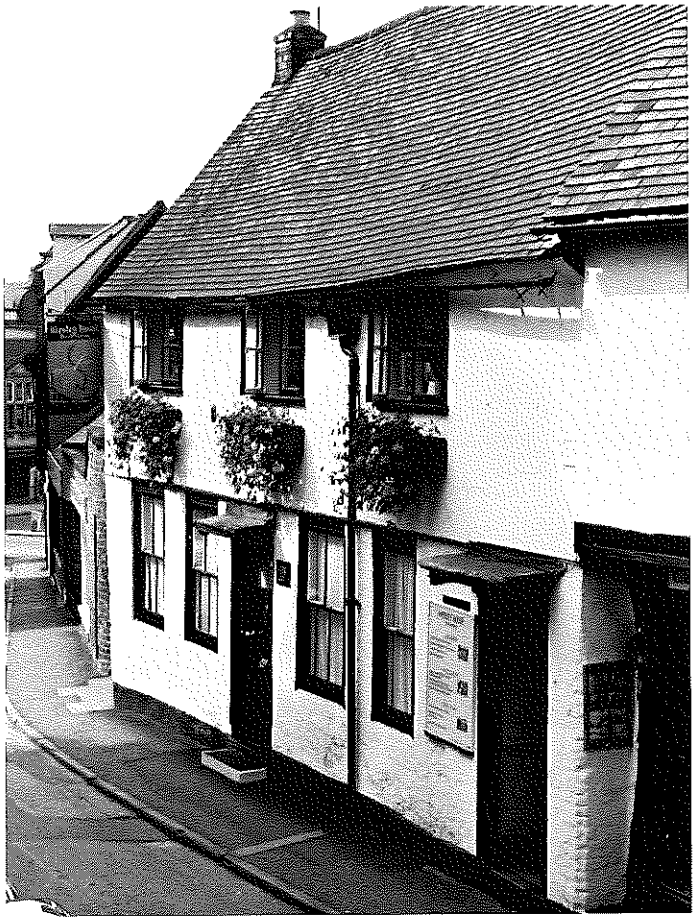


PLATE 8 NO. 1. FISH STREET, WHERE JOHN WESLEY FIRST PREACHED IN SHREWSBURY IN 1761. PHOTOGRAPH DOUGLAS E CAPEWELL.

minister) preached there in English.[134] Despite there being only a small number of members (thirty-five in 1821[135] rising to seventy-four by 1842[136]) the sum of £52 was collected at the opening services to help defray the expense of rebuilding the chapel.[137] The chapel, measuring 30' by 36',[138] was built of brick and 'very neatly fitted up' [139] with accommodation for about 250 to 300 people,[140] and with a Sunday school attached.[141] It was said that they had 'greatly improved the property and fitted up a very neat and complete chapel'.[142] The chapel was substantially rebuilt in 1870 at a cost of £882 and reopened for worship on 17 July of that year.[143] It is possible that the old houses fronting the street, behind which the chapel was situated, were pulled down at the same time. The chapel doors were closed on 22 November 1931 as the building was bought by the local council for £4,000 and subsequently demolished as part of the general clearance of the area.[144] The congregation, which for the previous five years had been under the pastoral care of the Revd. David Williams of St. David's Presbyterian Church of Wales, Belmont, [29] voted unanimously to transfer their membership to St. David's Church. As St. David's services were entirely in English it meant an end to services in the Welsh language for this congregation.[145]

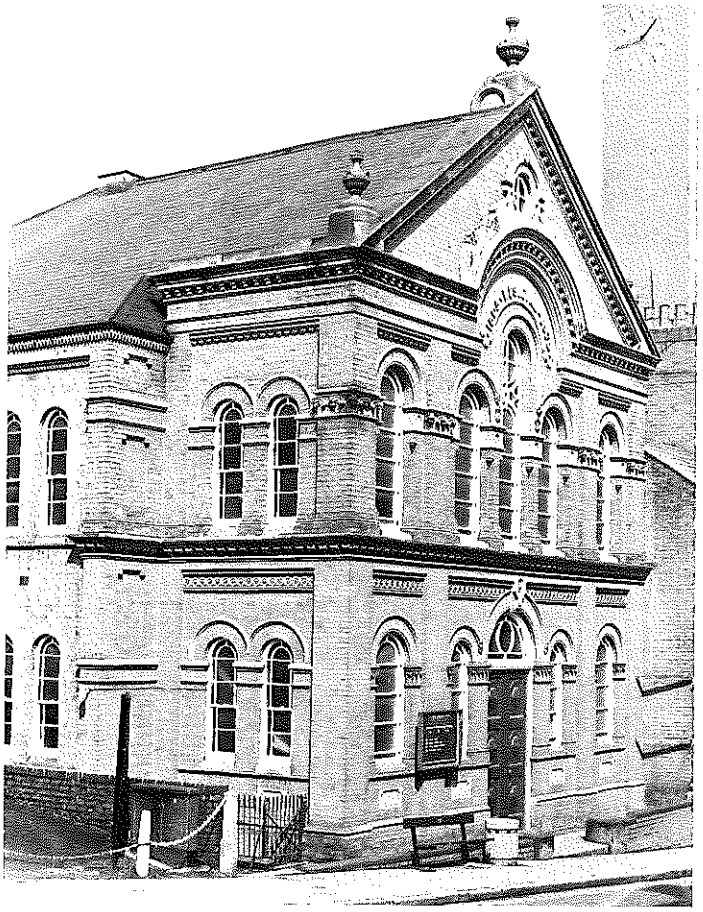


PLATE 9 ST. JOHN'S HILL WESLEYAN METHODIST CHAPEL, BUILT 1879. PHOTOGRAPH DOUGLAS E CAPEWELL.

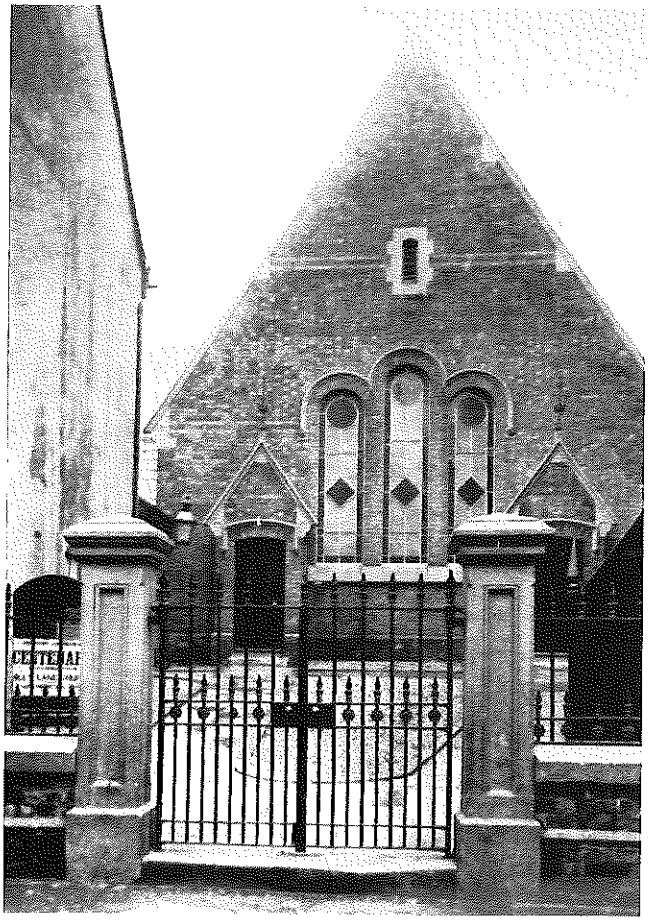


PLATE 10 WELSH CALVINISTIC METHODIST CHAPEL, HILLS LANE, BUILT 1870. PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, SHROPSHIRE RECORDS AND RESEARCH CENTRE.

PLATE 11 WELSH CALVINISTIC METHODIST CHAPEL, HILLS LANE, DURING DEMOLITION IN THE 1930S. PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, SHROPSHIRE RECORDS AND RESEARCH CENTRE.

Moravian Society, Cole Hall Chapel, Hills Lane

Very little is known about this society except that it was in existence by 1799 when the Archdeacon of Salop made his visitation and reported that there was a group of twenty Moravians meeting in St. Chad's parish.[146] It was still in existence in 1808 when they were meeting in Cole Hall Chapel, [14][147] but nothing definite is known of its further history.[148] However it is doubtful whether it was still extant in 1815 when a survey of existing nonconformist congregations in the town made no mention of it.[149]

The Sandemanian or Scotch Baptists, Cole Hall Chapel, Hills Lane, and of Castle Court, Castle Street

This small national sect wanted the restoration of primitive Christianity based on the New Testament and held an extreme view of justification by faith. Edward Pike, leader of a group of these Sandemanian Baptists, licensed a 'tenement or room in Hills Lane' [ie Cole Hall Chapel] [14] as a meeting place on 13 January 1800.[150] He was succeeded by John Edgerley in 1803[151] and then by the the Scottish minister John Hinmers in 1808,[152] under whom the society flourished. Cole Hall Chapel became 'too small and inconvenient' so they built their own chapel in Castle Court, Castle Street [15] (the chapel was built on the top of two vaults which had been used as part of the House of Correction[153]) which was licensed at Easter 1811.[154] However a dispute between the minister and some of the congregation led to a split. John Hinmers left to minister elsewhere[155] and a 'respectable portion' of the congregation returned to Cole Hall Chapel where they were meeting by 1815.[156] The chapel in Castle Court became a billiard hall until it was bought by the Primitive Methodists in 1826.[157] The Sandemanians were still meeting in Cole Hall Chapel in 1825,[158] but were described in 1837 as 'nearly extinct'.[159] It was said in 1840 that 'At the present day and for several years passed the upper part of this building [ie Cole Hall Chapel] has been appropriated to sectarian meetings and the lower portion of it used as a warehouse'.[160] The congregation did not appear in the 1851 Religious Census.[161] It was said of Cole Hall Chapel in 1920 that evidence of the religious use of the building still remained then.[162] Nationally the sect was extinct by c. 1870.[163]

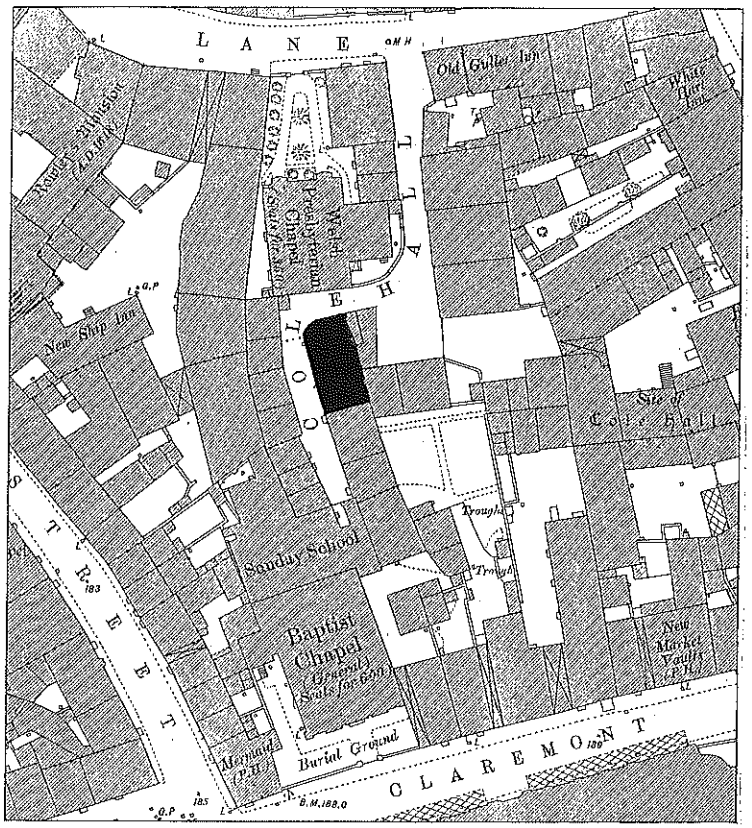
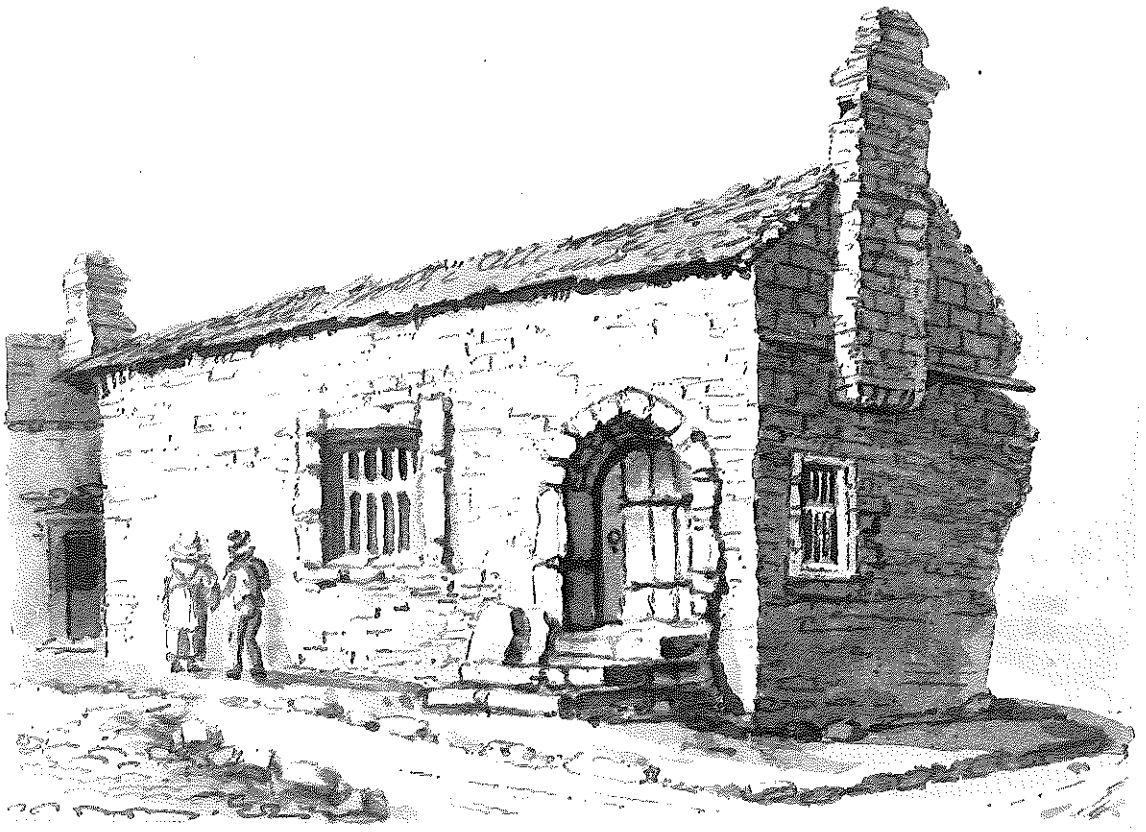


PLATE 12 MAP OF THE AREA BETWEEN CLAREMONT STREET & HILLS LANE, SHOWING THE BAPTIST CHAPEL, COLE HALL CHAPEL (IN SOLID BLACK) AND THE WELSH CALVINISTIC METHODIST CHAPEL. ORDNANCE SURVEY, SHROPSHIRE, SHEET XXXIV.10.10, 1ST EDN 1882, SCALE 1:500.



Remains of Cole Hall. Shrewsbury. N. East.

PLATE 13 COLE HALL CHAPEL, DEPICTED IN THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY. REPRODUCED BY KIND PERMISSION OF THE BODLEIAN LIBRARY, OXFORD, MS. TOP. SALOP. C. 2, f. 20r.

PLATE 14 COLE HALL CHAPEL, MUCH MUTILATED, PROBABLY PHOTOGRAPHED EARLY IN THIS CENTURY. PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, SHROPSHIRE RECORDS AND RESEARCH CENTRE.

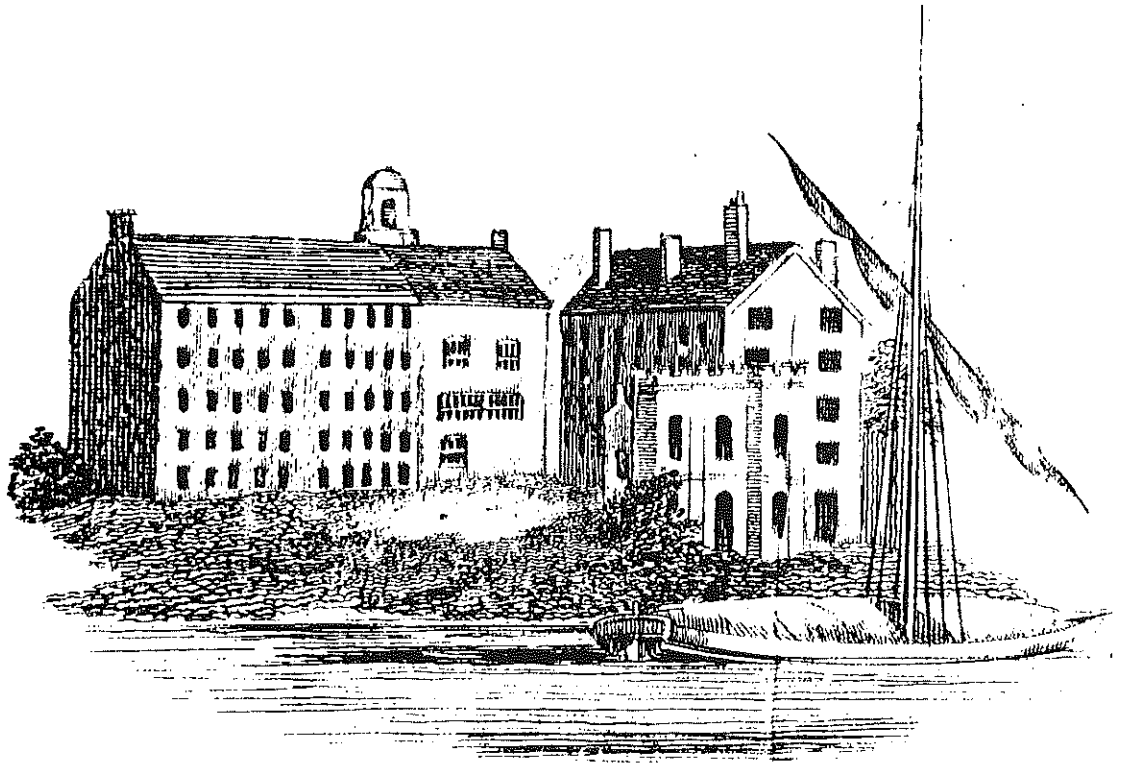


PLATE 15 THE OLD FACTORY, CARLINE FIELDS, COLEHAM. PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, SHROPSHIRE RECORDS AND RESEARCH CENTRE.

Methodist Society, The Old Factory, (Carline Fields), Coleham

In February 1804 a Methodist society was formed, which held meetings in a large room in the Old Factory in Coleham. [16] Meetings were still being held there in July 1806, but the congregation's subsequent history is not known.[164]

Primitive Methodist Chapel, Castle Court, Castle Street

A congregation of Primitive Methodists (or 'ranters' as they were then called) was first formed in Shrewsbury in the middle of 1822 as a result of preaching in the streets and suburbs by missionaries from elsewhere in Shropshire. A malt-house in Barker Street was soon hired which they continued to occupy until the former Sandemanian Baptist Chapel in Castle Court, [15] with accommodation for about three hundred people, was purchased for £850 and opened for worship on 4 June 1826.[165] As well as holding services in their chapel they continued their outdoor meetings on the site of Dominican Friars.[166] The chapel was entirely rebuilt in 1863 on its old site and reopened on 27 September of that year. The new chapel which had a schoolroom (said to accommodate 270 scholars), two vestries and other conveniences built underneath the chapel, was situated at first floor level and reached by a flight of external steps. The chapel, well-pewed and with a gallery at the back and a neat rostrum at the front, was lit by eight round-headed windows. The chapel was built of polychrome brick, with stone dressings, and by using some of the old materials the cost of rebuilding was kept down to £470.[167] Although situated in the centre of town, the chapel was set back off the street down an alleyway behind other premises which fronted the street. The chapel continued in use until c. 1957 when it was sold for £2,000 and the congregation joined the Methodist Church on St. John's Hill.[168] The building is now used for commercial purposes.

PLATE 16 PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHAPEL, CASTLE COURT, BUILT 1863. PHOTOGRAPH DOUGLAS E CAPEWELL.

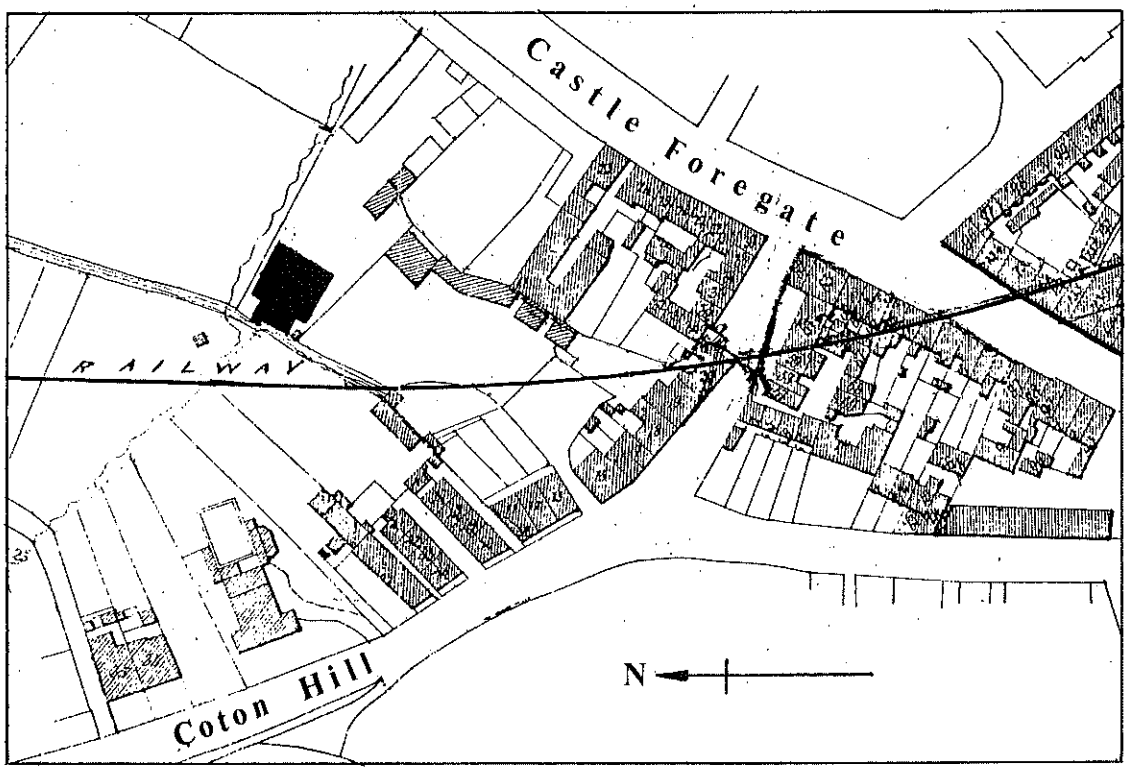


PLATE 17 MAP OF THE AREA BETWEEN CASTLE FOREGATE AND COTON HILL SHOWING THE SITE OF THE BAPTIST CHAPEL (IN SOLID BLACK), BUILT 1830. BASED ON DEPOSITED PLAN 337, DATED 1845, IN SHROPSHIRE RECORDS AND RESEARCH CENTRE.

Baptist Chapel, Castle Foregate

In July and August 1827 a split began to emerge between the Claremont Street Baptists and their new minister the Revd. Manoah Kent, John Palmer's successor. A group wanting the Revd. Mr. Hassall of Haverfordwest as their minister wished to establish a second Baptist cause in the town in the Castle Foregate area. They said that the Claremont Street Chapel would not accommodate sufficient people and that the vast population of the Castle Foregate area was 'ill-served'.[169] The breakaway group met in that area and in March 1829 advertised for a builder to erect their new chapel to designs which could be seen at the premises of Mr S Bickerton in Castle Street.[170] In the following June building was commenced.[171] The chapel was situated on the north-west side of Castle Foregate [17] some distance from the street and backed directly onto a stream. The external measurements were approximately 53′ long by 45′ wide[172] and it had seating for about 180 people.[173] On Good Friday, 9 April 1830, the new chapel was opened.[174] Two sermons were preached on the occasion, one by the Revd. Manoah Kent there having been a reconciliation between the two factions two days beforehand.[175] Unfortunately for the new Baptist congregation the chapel was in the way of the proposed railway line from Shrewsbury to the north, so in the late 1840s it was taken down. The congregation then met temporarily in a large room in a building in St. Austin Street, [18] where they had a congregation of sixty-seven and eighty-one at their two services on census Sunday in March 1851.[176] In 1858 they leased the former Friends Meeting House on St. John's Hill,[177] and on the termination of the lease they were required to fill up the baptistry and restore the boarded floor.[178] They continued meeting on St. John's Hill until they rejoined the Claremont Street Baptists in 1872.[179] The remnants of this congregation who did not wish to join with Claremont Street rejected any denominational label and called themselves only 'Christian'. They are said to have registered a meeting room in Marine Terrace, Wyle Cop [19] in 1875,[180] and subsequently moved to Foresters Hall, [20] Wyle Cop.[181] This congregation's further history is not known.

Ebenezer Chapel (Methodist New Connexion), Town Walls

The Methodist New Connexion cause started in Shrewsbury in 1833, when, at the instigation of the Revd. Samuel Hulme who had been invited to open a cause here, the Revd. P T Gilton of Dawley Green Methodist New Connexion circuit came and held services in a house on Union Wharf [21] at the bottom of St. Mary's Water Lane. This meeting place soon became too small for the growing congregation, so Cole Hall Chapel in Hills Lane was rented for a while.[182] Within a year a chapel, designed by Fallows and Hart of Birmingham (as was the Butter Market in Howard Street, built in the following year), was built on Town Walls [22] and opened for worship on 13 June 1834.[183] It was described as 'a handsome building, having two entrances, with a Doric portico to each. The interior has a light and pleasing appearance; it is without galleries; in the centre of the chapel are two rows of pews, with a row on each of the sides, which gradually ascend from the floor; the blank walls display arches and pilasters, supporting a frieze and cornice'. The chapel cost £1500[184] to erect and seated 450 people.[185] There were schoolrooms, a vestry and a door-keeper's house underneath the chapel.[186] The chapel was used by the Methodists until 1938, when it was sold to the Christian Science Society[187] and in the early 1980s was acquired by the Shrewsbury High School for Girls, who also occupy the premises adjoining, and the interior totally gutted. Fortunately the street façade – the most charming of all the Shrewsbury chapels still existing – has been retained unaltered except for the removal of the stained glass from the windows.

PLATE 18 EBENEZER METHODIST NEW CONNEXION CHAPEL, TOWN WALLS, BUILT 1834. PHOTOGRAPH DOUGLAS E.CAPEWELL.

Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, New Park Road, Castle Fields

This chapel [23] was first erected in 1837[188] on a site measuring 200 square yards.[189] It was a small chapel with a projecting porch.[190] In 1851 it is said to have had seating for 218 people but there were only twenty-five and forty-six attendants (excluding Sunday scholars) at the two services held on census Sunday in March 1851.[191] The chapel was rebuilt in 1893[192] as a single storey building of brick with stone dressings. It had an ornate façade but very plain sides and due to the close proximity of the adjoining houses the chapel was lit by clerestorey windows. In 1927 a schoolroom and vestry were added to the chapel.[193] There was a continuous decline in the size of the congregation in this century and by 1972 only seven or eight old people were attending services, which were being held in the schoolroom at the rear of the chapel as the building had become increasingly dilapidated. In view of this situation the Methodist Church decided to close the chapel and sell the building. On 1 August 1973 it was sold to Shrewsbury Borough Council for £1500 and subsequently demolished.[194] The site is now covered by modern housing.

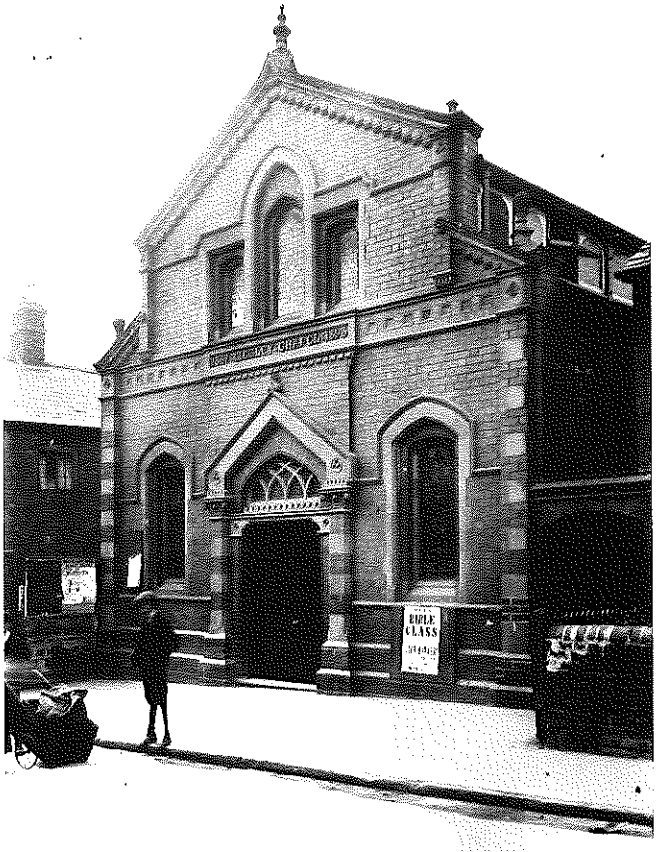


PLATE 19 WESLEYAN METHODIST CHAPEL, NEW PARK ROAD, BUILT 1893. PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, SHROPSHIRE RECORDS AND RESEARCH CENTRE.

Churches of Christ (Campbellites, also known in America as the Disciples of Christ), Cole Hall Chapel, Hills Lane

A small congregation calling itself the 'New Testament Church' was established in Shrewsbury by late 1837 by two brothers, Thomas and William Butler.[195] They held very similar beliefs to the Sandemanian Baptists in wanting a return to primitive Christianity based on the New Testament but the Butlers said that they had not had any connection with Scotch, Calvinistic, Arminian or any other Baptist cause.[196] They subsequently joined with other similar congregations to form the Association of Churches of Christ which held its first national general meeting in 1842. The Shrewsbury congregation had only a few members in its early years and met 'great opposition'.[197] In 1841 William Butler wrote 'This is a large town & the people are too tasty to listen unto such clumsy home spun fellows as us'.[198] The congregation was meeting in a private house in 1840,[199] and in 1842 declined a potential opportunity to borrow the Particular Baptists' chapel as they preferred the place where they regularly met.[200] A letter of February 1846 refers to the congregation having had notice to quit their meeting

house (which may have been Cole Hall Chapel [14])[201] and taking another one (whose location is unknown) which they estimated would hold two hundred people.[202] One of the movement's American leaders, Alexander Campbell, a Scottish emigré and former Scotch Baptist, visited the town from America in June 1847 during a British tour,[203] and Thomas Butler represented Shrewsbury at a conference of the Association of Churches of Christ held in Chester in October of the same year.[204] In 1850 they reported that 'six months ago' they took a small chapel three miles from the town,[205] but it has not been possible to trace this building, for no entry was found for this or a town centre meeting place in the 1851 Religious Census. It is not known whether this out-of-town chapel remained their meeting place until *c.* 1868 when the will, dated March of that year, of one of the members Edward Hulme refers to property in Chester Street upon which a chapel was about to be erected.[206] The number of disciples in Shrewsbury had gradually increased until a membership of about thirty had been built up by the late 1860s,[207] but the congregation suddenly disintegrated in the early 1870s.[208] It is likely that the death in 1871 of Thomas Butler, the founder and an elder of the church for more than 30 years, precipitated its demise.[209]

Assembly of Plymouth Brethren, Jones's Mansion, St.Mary's Street, and subsequently of other places

In the ten years following the founding of the sect in Dublin in 1827/8 assemblies of Brethren were formed in many of the principal towns in England. The Brethren were established in Shrewsbury by late 1838 for it is known that several members of Swan Hill Independent Chapel joined the Brethren in October and November of that year.[210] Assemblies were also established in the nearby county towns of Hereford and Stafford at this time.[211] It is not known where the sect held its early meetings but by 1840 they were meeting in St. Mary's Street[212] [24] and in November 1841 a small room in Jones's Mansion, St. Mary's Street, was licensed by them.[213] They were still meeting in St. Mary's Street in 1851 when they had a congregation of between sixteen and eighteen people at their Sunday services.[214] Between 1880 and 1890 an Assembly of Plymouth Brethren was meeting in a building in Fire Office Passage [39] at the side of No. 20 the High Street.[215] This passage and its buildings were demolished when the site was redeveloped for the construction of the Alliance Insurance Company's offices towards the end of the century. Not long after June 1890 this meeting is said to have closed and the members went into fellowship with the Brethren meeting in the Gospel Hall, John Street, Castlefields (q.v.).[216] However an Assembly of Brethren is recorded as meeting in St. Alkmond's Place in 1891,[217] and in or behind No. 2. St. Alkmond's Place [40] between 1936 and 1940.[218] An Assembly of Exclusive Brethren who are 'in' with the 'London Party' now (1995) meet in an Assembly Room, Barracks Lane, on the Mount, and an Assembly of Exclusive Brethren who are 'out' from the 'London Party' built a new meeting house in Betton Street *c.* 1980, having formerly met in a building next to the Greyfriars Bridge, Coleham.[219]

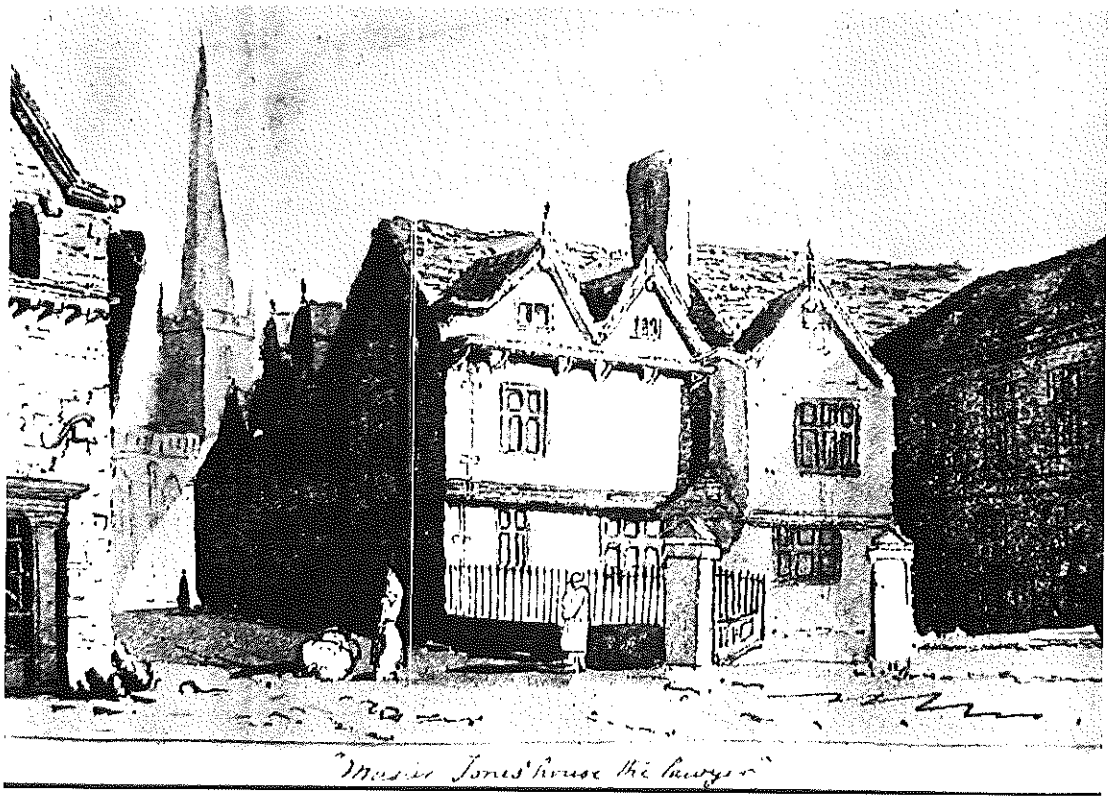


PLATE 20 JONES'S MANSION, ST. MARY'S STREET, WHERE THE PLYMOUTH BRETHREN WERE MEETING 1840/1–1851. PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, SHROPSHIRE RECORDS AND RESEARCH CENTRE.

Jerusalem Welsh Independent Chapel, Pride Hill, and afterwards the Tabernacle, Dogpole

This Welsh congregation began on 24 July 1842 when a meeting was held in a room in Howard Street (possibly in the Butter Market). [30] Meetings continued to be held there[220] until 1845 when a site in Wagon and Horses Passage (now Seventy Steps), Pride Hill, was obtained and a small brick chapel, called the Jerusalem Chapel, was built at a cost of £800 and opened on Christmas Day 1845.[221] It accommodated about 150 people.[222] This was replaced in 1862 by a new chapel called the Tabernacle, which was erected in Dogpole [26] and opened on 27 April of that year. 'A memorial of 1662' was inscribed on the façade, a reference to the Act of Uniformity and the ejection of the puritan clergy two hundred years earlier. This was a far more imposing building with a stone façade, and was described at the time as 'an ornament to the locality in which it is situated'.[223] The chapel, which cost nearly £2,000 to build[224] accommodated about four hundred people. At the back there was a vestry, schoolroom and a house for the chapelkeeper. A large arch which could be opened connected the schoolroom to the chapel, increasing the chapel's capacity if required.[225] The architect was the Revd. Thomas Thomas of Swansea,[226] a minister of religion and noted chapel architect of his day.[227] The builder was Treasure.[228] The chapel debt was finally extinguished in 1880 and in 1888 the building was thoroughly renovated.[229] During the periods 1927–32, 1934–50 the congregation was without a permanent minister, but the 1950s saw a revival with membership trebling to 126.[230] Decline followed however and the Tabernacle was sold in the early 1970s and is now used as offices. Since 1972 the congregation has used the Swan Hill Independent Chapel for its services.[231] The former Jerusalem Chapel was used as a warehouse during the rest of the nineteenth century and was subsequently demolished.

PLATE 21 JERUSALEM WELSH INDEPENDENT CHAPEL (JUST TO THE LEFT OF THE BANNER), WAGON & HORSES PASSAGE, PRIDE HILL, BUILT 1845. PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, SHROPSHIRE RECORDS AND RESEARCH CENTRE.

PLATE 22 THE TABERNACLE WELSH INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, DOGPOLE, BUILT 1862. PHOTOGRAPH DOUGLAS E CAPEWELL.

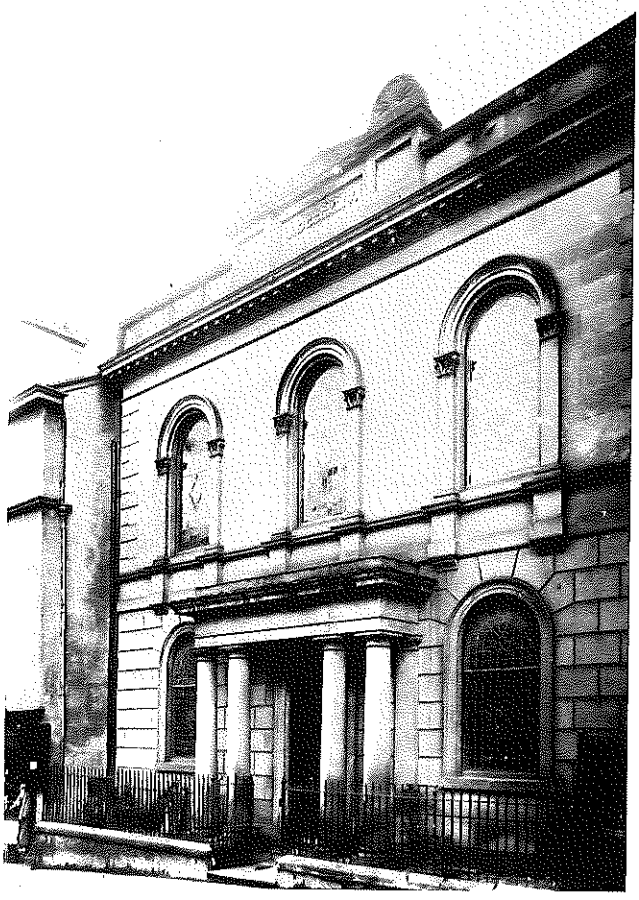


PLATE 23 INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, CASTLE GATES, ERECTED 1844/5. PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, SHROPSHIRE RECORDS AND RESEARCH CENTRE.

Independent Chapel, Castle Gates, subsequently on Coton Hill

On 10 September 1843 fifty-six members of Swan Hill Independent Chapel resigned their membership because of a dispute over the appointment of a co-pastor and their desire for a second Independent cause in the town. They resolved to build a chapel 'as far as possible from Swan Hill'.[232] Whilst waiting for their chapel to be built they met in the Ebenezer Chapel on Town Walls and then rented the Baptist Chapel in Castle Foregate.[233] After they had raised half the expected cost the building began. They were 'desirous to build a place of worship in an eligible situation, which would unite in it simplicity without meanness and commodiousness without extravagance'. On 25 June 1844 the foundation stone was laid and the chapel in Castle Gates, [27] designed by D R Hill of Birmingham, officially opened on 4 March 1845.[234] Although the chapel was larger than Swan Hill, with 572 sittings, it was full within a few weeks with every pew let, and a gallery was soon added.[235] In 1851 the chapel (50′ by 41′)[236] was described as 'a handsome building of free stone . . . the most imposing structure in connection with the nonconformists in the town of Shrewsbury. The interior has a very chaste and beautiful appearance'. Although the chapel cost £3,000[237] the debt was extinguished by 1858.[238] There was a Sunday school over the chapel entered from the Dana at the back but the infants were taken to the Butter Market in

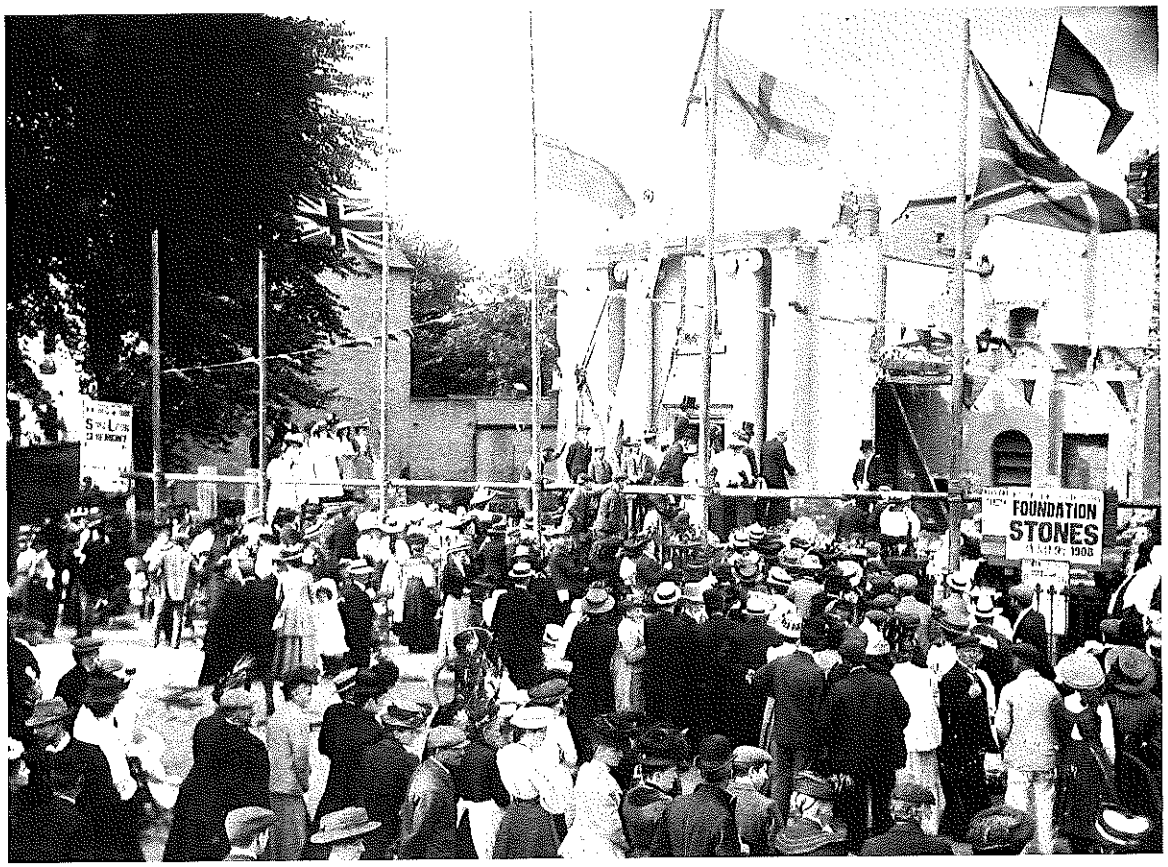


PLATE 24 INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, COTON HILL, FOUNDATION STONE LAYING 1908. PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, SHROPSHIRE RECORDS AND RESEARCH CENTRE.

Howard Street.[239] As the building was on a very restricted site (being situated between the main road at the front and the Dana at the rear, with buildings directly adjoining both sides) it was eventually decided to build a new chapel on a more spacious site on Coton Hill [28] in 1908–9. It was described at the laying of the foundation stone on 10 July 1908 as going to be 'brighter and more airy'. The building and site cost £3,500 of which only £500 had to be found after the sale of the old chapel. The architect of the new chapel was A B Deakin of Shrewsbury.[240] It was built of Ruabon brick with Grinshill stone dressings and the columns on the tower came from the portico of the old chapel on Castle Gates.[241] By the 1930s the size of the congregation had fallen considerably so it was decided to close the chapel early in 1942. The building was then let to the Ministry of Supply and after the War the chapel was let to various commercial organisations and eventually sold in 1975.[242] It has been occupied by the glass merchants Matthews and Peart in recent years. The old chapel on Castle Gates was subsequently used for commercial purposes (including at one time a picture palace) and its façade was substantially rebuilt in 1933.[243] It is now used as a shop.

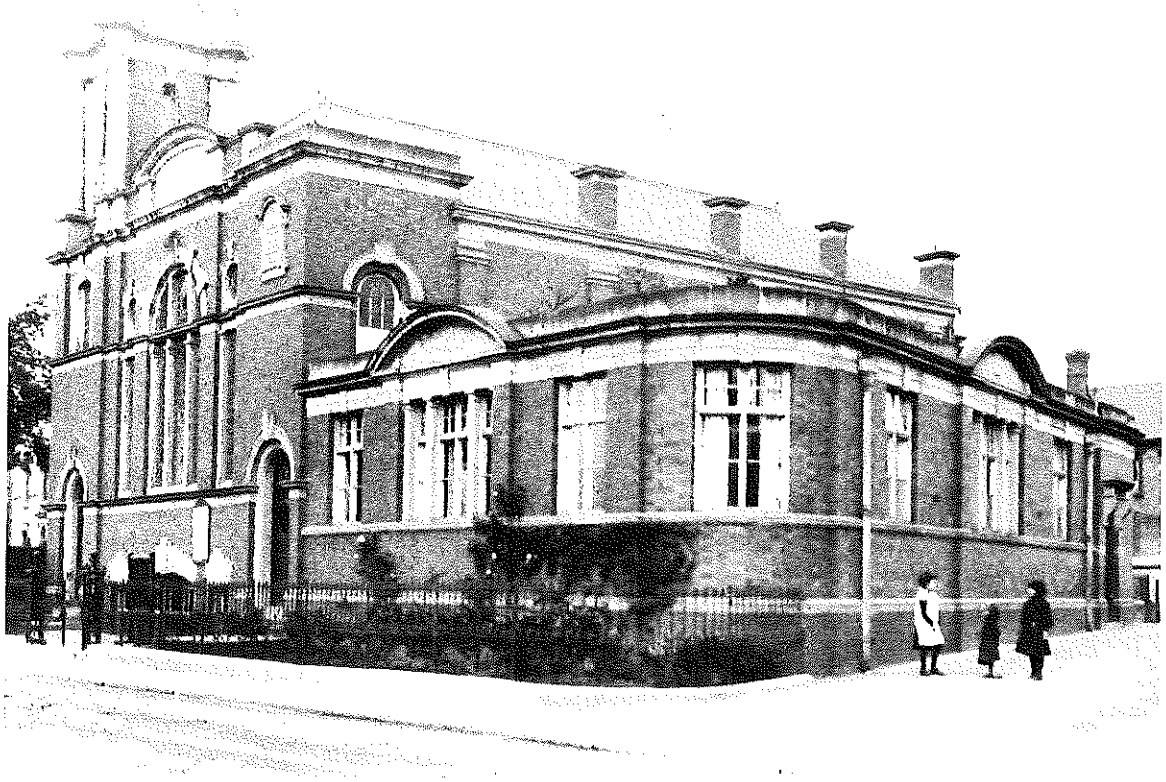


PLATE 25 INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, COTON HILL, ERECTED 1908/9. PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, SHROPSHIRE RECORDS AND RESEARCH CENTRE.

Bethesda Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, New Street, Frankwell

This small congregation began in 1846 when a room in New Street accommodating about 140 people[244] was rented for £12 a year by Thomas Brocas.[245] In 1851 there were average congregations of forty-five and twenty (excluding Sunday scholars) at their two Sunday services,[246] although the room was used principally as a Sunday school. After Thomas Brocas died in 1862 his widow continued paying the rent of the room, but when she died the local Wesleyan Methodists decided to build a proper chapel of their own. Several generous benefactors gave money towards the cost of erection, the rest being raised by local effort. The foundation stone of the chapel in New Street [29] was laid on 7 June 1870.[247] It is a small chapel accommodating about 120 people, built of brick but now covered by rendering. The chapel which has a small entrance porch is lit by three gothic windows on each side. An extension has been built at the rear of the chapel in more recent times. The building is still in use as a Methodist chapel today.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons), the Old Factory, Coleham; the Butter Market, Howard Street; Union Wharf and other places

The first known mention of Mormons in the town is in 1847 when local convert Thomas Davies was baptised in Shrewsbury.[248] In 1848 the Mormons hired a room in the Old Factory, Coleham [16] for their meetings.[249] Eddowes's Salopian Journal, noted for its Tory and High Church views and seldom deigning to mention matters of religious dissent, was moved to comment on 8 May 1848 that 'a party of these absurd fanatics have established themselves in this town . . . for the purpose of 'holding forth' to their deluded followers. Their spokesman gives utterance to the most outrageous and in many instances blasphemous language, and that hearers should be found to listen to such harangues is one of the wonders of the age'.[250] By March 1851 the congregation had moved their meetings to the Butter Market [30] in Howard Street and had attendances of 24, 38 and 50 at their three services on census Sunday.[251] The Mormons aroused considerable local hostility

PLATE 26 BETHESDA WESLEYAN METHODIST CHAPEL, NEW STREET, FRANKWELL, ERECTED 1870. PHOTOGRAPH DOUGLAS E CAPEWELL.

and meetings had to be held in several different locations. In late 1851 meetings were being held at Union Wharf [21] and in 1854 also at the house of Henry Humphreys in Castle Fields.[252] By 1861 they were meeting in New Park Road, Castle Fields.[253] During the 1840s and 1850s the Mormons were not only seeking to establish congregations here but were actively engaged in recruiting emigrants to the United States of America. The history of the Mormons in the town during the rest of the century is not known.

Wesleyan Methodist Room, Coleham (exact location unknown)

An afternoon service was held there from mid 1850 onwards, with an average attendance of twelve in the 1850/1 period.[254] The congregation was still meeting here in August 1854[255] but had ceased by July 1856.[256]

Wesleyan Methodist Reformers Chapel (later called the United Methodist Free Church), Beacalls Lane, Castle Fields

As a result of conflict and schism within the national Wesleyan Methodist movement a separate connexion was formed calling themselves the Wesleyan Methodist Reformers. The object of the Reformers was the restoration of conference Methodism.[257] A congregation of Reformers was established in Shrewsbury who commenced worship on 1 October 1850 in an upper room in the linen manufactory in Severn Street, Castle Fields. [31] In 1851 they had attendances of fifty-three and one hundred (excluding Sunday scholars) at their two services on census Sunday.[258] A site in Beacalls Lane [32] was subsequently purchased from the Shrewsbury Freehold Land and Building Society and in April 1853 the foundation stone of the chapel was laid by the Revd. James Everett, one of the first three ministers expelled by the Wesleyan Conference. The chapel, measuring 49′ by 31′, was built of polychrome brick and lit by round-headed windows. A schoolroom and two vestries were built at semi-basement level underneath the chapel, which was approached by raised steps at the front, leading to the central

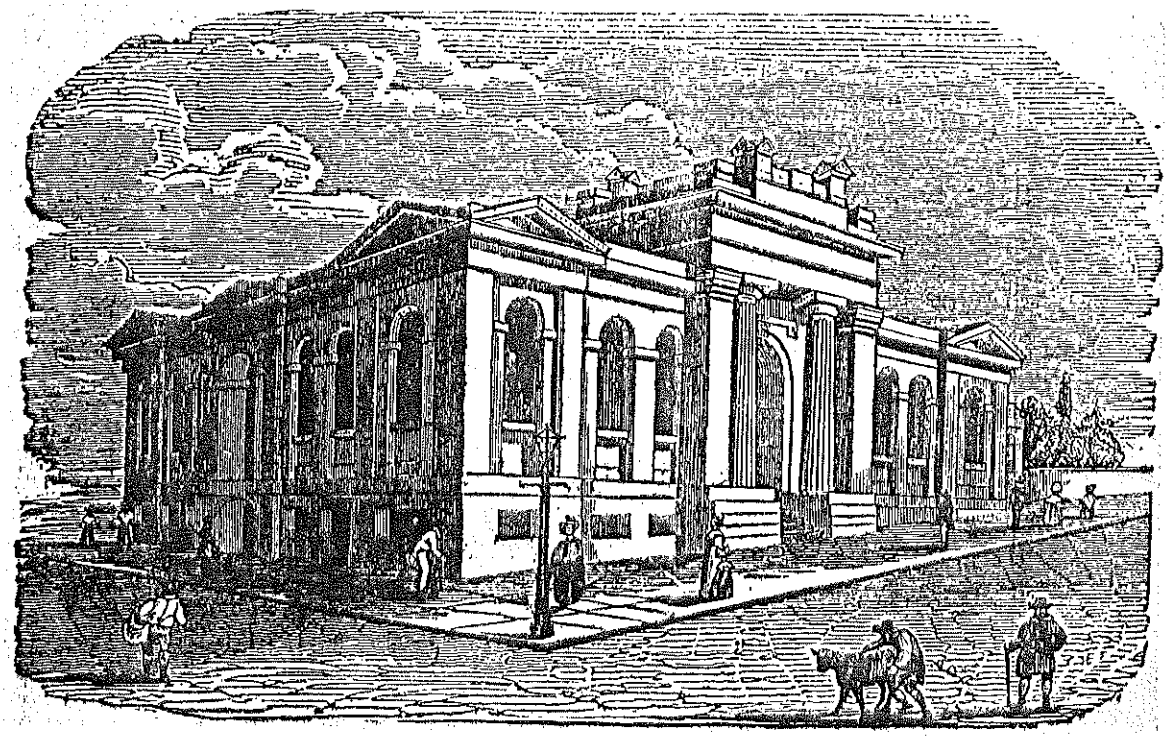


PLATE 27 BUTTER MARKET, HOWARD STREET.

doorway. The chapel was described at the time as being 'neat and commodious' and had seating for about three hundred people.[259] The congregation declined during the early twentieth century and by 1939 membership had fallen to 10. The building then ceased to be used for religious worship and was sold in late 1939/early 1940. The remaining congregation joined Castle Fields Methodist Chapel in New Park Road nearby.[260] The building has been used for commercial purposes in recent years.

Calvinistic Methodist Chapel, Frankwell Quay, subsequently St. David's Presbyterian Church of Wales, Belmont

The congregation which built this chapel was first formed in 1854 when the wife of the Revd. Ebenezer Williams (newly appointed minister of Hills Lane Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Chapel) realising that there was no provision for English-speaking Welsh Calvinistic Methodists in the town, decided to form a Bible class to be conducted by herself. This was first held in the gallery of Hills Lane Chapel, then in her own house in St. Alkmonds Square, and then in larger premises on Claremont Hill. By 1860 the Sunday school and congregation had increased and more regular preachers were found. In 1862 the idea of building their own chapel was formed as there was difficulty in finding a more commodious room for rent. Two years later, land was purchased on Frankwell Quay, [33] and in April of the following year, 1865, the chapel, designed by T Tisdale, Borough Surveyor, was opened. The chapel, with a schoolmistress's house adjoining, cost £1,100. It was built at first-floor level, and entered by a flight of external steps at the front. It contained seating for between one and two hundred people. It was built of red brick with yellow brick dressings and lit by round-headed windows. The site being so near to a river liable to flood suffered periodic inundation, and the schoolroom on the ground floor underneath the chapel was occasionally submerged. In 1884 the chapel debt was cleared. The 1890s was a difficult period for the congregation with small numbers and few resources but with the appointment of a new minister, the Revd. D M Rowlands in 1900, membership was revitalised growing from twenty-three to seventy in four years. In 1903 it was decided to move to a new locality with more convenient buildings. Accordingly a site costing £2320 was procured in the pleasanter area of Belmont and Belmont Bank.[261] [34] A lecture hall (to be used as the chapel) seating two hundred people, a connecting schoolroom, clubroom and library, parlour and committee room, costing £4,500 and designed by the architect G Dickens Lewis, were built and opened on 5 April 1905. It was intended 'when circumstances permit' that a 'handsome church worthy of a great denomination' would be provided.[262] The church, called St. David's Presbyterian Church of Wales, Belmont, was very successful and it was soon realised that the buildings would be inadequate for future growth. Plans were therefore made and a fund started for a purpose-built chapel to be erected on that part of the site not

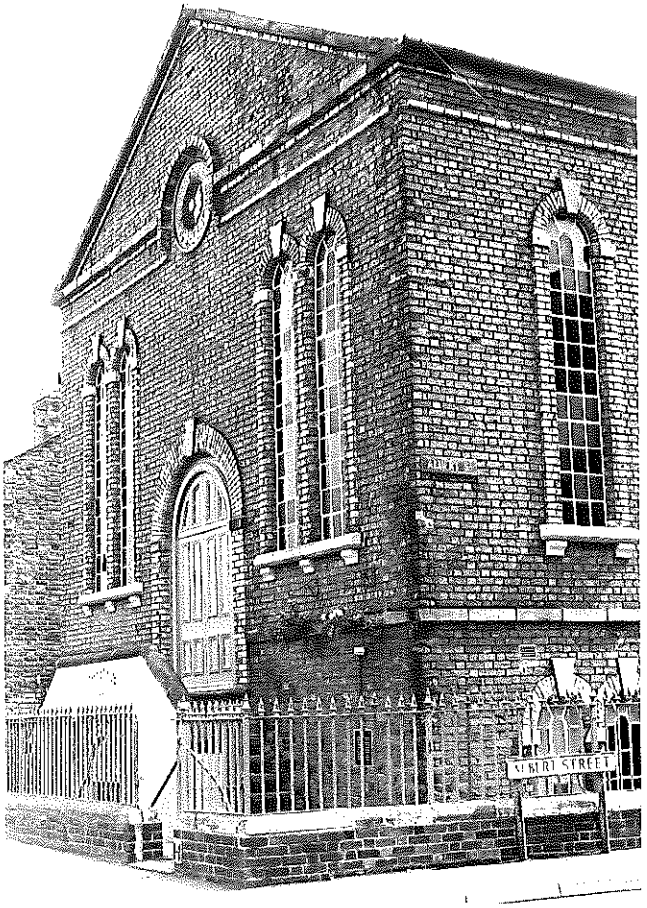


PLATE 28 WESLEYAN METHODIST REFORMERS CHAPEL, BEACALLS LANE, ERECTED 1853. PHOTOGRAPH DOUGLAS E CAPEWELL.

PLATE 29 WELSH CALVINISTIC METHODIST CHAPEL, FRANKWELL QUAY, ERECTED 1865. PHOTOGRAPH DOUGLAS E CAPEWELL.

hitherto built on. Funds were boosted by £2500 when Hills Lane congregation joined St. David's in 1931, and in June 1935 the foundation stone was laid.[263] The new chapel which was designed by Cecil E M Fillmore, A.R.I.B.A. of West Bromwich[264] seated 320 and cost nearly £7000 and was opened on the 12 March 1936. This is the chapel as it stands today, still in use as a place of worship. The old chapel on Frankwell Quay was continued in use as a mission church until 1909 when the building was sold. The £435 raised by the sale of the chapel was used to reduce the building debt of St. David's.[265] The old chapel was subsequently used for a variety of commercial purposes and is now used by a firm of tyre fitters.

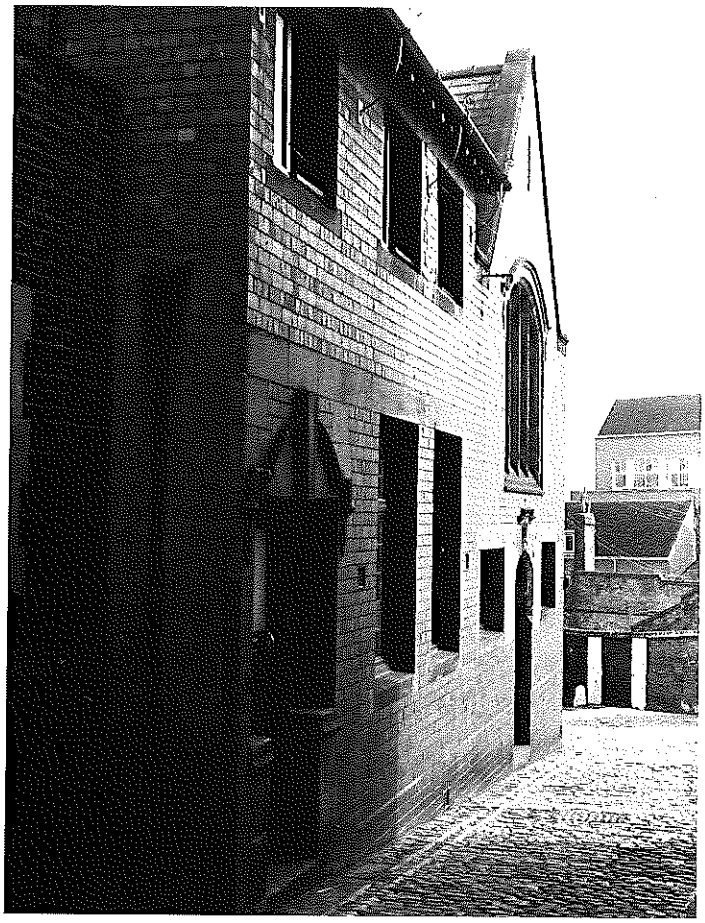


PLATE 30 ST DAVID'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WALES, BELMONT BANK, ERECTED 1905. PHOTOGRAPH DOUGLAS E CAPEWELL.

Congregational Chapel (now the United Reformed Church), Abbey Foregate

In the 1850s the minister and congregation of Castle Gates Independent Chapel wished to expand the Independent cause into the Coleham or Abbey Foregate areas of the town. Eventually in 1862 at a bi-centenary celebration meeting (to commemorate the 1662 ejection of the puritan clergy following the Act of Uniformity) it was decided to erect a memorial chapel.[266] A suitable site [35] next to the English bridge (probably the most impressive site of any nonconformist chapel in the town) was soon purchased for £750. The site consisted of a public house, carpenter's shop and stable range, this latter being immediately converted into a temporary chapel and opened on 5 October 1862. A schoolroom was subsequently built and this was used as the chapel until the chapel itself was built. The foundation stone was laid on 13 April 1863 by Thomas Barnes of the Quinta, Weston Rhyn (Liberal M.P. for Bolton 1852–7, 1861–8) who generously contributed £500 towards the cost of the building, which was opened for worship on 31 May 1864.[267] The cost inclusive of land was between £5,000 and £6,000. The builders were Messrs. Trow of Wednesbury and the architect was George Bidlake of Wolverhampton who designed a building in the gothic style. The chapel is faced with white Grinshill stone, set rubble work with bands of red Grinshill stone. In the west front there is a centre gable with a large tracery-headed window and central doorway together with a 114′ high tower and spire (the only nonconformist chapel in the town to have one). The internal dimensions are 70′ by 45′ wide, divided by side aisles into three groups of sittings. There is an organ gallery at the east end with the underportion enclosed as vestries, with a central pulpit in front.[268] Galleries with benches were installed later.[269] In 1874, the building debt extinguished, the chapel was refurbished, redecorated and the organ rebuilt.[270] The congregation flourished in the later nineteenth century and still exists today, having joined the United Reformed Church on 5 October 1972.[271]

PLATE 31 ST. DAVID'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WALES, BELMONT, ERECTED 1935/6. PHOTOGRAPH DOUGLAS E CAPEWELL.

PLATE 32 CONGREGATIONAL CHAPEL (NOW UNITED REFORMED CHURCH), ABBEY FOREGATE, ERECTED 1863/4. PHOTOGRAPH DOUGLAS E CAPEWELL.

Baptist Chapel, Wyle Cop

This congregation of Baptists from Coleham was established through the zeal of the Revd. John Williams of Holyhead. The congregation was first established in 1858/9 although it is not known where in Coleham they met in their early days.[272] Within five years they felt sufficiently confident to build their own chapel. On 18 August 1863 the foundation stone of their chapel on Wyle Cop [36] was laid by the Revd. J Williams. The chapel, designed by H Weatherby, was built in the yard at the back of what had been the Spread Eagles Inn and consequently had no street frontage. It was reached by a passageway between the houses fronting the street. The old public house was converted into two private dwellings so producing an income for the chapel until such time as the purchase money of the site (£780) and the cost of the building had been raised. It was then intended to demolish the houses fronting the street, extend the structure and put up a 'commanding' stone front, to replace the original temporary brick facade, 'which would be an ornament to the town'. The building measured 53′ long by 45′ wide, and was calculated to hold between 350 and 400 people. It was built of red brick with fire-brick dressings. The façade consisted of a high circular-headed doorway with a window on each side to correspond. A Sunday school was built at the back. It was intended at a later date to insert galleries but this was never done, nor was the front of the building ever extended to the street.[273] The congregation did not flourish and by 1886 the chapel was described as 'vacant'.[274] The building was subsequently used as a warehouse for many years and is now an antiques shop.

PLATE 33 THE HOUSES ON WYLE COP BEHIND WHICH THE BAPTIST CHAPEL WAS ERECTED. IT WAS APPROACHED THROUGH THE GATES ON THE RIGHT OF THE PICTURE. PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, SHROPSHIRE RECORDS AND RESEARCH CENTRE.

PLATE 34 BAPTIST CHAPEL, WYLE COP, THE MUCH-ALTERED FAÇADE. PHOTOGRAPH PETER CRIDDLE.

St. Nicholas's Presbyterian Chapel, Castle Gates

During the nineteenth century there was a gradual reintroduction of Presbyterianism into England from Scotland. A congregation of Presbyterians was established in Shrewsbury in 1865 following a request by Mr. George Deakin of Wyle Cop and others for missionaries and preachers to come to help establish a congregation in the town. The first meeting was held in the Music Hall on 5 March, but from 2 April 1865 onwards meetings were held in the Long Room in the Lion Hotel[275] and also at some of the other chapels in the town.[276] The congregation grew and in March 1868 their first pastor was appointed. Many of the ministers of St. Nicholas's in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were emigrés from Scotland or Northern Ireland, and it is likely that a sizeable proportion of the congregation was also Scottish in origin. As the months passed the need for a more permanent church was felt in order to give the cause visibility. However there were very few town-centre sites available – especially with street frontages. They wanted a site in Dogpole but could not get one. Instead they purchased a prominent site in Castle Gates [37] from Dr W J Clement of the Council House (Liberal M.P. for Shrewsbury, 1865–70) at a cost of £1,500. The foundation stone containing a bottle holding copies of the Daily Telegraph, three local newspapers, the Weekly Review, the Monthly Messenger, copies of the 'historical account' together with some coins was laid on 18 January 1870 by Mr Robert Stewart of Ryton Grove. He used a mallet made from some oak from the medieval chapel of St. Nicholas, which had formerly occupied the site and after which the new chapel was named. The chapel was built at a cost of £2,000 and opened on 16 December 1870.[277] It was designed by R C Bennett of Weymouth, an architect with a penchant for the Norman style.[278] He designed a very tall chapel with accommodation for five hundred people on a small square site in a style described at the time as 'modified twelfth century'. The chapel, erected by Mr. Farmer of Ironbridge, was built of Grinshill stone with Bath stone dressings. On the ground floor a schoolroom, vestry, and other accommodation rooms were provided with access from two corner entrances. The principal entrance was through a central doorway at the west end giving access to the chapel and galleries on the first and second floors. The chapel consisted of a nave with two side aisles covered by galleries. At the west end a pierced arcade was erected in case an end gallery was needed in the future. The clerestory with circular windows was supported by moulded stone arches and piers with carved capitals. There was a semi-circular apse at the east

PLATE 35 ST. NICHOLAS'S PRESBYTERIAN CHAPEL, CASTLE GATES, FRONT VIEW. PHOTOGRAPH DOUGLAS E CAPEWELL.

PLATE 36 GOSPEL HALL, JOHN STREET, CASTLEFIELDS, USED BY AN ASSEMBLY OF OPEN BRETHREN. PHOTOGRAPH DOUGLAS E CAPEWELL

end with a rostrum accessible not only from the nave but also from the vestry on the floor below. It was originally intended to build a tower at the west end when funds became available but this was never done.[279] The building was a very large financial outlay for a relatively small congregation. Membership fell to as low as twenty-six following the dismissal of the minister in 1889 owing to a conflict between him and some of the congregation. Following the appointment of a new minister in 1890 matters improved considerably and membership reached an all-time peak of just over two hundred by 1914.[280] However the congregation declined from this point onwards and the chapel ceased to be used for religious worship when the congregation joined the United Reformed Church in Abbey Foregate on 21 September 1975.[281] The building remained empty for some time, until being converted into offices.[282]

Salvation Army, Wyle Cop, and subsequently of Barker Street and Salters Lane

The Salvation Army established a meeting in Shrewsbury in 1886,[283] congregating first of all in the former Baptist Chapel [36] on Wyle Cop,[284] and then moving to the Auction Rooms in Barker Street in 1888 which were licensed by them in May of that year.[285] They had left there by December 1894. The Shrewsbury Corps is known to have been in existence until about 1904 but its meeting place is unknown. In 1920 the Corps rented a hall in Salters Lane, Coleham where it still meets.[286]

Assembly of Open Brethren, Gospel Hall, John Street, Castle Fields

In the early 1880s a small non-denominational Gospel Hall was built at the corner of John Street [41] and New Park Road on land purchased by a Mr Nightingale, the chairman of a Household Mission which had been formed to spread the Gospel to the poor.[287] By *c.* 1890, under the influence of Mr. Nightingale's two sons the congregation developed into an Assembly of Open Brethren. Not long after June 1890 they are believed to have been joined by most of the members of a small congregation of Brethren whose meeting in the town had closed. This was possibly the congregation which had met in Fire Office Passage at the side of No. 20 High Street. The Assembly of Open Brethren still meets in the Gospel Hall, with a present membership of approximately fifty.[288]

Other congregations

In addition to the above there were two licensed premises used by congregations about whom very little is known and who may not have been connected with any other congregation. However these premises may have been used by congregations which are discussed above, at a stage in their existence prior to their becoming well established.

Dwelling house of Thomas Roberts, carpenter, Abbey Foregate

Thomas Roberts petitioned for a meeting-house licence on 10 January 1824, which was granted on the 30 April following.[289] Nothing further is known about this congregation.

A large room situated in the yard of the Mermaid Inn, Shoplatch

This was licensed upon the petition of Edward Williams of the Mardol, as a meeting place [38] on 30 June 1832,[290] but nothing further is known of this congregation.

Note

The nonconformist chapels in the outer suburbs of Shrewsbury, ie Bellevue, Copthorne, Ditherington, Greeenfields, Harlescott, Heathgates and Spring Gardens have been excluded from this survey, as have the non-sectarian mission halls established in the town towards the end of the last century.

Notes

1 M R Watts, *The Dissenters from the Reformation to the French Revolution*, 1985, 272–276
2 *Shropshire Parish Register Society, Nonconformist Registers*, 1903, Shrewsbury High Street Church, iii; Ibid. Society of Friends, iii-iv; H Owen & J B Blakeway, *History of Shrewsbury*, **2**, 476–487; Dr Williams's Library (henceforth DWL), Ms.38.6, Thompson Ms. f.31
3 Shropshire Records and Research Centre (henceforth SRRC), 3365/2250–2271, Shrewsbury Borough Quarter Sessions Rolls, 1661–1685/6
4 DWL, Ms.34.4, Evans Ms.97–98
5 *Salopian Shreds and Patches*, 8 July 1891, 103–5
6 SRRC 3916/1/1, Visitation of the Archdeacon of Salop, 1799, f.79
7 DWL, Ms.34.4, op.cit.
8 *Salopian Shreds & Patches*, op.cit.
9 In 1741 the average age of the members of both congregations whose dates of baptism and death are known was 62
10 A D Gilbert, *Religion and society in industrial England*, 1976, 16
11 *Shropshire Parish Register Society*, op.cit., Swan Hill Chapel, iii
12 SRRC 3916/1/1, op.cit.
13 DWL Ms.34.4, op.cit.
14 SRRC 2706/1, Claremont Baptist Minute Book, 1718–1814, list of members dated 22 December 1718
15 Ibid. description of the state of the church dated 1 July 1794
16 SRRC 3365/2250–2271, op.cit.; R F Skinner, *Nonconformity in Shropshire*, 1964, 6–9, plate iv
17 SRRC 3916/1/1, op.cit.
18 A D Gilbert, op.cit. 36
19 Public Record Office (henceforth PRO), HO 129/360, Census of Religious Worship 1851. Figure 3 illustrates the total nonconformist attendances in Shrewsbury town centre and inner-suburban chapels and meeting houses in 1851. The Churches of Christ congregation did not appear in the census and is therefore excluded from these statistics.
20 SRRC 3365/2430–3, Shrewsbury Borough Quarter Sessions Order Books, 1680–1801 (gap 1720–45), *passim*
21 SRRC 3916/1/1, op.cit.
22 M R Watts, *The Dissenters*, **2**, 1995, 23–4, between 1773 and 1851 the number of nonconformist congregations in England and Wales increased by 975% whilst the population increased by 155%
23 SRRC 3365/2250–2271, op.cit.; SRRC, transcripts of the registers of the parishes of Holy Cross and St. Julian's, Shrewsbury, passim
24 *Salopian Magazine*, 1815, 504–506
25 SRRC 2706/1, op.cit. 114, membership reached 156 by 1810
26 *Salopian Telegraph* (henceforth ST), 4 December 1841, 7
27 *Salopian Magazine* 1815, 462, congregation said to number six hundred
28 *Salopian Magazine*, 1815, 506–508
29 M R Watts, op.cit. 2, 674, 700–1
30 H Pidgeon, *Memorials of Shrewsbury*, 1837, 86, 89, 93
31 *Kelly's Directory of Herefordshire & Shropshire*, 1891, 412
32 *Christian Messenger*, ii, no. 2., April 1838, 72, containing a letter from W Butler dated December 1837. This reference was kindly provided by Dr D M Thompson of Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge
33 D M Thompson, *Let sects and parties fall*, Birmingham, 1980, 31, it was estimated that at that time there were nearly 200 churches representing 1600 members
34 Information provided by Dr D M Thompson (above), and Mrs E M Sewell of Bournville, Birmingham
35 *Shropshire Family History Journal*, **14**, part 4, (December 1993), 122-125
36 M R Watts, op.cit. 2, 618–625
37 Gilbert, op.cit. 41
38 M R Watts, op.cit. II, 700–1
39 M R Watts, op.cit. I, 272–6
40 Gilbert, op.cit. 40
41 Gilbert, op.cit. 39
42 Gilbert, op.cit. 42–3
43 In making this analysis it has been assumed that:–
a) The Wesleyan Methodist congregation meeting in Coleham 1804–1806 did not survive beyond the first decade of the century since no further evidence has been found for its continuance. It did not appear in the 1813 Wesleyan Methodist Circuit plan.
b) The congregation meeting at the house of Thomas Roberts, Abbey Foregate, registered in 1824, may not survive beyond the 1820s, as no evidence has been found for its continuance.
c) The congregation meeting at the Mermaid Inn, registered in 1832, did not survive beyond the 1830s for the same reason. It has also been assumed that congregations b) and c) above, had no connection with any other
44 Presbyterian Church of Wales, Frankwell, Shrewsbury, *Annual Report*, 1903, 3; *Eddowes's Salopian Journal* (henceforth ESJ), 11 January 1871, 8
45 PRO, HO 129/360, op.cit.
46 S Bagshaw, *History, gazetteer and directory of Shropshire*, 1851, 55-6; G Lyon Turner, *Original records of early nonconformity under persecution and indulgence*, 1911–4, **2**, 734–741
47 A Broadbent, *The story of Unitarianism in Shrewsbury*, 1962, 4
48 SRRC 4335/3/2, Unitarian Church records, lease dated 2 February 1691/2
49 *Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society* (henceforth TSAS), 4th series, 7 (1918–9), 122

50 SRRC 4335/3/3, Unitarian Church records, lease dated 7 August 1704; SRRC 3365/2430, Shrewsbury Borough Quarter Sessions Order Book, 1680–1719, 8 October 1703
51 John Rocque's Map of Shrewsbury, 1746; PRO E 178/6907, Special Commission concerning damage done by rioters to nonconformist meeting houses in Shropshire, 1716
52 SRRC 3365/2430, op.cit. 13 January 1715/6
53 T J Howell, *The Stranger in Shrewsbury*, 1816, 108
54 H Pidgeon, *Memorials of Shrewsbury*, op.cit. 96
55 SRRC 3365/2672, Minutes of meetings of the Trustees of the Shrewsbury Street Act, 1830–41, entries between April 1839 and February 1840; SRRC 3365/2669, associated maps, drawings and plans, 1822–31
56 SRRC 4335/1/50, Unitarian Church records, appeal leaflet, 1885
57 SRRC 6000/16063, Expense of restoration of High Street Chapel, 1840
58 SRRC 4335/3/14, Unitarian Church records, Salop Fire Office Insurance Policy 18557, 26 December 1840
59 S Bagshaw, op.cit. 55-6; H Pidgeon, *An Historical and illustrated handbook for the town of Shrewsbury*, 1860, 37, describes the chapel as 'fitted with the pews and pulpit of a former edifice'
60 ESJ, 4 March 1885, 6; ibid. 18 March 1885, 6; *Shrewsbury Chronicle* (henceforth SC) 13 March 1885, 9
61 SRRC v.f. D98.8, offprint from the *Shropshire Magazine* entitled 'High Street Unitarian Church, Shrewsbury', n.d.
62 R F Skinner, op.cit. 5; DWL, Ms.38.6, op.cit.; TSAS, 4th series, **1**, 298; *Shropshire Parish Register Society*, Lichfield diocese, **15**, St. Chad, Shrewsbury, entries for the births of the children of Timothy and Mary Seymour, 1660–1674; SRRC 3365/2250–2256, Shrewsbury Borough Quarter Sessions Rolls, 1660/1–1669, known Baptists such as William Harrison, Timothy Seymour and John Hill were presented to quarter sessions throughout the 1660s, and beyond
63 SRRC 3365/2266, Shrewsbury Borough Quarter Sessions Roll, 1681–2, list of 'Anabaptists' dated 16 September 1677 filed in this roll
64 SRRC 3365/2269, Shrewsbury Borough Quarter Sessions Roll, 1685, statements by Thomas Longsden and Richard Chandler, dated 19 April 1685
65 SRRC 3365/2430, op.cit. 1689–1712 checked
66 Ibid. 2 April 1712
67 SRRC 3365/2444, Shrewsbury Borough Quarter Sessions Papers (Miscellaneous), 1733–45, petition of 8 October 1736
68 SRRC 6001/3058, H.Pidgeon, *Salopian Annals*, **6**, entry for 3 March 1829
69 *Salopian Magazine*, 1815, 459–60
70 SRRC 2706/1, op.cit. 37
71 SRRC 3365/2434, Shrewsbury Borough Quarter Sessions Order Book, 1802–26, July 1803
72 Ibid. 14 July 1809; SRRC Shropshire County Quarter Sessions File, 9/349, letter from the Revd John Palmer to Joseph Loxdale
73 *Baptist Magazine*, 1809, 39
74 SRRC Shropshire County Quarter Sessions File, 9/348 and 349, two letters from the Revd John Palmer to Joseph Loxdale
75 Ibid. 9/349; *Baptist Magazine*, 1810, 531; SRRC 2706/1, op.cit. 114
76 *Salopian Magazine*, 1815, 459–60
77 T J Howell, op.cit. 109–110; SRRC Shropshire County Quarter Sessions File, 9/349, op.cit. the pulpit (situated halfway down the left-hand side) could only be reached from the vestry at the back by passing through the rear yard of the adjoining property
78 ST 4 December 1841, 7
79 S Bagshaw, op.cit. 56
80 PRO, HO 129/360, op.cit.
81 SRRC, photographs of Claremont Street, Shrewsbury
82 ESJ 8 August 1877, 6
83 A Jones, *Welsh Chapels*, 1984, 57
84 SRRC 6001/3058, op.cit. entry for 3 March 1829
85 ESJ 8 August 1877, 6
86 R F Skinner, op.cit. 6–9
87 SRRC 3365/2257, Shrewsbury Borough Quarter Sessions Roll, 1670, reports of raids on secret conventicles on 6 and 20 June 1670
88 Information provided by the Librarian, Friends House, Euston Road, London, NW1
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106 SRRC 3365/2250–2271, Shrewsbury Borough Quarter Sessions Rolls, 1660/1–1686, eg, James Quarrell, John Moore, John Sparke, John Wright, Thomas Orton, John Tompkis, Elizabeth Milward and others
107 R F Skinner, op.cit. 116
108 Revd Henry Maurice, Diary, June to October 1672. The late Dr.Basil Cottle of Bristol University very kindly provided me with a photocopy of a transcript of this diary which was in his possession
109 SRRC 3365/2430, op.cit. 7 November 1691
110 A Broadbent, op.cit. 6
111 SRRC 3365/2446, Shrewsbury Borough Quarter Sessions Papers (Miscellaneous) 1755–1767, petition of 9 October 1766; *Shropshire Parish Register Society*, op.cit. Swan Hill Chapel Shrewsbury, iii
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118 SRRC 3365/2431. op.cit. 11 October 1754
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120 Plaque on the wall of No 1 Fish Street, Shrewsbury
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122 J Wesley, *Journal*, Dent Everyman edition, 1906, **4**, 202
123 W E Morris, op.cit. 29. The land, with the houses on it, had been conveyed in 1803 from John Hiram Haycock to the trustees; SRRC 5492/2, Thomas Brocas, Journal, vol.**2**, 314, the builder of the chapel was Mr Phillip Jones, a regular attender at the Methodist chapel
124 W E Morris, op.cit. 29
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136 NLW, Calvinistic Methodist Archives, 16510, op.cit.
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151 SRRC 3365/2434, Shrewsbury Borough Quarter Sessions Order Book, 1802–26, July 1803 session
152 Ibid. July 1808 session
153 H B Kendall, *The origin and history of the Primitive Methodist Church*, 1905, **2**, 279
154 SRRC Shropshire County Quarter Sessions File, 10/177, 1810–11, petition for a meeting-house licence, Easter 1811
155 *Report of the Baptist Union*, [1838], 25, obituary of the Revd John Hinmers, 'He . . . persued his preparatory studies for the ministry under the patronage of R.Haldane, Esq. After labouring for a few years in Scotland, and at Shrewsbury, he was ordained at Whitchurch, Salop, about the year 1814'
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193 W E Morris, op.cit. 34
194 SRRC 3938/4/1, Shrewsbury Methodist Circuit, File of correspondence about the closure and sale of Castle Fields Chapel, 1967-73
195 *Christian Messenger and Reformer*, **2**, no 2, April 1838, 72; *Ecclesiastical Observer*, 1 March 1871, 108; *British Millenial Harbinger*, **xiv**, 1849, 572, in the obituary of William Butler, it states that 'he had been a consistent member of the church here for eighteen years', which suggests that the church may have begun as early as *c.* 1831, although no other evidence has been found confirming such an early date. These references were provided by Dr D M Thompson
196 *Christian Messenger and Reformer*, **2**, no 2, April 1838, 72. Reference provided by Dr D M Thompson
197 Ibid. **2**, 1839, 428. Reference provided by Dr B Trinder.
198 Information provided by Dr D M Thompson from a letter of 2 August 1841 to John Davies in the Churches of Christ Historical Society archives
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JOHN BISHTON AND ARCHDEACON JOSEPH PLYMLEY IN THE WRITINGS OF WILLIAM MARSHALL

By PETER B HEWITT

Joseph Plymley, Archdeacon of Salop, is well known to Shropshire historians for his 'General View of the Agriculture of Shropshire' published by the Board of Agriculture in 1803. The survey is recognised for its value as a source for historians. The reprinting of William Marshall's five volume, *Review and Abstract of the County Reports of the Board of Agriculture* provides the opportunity for an evaluation of the work of Plymley and John Bishton (who wrote the first Shropshire report for the Board in 1794) in the light of Marshall's commentary.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, even in those areas where inclosure had taken place, little had changed in terms of farming techniques and machinery. In many parts of Britain the agrcultural scene had progressed little from the 'high middle ages'. In the late eighteenth century the pace of agrarian reform intensified. Rapid urban growth was increasing the demand for basic foodstuffs, wheat and meat, annually, and combined with the long wars with France which were a further stimulus to agarian prosperity.

The demand for greater production and the potential profits provided the impetus for innovators in the field of agriculture to promote the publication, discussion, and dissemination of the new ideas. Arthur Young (1741–1820), Nathaniel Kent (1737–1810), Thomas Coke (1752–1842) and William Marshall (1745–1818) were in the forefront. William Marshall began trading in the West Indies, afterwards farmed in Surrey and then became agent in Norfolk for Sir Harboard Harboard.[1] Marshall was a prolific writer on agricultural improvement[2] and an advocate of the establishment of a 'Board of Agriculture' or as he would have preferred 'of Rural Affairs'.[3] As early as 1783 he proposed the surveying of agricultural practices in the various counties of England. In the same year he submitted to the Society of Arts a plan for carrying out such a survey.[4] In 1790 he proposed the establishment of agricultural colleges in the various districts to disseminate good practice.[5] In common with Arthur Young and Nathaniel Kent, Marshall advocated the inclosure of common fields. He also supported the better planning and organisation of trading centres in market towns, to be financed out of the rates.[6] He was very critical of the tithe system as it was generally agreed to operate to the detriment of improvement; few tenants would be moved to invest and improve production to see part of their profit hived off.

In 1790 Marshall reports that he was approached by Sir John Sinclair.[7] In the spring of 1793 Sir John told Marshall of his intention of bringing the proposed Board before Parliament. He showed Marshall the plan and according to Marshall, 'repeatedly consulted me on the matter'.[8] During the year Marshall had travelled to central Scotland to carry out a survey there and was surprised to see in newspapers the announcement of the appointment of a Board of Agriculture with Sir John as president and Arthur Young as the secretary. In his introduction to volume one of his Review and Abstract, he indicates his displeasure at not being invited to serve, and later when he returned to London he came to the conclusion that this was the result of jobbery: 'Thus fled my hopes of credit and all chance of profit which I had not entertained.'[9]

This curious body (the Board) had no bureaucratic function or authority.[10] It was, 'not a state department in the modern sense, but a kind of Royal Society receiving, not too regularly, a subsidy from Parliament'.[11] The rest of its funds were raised by private subscription.[12] The Board comprised a body of enthusiasts including, as well as the president and secretary, the duke of Bedford, Coke of Holkham, and Lord Lonsdale.[13] One of its first acts was to commission the preparation of surveys of the state of agriculture county by county – a procedure long advocated by Marshall. When the president of the Board invited Marshall along with others to contribute

to the work he showed, according to Marshall, 'a firmness of nerve which few men are endowed with.[14] As Marshall had been similarly engaged for some years he felt that participation would render incomplete his *General Survey of the Rural Affairs of these Kingdoms*, which he felt altogether improper.[15] The Hammonds aver that, 'it was from his own choice, for he preferred to publish his own Minutes and Surveys rather than write them for the Board'.[16] Marshall's own account appears to contradict this view: his obvious pique at not being invited to serve on the Board ruling out co-operation on his part.

Marshall clearly was an important figure in the New Agriculture movement and his subsequent publication of his commentary upon the county surveys cannot but be regarded as informed contemporary comment. While it is critical, upon examination it proves to be remarkably fair. His aim was to highlight those features which merited attention whilst noting those where, in his view, the inexperience or lack of farming knowledge led the writers to wrong conclusions.

The Board's selection of its earliest surveyors was not consistently successful. As a result some twenty of its earliest reports fell short of its requirements to such a degree that new surveyors had to be appointed. With hindsight it is not surprising that such failure occurred. The Board's original remit did not (according to Marshall) give clear and precise guidance, the surveyors were breaking new ground and having to create procedures as they went, and at this early date there could not have been many men with the right experience and background to call upon.

There were two surveys of Shropshire, the first by John Bishton in 1794, and the second by Archdeacon Joseph Plymley in 1803. John Bishton, of Kelsall in Shropshire, who had farmed 400 acres on his own account for many years, was using the Norfolk four course rotation before 1790[17] and also by 1790 new farm offices and cattle sheds had been built on his farm.[18] From 1788 to 1790 he administered the Leveson-Gower estate; one of a succession of very able administrators.[19] It was Bishton who inaugurated on the Gower estate the most spectacular example of landlord investment as a rentracking device.[20] It was during this period that he was commissioned to prepare the report on Shropshire for the Board of Agriculture.

Joseph Plymley M.A.(1759–1838) who took the name Corbett when he inherited the estate at Longnor, was a landowner, churchman, magistrate, and a member of an influential county family. As archdeacon of South Shropshire parishes of the diocese of Hereford he made remarkably detailed records of the parishes when on visitations. These cover not merely the ecclesiastical aspects of parish life but also civil matters including the working conditions of the agricultural labourers, the use of modern ploughs and mowing machines. While he did not claim to be a practical farmer, his ability to make careful observations, his long contact with farming families, and his membership of a major landowning family of the county were clearly the reasons for his being chosen to prepare the second survey of the county at the turn of the century. He was also an honorary member of the Board.

Plymley, living on his estate at Longnor, was one of a group of a score or so of men of unusual ability active in Shropshire in the closing years of the eighteenth century. As well as his clerical duties he was a trustee of turnpike roads and active in the Anti-Slavery Movement. Their shared intellectual interests brought together this group who met regularly at Longnor and who included Dr R W Darwin (father of Charles), the Rev. R W Eyton, Roland Hunt, R Townson, and Thomas Telford.

At the beginning of his examination of each of the county reports Marshall begins with an assessment of the qualifications of the surveyor and his overall performance. While one might expect him, in view of his failure to be appointed to the Board, to be destructive in his criticism, surprisingly he is remarkably fair. About some of the earliest surveyors he is very harsh; for example, in the case of John Clark who prepared the first report on Herefordshire, he is dismissive. 'We have no proof whatsoever of his possessing a mature knowledge of practical agriculture, nor does he speak at all on the management of landed property'.[21] The report is, 'a mere sketch – the writer having in good measure set aside the Board's rules of arrangement'.[22] Likewise his appraisal of the work of the Rev. John Duncumb A.M. who prepared the second report on Herefordshire is equally harsh: 'Mr. Duncumb A.M. has very little (if any) practical knowledge – he has some acquaintance with the ancient writers (on agriculture) . . . but we find little in it which any other A.M. tho' fresh from college, might not have done as well'.[23]

In his commentary upon Bishton's report on Shropshire Marshall highlights its shortcomings, in particular its shortness: only twenty-seven pages of which only seven related to the agriculture of Shropshire; the rest being filled with the writer's own practice and opinions. The president of the Board was dissatisfied with the report and sent Bishton a list of queries, the answers to which were given as a postscript extending the final report to thirty-eight pages. Marshall was dismissive of Bishton's mode of enquiry,[24] but on the other hand notes at length Bishton's views on the ill effects upon the attitudes and usefulness of labourers who were allowed to squat on commons and citing this in support of inclosure.[25] Bishton's comments on roads are also quoted at length. Noting the extremely poor condition of roads in the county, and the, 'folly of appointing annually, ignorant, dilatory Parochial surveyors of roads', Bishton expresses the opinion that improved roads would be a

step in the improvement of agriculture.[26] However, Marshall's general assessment of the first survey of Shropshire agriculture cannot be said to be very high.

Marshall's early assessment of Plymley's qualifications to carry out the survey is also very critical, and it would seem either that he was unaware of the archdeacon's background and interests, or he had ignored them. One cannot but wonder if he took exception on principle to anyone who was a member of the Board. On the other hand he does comment favourably upon the, 'spirit of philanthropy which is conspicuous throughout the work, and was, doubtlessly, the amiable motive which induced the Archdeacon of Salop to comply with the request of the Board'.[27] Examining Plymley's account of the geology of the county, he says 'The learned reporter then proceeds to define several component parts of the geological system. But his labours are altogether inscientific and unavailing'.[28] This does not accord well with the picture of Plymley as one of the Shropshire enlightenment movement, all of whom, including Dr Townson, were especially interested in geology. Their views were the best available at the time, predating the work of Professor Adam Sedgwick and Charles Darwin in 1831 and Murchison even later. Plymley in his description of the political economy of the county drew attention to the complexity of parish and township boundaries, some interlinking, detached into other parishes, and even adjacent counties, and how this rendered the collection of land tax, tithes and rates extremely difficult. Marshall echoes his comments saying, 'what a complication of absurdities! Surely there must have been intervals of peace in which so much inconvenience, to magistrates, as well as owners, and occupiers of land, might have been done away or much meliorated, without alarm to the constitution'.[29] One result of this problem of parishes and townships was highlighted by Plymley in his comments on the population census of 1801: 'it is possible to say that a few districts may have been omitted in this return and some counted twice'.[30] He also points to the 'unevenness of the manner of enumeration district by district'.[31] It is interesting to note that as early as 1808 men of perception were noting the deficiencies of the first census.

There are occasions when Marshall is lavish in his praise for Plymley's views. For example, the archdeacon's strictures on the magistracy: 'the archdeacon's remarks are evidently the result of much thought, guided by good sense and moderated feeling; and afford for whom they were made, valuable means of reflection'.[32] Likewise he applauds Plymley's attack upon pretentious farm buildings and cottages for farmworkers, where Plymley said, 'I would only suggest the impropriety of making them, or indeed any other object, bear an outward appearance to contradict there inward use . . . all castellated or gothicised cottages, church-like barns and fort-like pig-sties, I should conceive to be objectionable'.[33] Much of the report on agricultural practices is based upon evidence provided in writing by men of experience approached by the archdeacon, who included their reports verbatim in his report to the Board. Marshall comments that he would have wished the authors of such passages to have been identified at the beginning of the passage, with some note of the writer's credentials.[34]

On the matter of executive management of estates Marshall says of Plymley, 'we find the Archdeacon, with becoming deference, stimulating landed gentlemen to a just sense of their duties as such'.[35] Plymley went on to list some general rules for their consideration. First, 'I would offer to landed proprietors in this place a consideration of how much their own good, and that of the community, may often times be promoted by residence on their estates'.[36] Secondly, while he did not want, 'persons of large fortunes to be their own stewards, perhaps those who reside in the county and are intent upon the general improvement of their neighbourhood need the professional assistance of this kind'.[37] Thirdly, when a resident owner acts from the proper principles, 'excessive poverty is, of course, banished from his district',[38] finally he drew attention to the parallel with Ireland where absentee landlords adversely affected the rural economy. Fourthly on covenants and leases and the choice of tenants Plymley makes telling comments which are supported by Marshall.[39]

Concerning the size of farms Plymley expressed the view, 'that there is a use for farms of all common sizes, so far as they are extended in this county. The small farmer, for instance, brings his grain early to market, and the large farmer's hoard may prevent scarcity'.[40] As Marshall says, 'these are truisms that have been uttered again and again, and cannot have too many tongues to promulgate them'.[41]

Time and again Marshall highlights those comments of Plymley which he regards as cogent and relevant. His commentaries on the Surveys for other counties make it clear that he was more impressed with the performance of Joseph Plymley than that of other writers.

Although Marshall's work is mentioned in many general texts, little has been written of Marshall the man despite his widespread activity and writings on the New Agriculture. According to Ross Wordie of Reading University Department of History, 'it really is scandalous that no proper biography of William Marshall has been written'. From the tenor of his writing Marshall clearly had a wealth of experience to offer. Like Cobbett, however, he had a style and mode of expression that must have antagonized many others working in the same field, and in particular those men of political power who could have afforded him assistance to achieve his ends.[42]

Notes

1 Hammond and Hammond; *The Village Labourer, 1760–1832*; p. 80
2 Marshall's listed publications: *Minutes and Experiments in Agriculture* two volumes; *The Rural Economy of Six Agricultural Regions* twelve volumes; *Planting and Rural Ornament* two volumes; *Treatise on Landed Property*; *Management of Landed Estates*; *The Review and Abstract of the County Reports of the Board of Agriculture* six volumes
3 W Marshall; *The Review and Abstract of the County Reports of the Board of Agriculture*; vol. i, p. xxii
4 ibid; p. xvii
5 ibid; p. xxi
6 P Langford; *Polite and Commercial People* p. 431 and n. 60
7 Marshall; vol. **i**; p. xxii
8 Marshall; vol. **i**; p. xxii
9 ibid; p. xxiii
10 P Langford; *Polite and Commercial People* p. 152
11 ibid
12 ibid
13 ibid
14 Marshall; vol. **i**; p. xxiv
15 ibid; p. xxiv
16 Hammond and Hammond; p. 80
17 V.C.H. Salop; vol. **iv**; p. 178
18 ibid; p. 185 and n. 94
19 ibid; p. 185
20 ibid; p. 214 and n. 67
21 Marshall; vol. **ii**, *Western Department*; p. 171
22 ibid
23 Marshall; vol. **ii**; p. 298
24 Marshall; vol. **ii**; p. 173
25 ibid; p. 171
26 ibid; p. 175
27 ibid; p. 186
28 ibid; p. 192
29 ibid; p. 204
30 ibid; p. 207
31 ibid; p. 207
32 ibid; p. 227
33 ibid; p. 239
34 ibid; p. 188
35 ibid; p. 231
36 ibid; p. 236
37 ibid; p. 236
38 ibid; p. 236
39 ibid; p. 233
40 ibid; p. 236
41 ibid; p. 236
42 Pers. comm.

A FURTHER REPORT ON THE 1867 'BOG BODY' FROM WHIXALL MOSS

By ROBERT CROMARTY

In the last volume of the Transactions there appeared an article by R C Turner and S Penney on three bog bodies found on Whixall Moss in the second half of the nineteenth century. On page 4 they state that they have been unable to find further information from local printed sources. However, there is a short entry in Eddowes Salopian Journal of 21 August, 1867 which provides some extra and some conflicting evidence about the body found in that year.

'On August 7th as some turf-cutters were getting peat on a portion of Whixall Moss which had not been worked on within living memory, they came upon some human bones about a yard beneath the surface of the moss. Upon examination by a surgeon, the bones appear to have belonged to a child, between four and six years old; they were much worn and softened probably by the action of the humic acid in the moss, but how long the bones had been in the ground there was nothing to determine. Where the grave has been dug, the peat showed evident signs of having been disturbed, and bits of twigs from the grig(sic) were found, a proof that a portion of the surface had been shovelled in when the grave was filled up. There was also found a wooden four-legged stool of oak, with one of the legs entire; this leg is of birch, and the bark still remains. The seat of the stool is twelve inches by ten, and is pierced by a crudely cut hole, four inches by four, intended to be circular. The corners of the stool are rounded off in a rough way, one of them being cut more than the others. A piece of leather was found with the bones, a portion of the leather is enclosed. Some remains of the 'wrapping' were also discovered, possibly the debris of a bag in which the body was enclosed before it was thrown into the grave.' From a Correspondent.

The dating of the find is now fixed. Apart from the use of the word 'lad' in the reminiscences of the peat cutters in 1889 there was no evidence that this was a young child. The stool is here said to have four legs and not three and from the full description could it be assumed that the correspondent was the vicar of Whixall into whose hands the stool was given? Sadly the correspondent throws no further light on the position of the stool in the grave. The references to the leather and the fabric are also irritatingly vague. What happened to the stool subsequently and what did the Salopian Journal do with the leather sent with the note?

In a letter dated 24 June, 1997 Richard Turner made the following comments on the significance of the extract above.

'The extract confirms the date of discovery, and a more accurate description of the stratigraphic position. The fact that it was recognised that a hole or grave had been dug in which to place the body is unusual for British bog bodies. The isolated head from Pilling Moss in Lancashire is recorded as having a clod of peat placed on it to hold it down. The youth of later description is more accurately described as a 4-6 year old child, no sex given. Again, children are rare in the British context and none of this young age fall within the 'potential sacrifice' group. The description of the stool is much more complete and even more intriguing. The presence of leather and ?cloth wrapping has interesting parallels both in Britain, Ireland and further afield.

This new information increases the detail about this discovery but does not help refine the dating. The presence of the stool and fragments of clothing and/or a shroud makes this a relatively rich bog body.'

REPORTS

ARCHAEOLOGY IN SHREWSBURY MUSEUMS SERVICE 1996–1997

By MIKE STOKES, Museums Archaeologist, Shrewsbury Museums Service

Due to long-term sick leave occasioned by my need for a double hip replacement, part two of which is due in April 1997, part one having been completed in July 1996, the nature of archaeological activity in the museums has been somewhat different this year. In my absence enquiries have mainly been dealt with by Dr. Roger White. A total of 42 enquiries were made for identification including 75 separate artefacts ranging from coins and tokens from the Roman to post-medieval periods, Romano-British brooches and ceramics. These are recorded in the museum day books and are available for consultation on appointment with the collections manager.

My own major project during recuperation has been the production of a computerised catalogue of the collections of Roman coinage from excavations at Wroxeter, from hoards at Hordley Grange and Much Wenlock, and more recently the Stubbs Collection. These are also available for consultation on the Museums database on appointment. A secondary project has been the preparation of a brief for a total re-display and interpretation of the extensive prehistoric collections held.

Academic links with other institutions have been maintained. In particular we are grateful to the Classics Department of the University of Warwick for their continued support and whose students have and are undertaking research on the Wroxeter collections. One project deserves special mention, that of John Darley who is working for a doctorate based upon the brooch collections held here and throughout the West Midland counties. John would be delighted to know of all or any brooches or fragments thereof held by individuals or institutions. He can be contacted via Shrewsbury Museum Service. John is also producing a popular guide to brooches from Wroxeter as the second in our Wroxeter series (the coins booklet was published last year and work is in progress on guides to mosaics, grave stele and the forum inscription). Students from Shrewsbury College, Dudley College, Universities of Birmingham, Wolverhampton and Stafford have all undertaken work on the collections.

A detailed research paper on the sculptures and their patronage context from the Bell Inn at Alveley, Shropshire by the author and Dr John Hunt has been completed and accepted for publication in the next volume of the Journal of the British Archaeological Association.

The major archaeological acquisition this year has been the octagonal gold finger ring of later Roman date recovered from Condover last year. After progress through a treasure trove inquest, the artefact was returned to the finder and subsequently purchased by the Museums Service. It will form part of a new display of finger rings and jewellery in the Wroxeter gallery later this year.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS IN SHROPSHIRE IN 1995–6

A summary of archaeological work undertaken in the county reported to the Archaeology Service, Shropshire County Council
compiled by H R Hannaford

Parish	NGR	Site and Description
Aston Eyre	SO 653 941	In October 1995 the University of Bristol Archaeological Service undertook an evaluation of the medieval manor house, Aston Eyre Old Hall (SA601). The evaluation of the standing buildings suggested the solar and possibly the gate-house dated to the early 14th century, with the existing hall building dating from the mid-15th century. Trial excavations revealed a well-preserved medieval floor of creamy yellow plaster within the solar wing. (Horton, 1995)
Bromfield	SO 4848 7746	In 1995, quarrying at the Bromfield Sand and Gravel Quarry exposed a further 30m length of the ditch marking the northeastern side of the Roman marching camp (SA192). A section across this stretch of the ditch was excavated and recorded by the Archaeology Service, Shropshire County Council.
Broseley	SJ 660 010	An archaeological evaluation by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit and Wardell Armstrong of a clay and coal extraction site at Windmill Lane, Posenhall, demonstrated that the proposed quarry area lay outside the boundaries of the medieval settlement of Posenhall. The site of a possible rabbit warren and traces of shallow underground mining were identified within the study area. (Coppin and Josephs, 1994; Mould, 1995; and Coppin and Josephs, 1995)
Cockshutt	SJ 414 293	In January 1996, a waster dump of medieval pottery (SA4715) was found during fieldwalking at Kenwick Park, Cockshutt, near Ellesmere. The fieldwalking was being carried out by staff from the Lancaster University Archaeology Service as part of the English Heritage-funded North West Wetlands Survey. A slightly mounded area of darker soil about 20m in diameter was seen to contain a substantial quantity of pottery. A casual walking of the 20m diameter mound produced 27kg of pottery sherds, consisting of fragments of medieval jugs, cooking pots, and bottles, a quantity of which were obvious wasters. The pottery has been provisionally dated to the late 13th–14th centuries.
Hadley	SJ 655 131	Rescue excavations and salvage recording by the Archaeology Service, Shropshire County Council during the redevelopment of Apley Castle, Leegomery, Telford, (SA696) found traces of early floors in the north range of the surviving buildings, possibly pre-

		dating the early 14th-century stone hall. The excavations have resulted in a slight modification to the ground-plan for the medieval hall as suggested by Morriss and Shoesmith, but otherwise provided supporting evidence for their sequence for the development of the site. (Hannaford, 1996a)
Longden	SJ 457 096	Whitley Grange. A second season of the training excavation was undertaken by Birmingham University on the Roman villa site (SA62) at Whitley on the south side of the Rea Brook. Further elements of the villa were revealed, including a large and well-preserved mosaic. The excavations were directed by Dr Roger White and undertaken within the framework of the Wroxeter Hinterland Project.
Ludlow	SO 5155 7425	In June 1995 the Clwyd–Powis Archaeological Trust carried out an evaluation of a site to the rear of the Angel Hotel, Broad Street, Ludlow. Some sources had suggested occupation of the site from the first half of the 13th century, although the earliest documentary reference to the plot dates to 1551. Four excavation trenches located varying depths of late medieval and post-medieval deposits, and although no direct structural evidence for medieval occupation was found, it was considered that medieval deposits could survive beneath the later accumulations. (Owen and Hankinson, 1975)
Ludlow	SO 512 748	Evidence of medieval occupation and industry in the form of bronze-working and bell-casting was found during an archaeological evaluation by the Archaeology Service, Shropshire County Council, of the site of the proposed new Ludlow Library and Museum Resource Centre. (Hannaford and Stamper, 1996)
Madeley	SJ 689 031	An evaluation of the Lloyds Pumping Engine was carried out by the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust Archaeology Unit. The evaluation concluded that on historical evidence, the Lloyds site might be that of the earliest steam pumping engine (constructed in 1719) in the Ironbridge Gorge. Substantial remains of the Lloyds Engine House and associated structures survive on the site. (Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust Archaeology Unit, 1995)
Oswestry	SJ 300 279	An archaeological evaluation of a stretch of the Dark Age linear earthwork, Wat's Dyke (SA1001), at Maes-y-Clawyd, Oswestry, found both the bank and ditch components of the dyke to be exceptionally well preserved. A number of small fragments of residual Roman Samian pottery were recovered from an excavated sample from the tail of the bank. The site has since been partially developed. (Hannaford, 1996b)
Oswestry Rural	SJ 30 24	In February 1996, the Clwyd–Powys Archaeological Trust undertook an archaeological evaluation of the line of a new navigation channel that would be required as part of the Phase 3 of the Montgomery Canal Restoration. Four sites at Redwith lay in close proximity to the line of the new cut. These included a 400m stretch of Wat's Dyke (SA1001), a cropmark field system (SA2425), a large cropmark ring-ditch (SA1416), and two conjoined cropmark enclosures (SA1306). In one of the evaluation trenches, the lower silts of a ditch were found which corresponded in location to a postulated alignment of Wat's Dyke and a field boundary shown on a 1766 estate map. The evaluation failed to locate any features which might have been associated with the cropmark sites SA1416 and SA1306. (Owen, 1996)
Shrewsbury	SJ 490 125	In June 1996, the Archaeology Service of Shropshire County Council began work on compiling the new Shrewsbury Urban Archaeological Database. The work is part of a nation-wide initiative by English Heritage leading to the preparation of Urban Archaeological Databases (UADs) in thirty or so of the most important English historic towns and cities.

Shrewsbury	SJ 4982 1250	In 1995 and 1996, further work was undertaken by Dr Nigel Baker at Shrewsbury Abbey (SA983) using resistivity and ground penetrating radar techniques to survey an area east and north of the surviving part of the abbey church. The surveys showed that the church formerly had an apsidal end (suggested by BUFAU excavations in 1992), possibly with a Lady Chapel projecting further eastwards. A detached anomaly to the north east is thought to represent a late 18th- early 19th-century building, possibly the abbey gardener's cottage. The GPR survey was undertaken by Dr Shawn Maxwell, Dept of Earth Sciences, Keele University, and funded by the Guild of St Winefred. (Baker, forthcoming)
Shrewsbury	SJ 5026 1046	An archaeological watching brief and salvage recording exercise was maintained by the Archaeology Service, Shropshire County Council, on building work on the chapel of St John, Sutton, Shrewsbury (SA10580). The chancel, which is all that survives above ground of the former parish church, is being restored for use as a church by the Greek Orthodox Church of the Holy Fathers of Nicea. The foundations of the north and south walls of the nave and an early floor surface within the chancel were revealed. (Hannaford, 1996c)
Uppington	SJ 5910 0990	During the course of a watching brief on a new water main, a stretch of the pre-1830 course of the London–Holyhead road was exposed near the Uppington turning on the modern Shrewsbury to Wellington road. Along the southern edge of the turnpike road, remains of the Roman road, Watling Street (SA99), were also seen to survive. The Roman road was seen to have been constructed of red sandstone paving on a boulder clay formation, later re-surfaced with pebbles and gravel in a clay matrix. (Hannaford, 1996d)
Wellington	SJ 644 130	In 1995 Gifford and Partners carried out an archaeological evaluation of a housing development site off Harley Close, Dothill. The development lay about 50m northwest of the site of the medieval moated site and post-medieval house of Dothill Manor, and encroached upon the site of an orchard and recently demolished post-medieval farm buildings. Although remains of these latter buildings were encountered, no traces of the medieval occupation of the site were found by the evaluation. (Wait, 1995)
Wem	SJ 5120 2893	An archaeological evaluation at Market Street, Wem revealed the remains of a medieval kiln, possibly a pottery kiln, in the back plot of a property which fronted onto the High Street in the medieval period (Hannaford, 1996e).
Whitchurch	SJ 544 409	An evaluation of a proposed development site at Bargates, Whitchurch, found pottery suggesting nearby medieval activity. There were no signs of occupation of the site in the Roman period, however, despite its close proximity to the Roman town. (Owen and Hankinson, 1996)
Worthen	SJ 37 02	The programme of consolidation of various surviving mine buildings at Snailbeach Lead Mine (SA984) continued in 1995 with works on the Crusher House and the Office complex. Archaeological recording during these works enabled the identification of the latter building as an early engine house. (Hannaford and Price, 1995)
Wroxeter	SJ 565 075	Halfway House, Wroxeter. An evaluation of a linear cropmark (SA2247) and a possible cropmark enclosure (SA4575) found no significant archaeological remains and concluded that both cropmarks probably represented natural features. (White, 1996)

(The numbers in brackets are the County Sites and Monument Record numbers for individual sites.)

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BOOK REVIEWS

Paul Stamper, *Historic parks and gardens of Shropshire*, Shropshire Books, 1996. ISBN 0–903802–70–8. 123 pp., 126 ill., £12.99.

Paul Stamper's *Historic parks and gardens of Shropshire* is a very welcome addition to the literature on Britain's historic parks and gardens. Its publication is no small achievement, given that detailed and systematic study of Shropshire's parks and gardens only began in the 1990s. Great credit should go to Shropshire County Council for supporting this work and for publishing Dr Stamper's book through its Information and Community Services Department. As Dr Stamper mentions in his Epilogue, public support for this aspect of our historic heritage will only be forthcoming when its full range is made known. This book fulfils that need admirably.

Historic parks and gardens of Shropshire is a wide-ranging survey of the legacy of park and garden making in Shropshire from the mediaeval period almost to the present day. It is well written, magnificently illustrated with photographs, estate maps and plans and illustrations; there are some fascinating ones of parks and gardens long vanished, such as the front cover illustration of the town garden in Shrewsbury. What emerges from the survey is how well endowed with park and garden remains of most periods Shropshire is. Could this have something to do with its relative isolation and rural nature? The county also appears to be very well provided with archival evidence of parks and gardens and Dr Stamper has made extensive and very productive use of it. Contemporary visitors' accounts of their experiences are not forgotten, including an indecisive nineteenth-century one which described Abraham Darby II's property, 'Sunniside' as: 'park and fine sheet of water', which was crossed out and replaced by 'paddock and fish pond'.

Several questions emerge from this survey. First, how does Shropshire compare with its neighbouring counties in terms of the density, range and survival of historic parks and gardens? In this connection, it might have been helpful to those unfamiliar with Shropshire to have given a brief introductory description of the county, its topography and social geography. This would have provided a mental picture, however basic, of the rivers, hills, towns and villages of the county into which to fit the parks and gardens. The picture might be the same in the nearby lowland areas, but to the west, where Shropshire borders on the marcher parts of Wales, there is a changing pattern, already visible within the county, except for the neighbourhood of Oswestry, of a dropping off in numbers of sites. This lower density continues in Radnorshire, Montgomeryshire and parts of Denbighshire. To the north, in Flintshire, the picture is more similar to that in Shropshire. Dr Stamper mentions some specific links beyond the county. There was contact with Wales, for instance at Blodwell Hall, where plants were obtained from Chirk Castle, and with Herefordshire, for instance at The Lodge, near Ludlow, where the landscaping of Richard Payne Knight at Downton and Uvedale Price at Foxley was influential. There are a number of important cross-border families, such as the Lloyds and the Kenyons, with estates in and beyond Shropshire.

The second question is, is the pattern of Shropshire's parks and gardens different in any way from elsewhere? Dr Stamper's book takes us on a chronological tour which includes some remarkable, but not untypical, parks and gardens of their period, suggesting that Shropshire was in touch with but not leading trends and fashions in parks and gardens. The sophisticated mediaeval water garden at Clun Castle, now reduced to earthworks, stands out as one of the few of its kind in the country. The remarkable seventeenth-century gardens at Llanforda might have been quite unusual, but alas they have gone. Shropshire has a number of interesting seventeenth-century gardens, including Condover Hall, Shifnal Manor, Golding Hall, Blodwell Hall and Acton Scott Hall. Tree houses seem to have been a feature of some of them and it would be interesting to know whether this habit was particularly endemic in Shropshire. Certainly I have not found any evidence for any in Wales.

Hawkstone, now splendidly restored, is perhaps the most outstanding of Shropshire's surviving eighteenth-century parks. This is the one site in the county whose fame spread well beyond it. Dr Stamper gives us a full picture of its development and the book has good illustrations of some of its features. The only way fully to appreciate this 'sublime' landscape, however, is to visit it. The county has many landscape parks, a few landscaped by known designers. Weston Park, near Shifnal, appears to have been overlooked. Capability Brown and Humphry Repton worked very little in the county, Repton's only work that was executed being at Attingham Park. Dr Stamper mentions the work of William Emes, who emerges as the most important landscape designer in the county in the eighteenth century, and John Davenport, who did some landscaping at Mawley Hall and Pitchford Hall.

Perhaps one area in which Shropshire stands out is in its early nineteenth-century public walks, many in the countryside, created for general enjoyment by philanthropic landowners. One such was Lincoln Hill, near Coalbrookdale, laid out by a Quaker ironmaster. The parks and gardens of Shropshire's largest town Shrewsbury, are of great interest, particularly the long history and transformations of The Quarry and the private gardens of some of its more eminent residents such as the Darwins. Smaller town gardens, nurseries, including that of William Cobbett, and florists' societies are also mentioned.

Nineteenth-century parks and gardens in the county appear not to have fared too well. Many have been partly or wholly demolished, including the greatest, Tong and Oteley. There were some interesting and downright eccentric developments in this eclectic era, such as the building of a half-scale Stonehenge at The Quinta, Oswestry, and the introduction of eland (where did they go?) at Hawkestone. New owners, many of them Midlands entrepreneurs made good, one even a lottery winner, moved in. It would be interesting to know what happened at this stage to the big local landowning families and their estates.

The survey ends with a number of Edwardian and early twentieth-century gardens in various styles, some created by well-known designers such as Russell Page. Unfortunately, that made by Gertrude Jekyll, probably at Chesterton Farm near Bridgnorth, has not survived. Perhaps the 1950s development of Burford House gardens as the showpiece for the Treasures of Tenbury nursery might have been mentioned. Having taken us to some glorious gardens of this period Dr Stamper drops us at the end into golf courses. I would have preferred a more positive springboard to the future – for instance, gardens in the modernist style, if there are any.

This excellent book joins a small band of published county or, in the case of Wales, country surveys of the historic parks and gardens of a particular region. The historic parks and gardens of Wales, the former county of Avon, Kent, Devon and Shropshire are now much better known than before. The dissemination of knowledge about these fascinating sites can only aid their preservation and in this connection a list of parks and gardens open to the public might have been useful. It is to be hoped that many more counties will follow Shropshire's fine example.

Elisabeth Whittle, Inspector of Ancient Monuments and Historic Buildings,
CADW: Welsh Historic Monuments

Barrie Trinder, *The Industrial Archaeology of Shropshire*. Phillimore & Co, 1996. ISBN 0 85033 989 8, 278pp., 125 ill., £25.00

For those who have cursed Barrie Trinder for frustratingly omitting Clee Hill, Shrewsbury or Snailbeach from *The Industrial Revolution in Shropshire*, all will now be forgiven. Despite the broad implication of his earlier title, it was right and reasonable that it focussed on that exceptional strand in the Industrial Revolution for which the Coalbrookdale area was responsible. Now, *The Industrial Archaeology of Shropshire* sets a context for the subject across the county. Indeed this new work is outstandingly even-handed, scrutinizing rural linen weaving as well as iron smelting, market town malting as well as Coalport ceramics, and examining the barely discernible Shrewsbury coalfield as well as its big brother in Coalbrookdale. Trinder still makes the case for the conspicuous position of Shropshire among the birthplaces of the Industrial Revolution, but he also emphasizes the need to look at regional patterns of industrial activity as a whole.

Barrie Trinder has been teaching and studying industrial archaeology in Shropshire for some thirty years, as an adult education tutor, and, until recently, as a lecturer at the Ironbridge Institute. An amount of research of an unparalleled amount has been at his disposal, much of which he has conducted or supervised himself. Possibly no-one else could have written this book; certainly no-one could have written it with such authority.

The book's scope is mining and manufacturing in the county between 1660 and 1960. Shropshire is one of the most diverse counties in Britain, and Trinder has taken as his structure its division into separate kinds of landscape, so that questions and comparisons are encouraged about the relation of past industries to the landscape of today. The main landscape types identified are coalfields (Clee, Wyre, Shrewsbury, Oswestry and Coalbrookdale), the two market towns, the upland metal mining area, the countryside, and the 'linear

landscapes' of transport routes. These divisions work successfully by and large, though a separate thematic chapter deals with the branches of the textile trades which were located in the town, countryside and coalfield. The structure illuminates the genius of the industries in different parts of Shropshire, their separate histories being defined by local resources and market conditions. The chapters on market towns and rural industries, in particular, contain a wealth of new information about topics such as brewing, housing provision, carriage building, foundries, limestone quarrying and cheese making. It is refreshing to find a strongly systematic approach, indicated by the tabulation of known sites of certain types (for example the fifty rural brickworks noted from the OS maps of the 1880s, or all known paper mills). Two substantial appendices comprehensively list water power sites and turnpike roads. Painstaking work such as this provides for the first time a context for many subjects. It demonstrates, for example, the dominance of grain milling in the use of rural water power (occupying 319 of the 396 sites) and by comparison the trifling significance of wind and steam in this sector (powering only 30 and 20 corn mills respectively).

Hundreds of individual sites are discussed and located with grid references in the text. Detailed archaeological investigations are drawn upon and referenced in the extensive bibliography, though there is insufficient space here for primary analysis or discussion of typology. It is at first surprising that there is hardly a site plan or a reconstruction drawing in the whole book; but this is a work of wide-ranging synthesis rather than a detailed examination.

This is a weighty and authoritative tome of great value to industrial archaeology in Shropshire. It is handsomely produced, with many excellent photographs in the text (an enormous advance for Phillimore). Not only does this book fulfil the outstanding need for a publication which covers Clee Hill as well as Coalbrookdale, it will open many eyes to the myriad other hidden riches of the county.

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Michael Watson and Chris Musson, *Shropshire from the Air: An English County at Work*. Shropshire Books, 1996. ISBN 0–903802–71–6, 98pp., 97 illus., £14.99

This book is a sequel to the same authors' *Shropshire from the Air: Man and the Landscape*, which appeared from the same publisher and printer in 1993. It is in the same popular format: well-produced aerial photographs of a number of sites accompanied by informative descriptions. The introduction says that it 'aims to be chronologically as well as thematically expansive'; i.e. it might contain anything. It is described on the cover as 'an insight into life and work'; it is certainly a window on local human geography and history. It includes a site index map, a list of photographs with dates, and a reading list. Michael Watson is the County Archaeologist and Chris Musson an architect, archaeologist and investigator in air photography for the Welsh Royal Commission.

The book invites comparison with its predecessor. It consists of ix + 98 pages in comparison with the earlier xi+119. One finds on the title page a small photograph of what seems an unremarkable traffic roundabout, but in the field beside it is the outline of a prehistoric enclosure. To the general reader not yet familiar with aerial archaeology a moment's study of the picture introduces the notion of what a powerful aid this comparatively new art must be. However, it might have made a better title image to the earlier volume in which aerial archaeology is explained and used. The present volume has moved on and is concerned with aerial views of industrial sites where the form of buildings and earthworks is of interest, rather than what is below ground. Of the present collection only one, or perhaps two, pictures concern features below the ground.

There are 92 pictures, all but 23 in colour. The great majority were taken in 1994/5. The authors probably did not have such a rich collection to choose from this time. Many were taken in winter, some with snow clarifying the irregularities of the ground surface. In the previous volume a larger proportion were in black and white. For extensive views of landscape black and white is preferable, as colour adds nothing to information, causes indistinctness and there tends to be blue haze. There is even indistinctness in some closer scenes, such as the shot of Bridgnorth. The present volume does not maintain the standard of its predecessor, in which the pictures have a greater clarity. It is also a little rash to publish a picture both inside and on the cover, inviting the reader to see how much better clarity and colour would have been if the whole book had been printed on glazed paper.

In the earlier volume the photographs were arranged chronologically. In this volume the subject matter is forced into six broad thematic categories (rural, extractive, processing, communications, market and commerce, and utilities). In a book intended at one level for intelligent browsing, or at another for *ad hoc* reference to particular sites, a chronological arrangement of the subject matter is less pretentious and perfectly adequate.

There is a fine frontispiece picture of a hockey match, the caption of which acknowledges that it is nothing to do with the subject of the book. The first thematic section includes types of traditional farming, related to geology,

some ridge and furrow drainage and lynchet fields, a moated site and some hilltop pillow-mounds, followed by views of modern farming of an industrialised character. The second section includes mining or quarrying sites plus a view of the Dingle in Shrewsbury. It includes several sites of what is often called squatter settlement where waste land is occupied apparently casually in some association, usually with mining or quarrying. The third section is the one most conventionally describable as industry, i.e. production and processing. It starts unexpectedly with two views of Wroxeter (on the grounds that tiles and pottery were made, at least used, there), bearing no comparison with the excellent black and white views of Wroxeter in the earlier volume; it continues with Hadley, for making bricks, Broseley for pipes and Coalport for porcelain. Iron is represented by a forest (timber having been needed for charcoal as fuel in furnaces), Charlcotte furnace, then Coalbrookdale and Ironbridge. Modern industry is represented by sites in and around Telford. The section concludes with mills of various type, mineral water, and a sawmill. The fourth section deals with communications, from prehistoric trackways to radar installations. The last two sections are leftovers, town scenes, Ironbridge power station, water and sewage, and the Shirehall. In addition to the archival reference of each photograph, which not many readers will need, one might have been given the compass direction of view and a grid reference to the point at bottom centre. Persons technically interested in photography might have welcomed some information on cameras, lenses, film and exposures.

The explanations appended to each picture are compact and informative, without excessive padding, but a little affected by hyperbole. The proof-reading is not faultless, and no publisher should put out work with a typographical error on the cover. The Introduction misses an opportunity to place the county in a wider picture. It assures us that most people regard the industrial history of Shropshire as synonymous with the Industrial Revolution, and that Shropshire laid the foundations of it, without any comment, for example, on the comparative backwardness of the county in the textile industries which held centre stage in that Revolution.

This is a book not quite maintaining the standard of its predecessor, but full of striking images and solid information. Aerial photographs have such appeal that they risk turning even squalor and pollution into a visual work of art; but they are better than maps as an aid to understanding how sites functioned and the authors should be encouraged to open their archives and continue their collaboration with further popular volumes.

Lance Smith

David Loyd, *Ludlow* (The Archive Photograph Series). Chalford Publishing Company, 1995. 0 7524 0155 6. Pp. 160. £8.99

To succeed at other than a very parochial level an old photographs book requires a strong linking theme, whether through its subject matter, its topographic scope, or because of tight chronological limits. This volume, compiled by Ludlow's leading historian and drawing on the endeavours of the town's Historical Research Group, sets out to do that by grouping its material in a series of discrete chapters. About half, the first part of the book, comprise an examination of the townscape including the surrounding suburbs. The remainder concentrate more on the Ludlovians themselves, in chapters headed 'Earning a Living', 'Government'. 'Body, Mind and Soul', 'Recreation', 'Wartime', and 'Today and Tomorrow'.

What also lifts a photographs book out of the mass of such productions are lucid, accurate and interesting captions. These make the content not only instructive but also an archive for the future, so often the information there recorded otherwise lying only in the memories of those who contribute the original photographs. In this the book scores highly, and in no small way serves as a companion to David Lloyd's earlier excellent collection of images compiled with Peter Klein, *Ludlow: An Historic Town in Words and Pictures* (1984). In fact, many of the images here reproduced are not photographs but paintings and drawings, and the captions include useful biographical sketches of several of the artists such as Henry Peach Robinson – better known, of course, as a photographer than a watercolourist – Philip Wison Steer, and G P Boyce.

If not all of the images are of great intrinsic interest what emerges is a more rounded picture of Ludlow than a visitor would gain if his reading was confined to Christopher Hussey or Alec Clifton Taylor. Streets of council houses such as Sandpits Avenue, the first four houses of which were occupied in 1929, are just as much a part of the fabric and structure of the town as Broad Street or Corve Street, and their histories and inhabitants merit equal record and respect. Many of the photographs of social and working life serve as reminders of just how rapid change has been over the past century, and of how much attitudes and indeed vocabulary have changed. A delightful poster of 1888 advertises a forthcoming football match between Ludlow and Wolverhampton Wanderers (in fact, as the caption reveals, their Reserves); admission was 6d., or 3d. for 'Working Class'.

Future historians of Ludlow will be grateful for the publication of this volume and for the preservation in print of so many ephemeral images. Its importance will increase substantially as time passes.

Paul Stamper, English Heritage

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