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CONTENTS

Front Cover: Kinlet Parish Church (see pages 35-46).

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The Whetstone Blanks from the Forum Gutter at Roman Wroxeter: The Case for Provenance

By J. R. L. ALLEN[1] AND A. C. SCOTT[2]

Abstract: The hand-specimen appearance, petrography, detrital mineralogy and palynology of this exceptional assemblage of whetstones strongly point to their origin in the early Cretaceous Weald Clay Formation of the western/northwestern Weald of southeast England, and not in the Middle Jurassic or Kentish rag source as previously suggested. Whetstones of a similar character are widely distributed at a variety of mid and late Roman sites in central-southern and southeastern England, plausibly supporting Atkinson's proposal that a substantial geomaterials industry making hones existed at this time in Roman Britain.

Introduction

Stone industries were of great importance in Roman Britain, and their sites or districts of operation have in several cases now been identified. These industries afforded building and architectural materials (e.g. Sellwood 1984; Pearson 2003, 2006; Hayward 2009; Allen 2010), stone for decoration and ornamentation (e.g. Cunliffe 1971a, 1971b; Lawson 1975; Allen *et al*. 2007), grindstones for milling (e.g. Peacock 1987, 2013, Shaffrey 2006) and stone mortars for the kitchen (e.g. Palmer 2001). Whetstones – perhaps the humblest but nonetheless essential objects of stone – are commonly recorded at archaeological sites (Allen 2014), but are generally poorly characterized and are mostly thought of as opportunistic in origin rather than as the products of some substantial, organized industry with a regional reach. At Wroxeter, however, the extraordinary deposit encountered by excavators in the east portico gutter of the Roman forum included a large number of whetstone blanks that led Atkinson (1942, 130) to conclude that 'we have here a consignment from a quarry which did a large and widespread business…during the second century'. The purpose of the present paper is to give a detailed, scientific account of these whetstone blanks from the gutter, in an attempt to build a case, backed by evidence, that will resolve the question of the several, conflicting, previous interpretations of their provenance, and that may lead to their wider recognition at archaeological sites across Britain.

The Whetstone Blanks: Discovery and Manufacture

The whetstone blanks, totalling about 100, were discovered along with other items when Atkinson (1942, 127–131, pl. 31A) in 1923 excavated the portico gutter running along the eastern (Watling Street) side of the forum in the Roman town (see also White and Barker 2002, 64, col. pl. 4). The blanks were thought to have originally been in a [?wooden] box, although no trace of that remained. Associated with them in the gutter were at least 20 Mancetter-Hartshill *mortaria*, many of which carried the same maker's stamp (SENNIUS) and clearly came from a single workshop, and a total of 210 decorated (13) or plain (197) samian vessels of various forms, typically in nests. A thick deposit of roofing tiles and building debris buried the items in the gutter. Atkinson interpreted the finds as the stock of shops in the eastern portico which had collapsed into the gutter after the fire of *c*.170 AD, but they could alternatively have been stock held in lock-up storerooms.

What is archived in the Shrewsbury Museum in numerous bags is a mixture of whole and broken blanks (Forum Gutter 20.00001). The whole blanks are bars of sandstone between 290 and 305 mm. in length, that is,

approximately the 'Roman' foot (296 mm.); a few measure 320 mm., rather nearer the provincial foot. The cross-section is rectangular, typically measuring (15–18)×(22–24) mm., although a few are almost square. The long edges on most specimens carry, as Atkinson (1942, 120) depicts, shallow, rectangular, sharp-cornered, smooth-sided rebates indicative of the mode of manufacture. He envisages the process as follows: 'A slab of stone having been procured and cut to the approximate width of a Roman foot, parallel grooves were cut about 1 inch apart on each side sufficiently deep to enable the bars to be successively snapped off by a sharp blow, and the rough broken surface was then rubbed smooth.' The character of the rebates, which are straight, unwavering and without minutely chipped margins, strongly suggests that the grooves were produced by sawing rather than chiselling. The tool used is likely to have had a slightly convex blade supplied with water and sand. In his account of the blanks, however, Cantrill (1931, 97) incorrectly depicts the rebates as V-shaped and regards them as 'cut on each face with a graving-tool'. Manning (1995, ch. 17) gives from excavated evidence an account of the process of whetstone manufacture similar to that inferred by Atkinson (1942), except as regards the making of the grooves.

Sedimentology

In hand-specimen, the rock used to make the blanks is a greenish grey (Munsell 2.5-5GY6/1–7/1), laminated, very fine- to fine-grained, well-sorted, firmly cemented, slightly micaceous, lustre-mottled, calcareous quartz sandstone. Carbonaceous granules, including brightly-reflective charcoal, and planty debris are strewn over the laminae in some blanks. A few shell fragments, especially of oyster-like forms, were seen in a few others. The bars, when suspended from the fingers, emit a musical note when lightly struck. The rock may be described as acoustic.

The lamination is delicate and of the parallel kind. It can be truly planar, but is more often very gently wavy on a scale of 20–25 cm., as is best seen on the sides of the bars, some bundles of laminae exhibiting slight cross-cutting relationships. These features of the lamination are strongly reminiscent of the swash-backwash (Allen 1984, B461-469) and antidune (Allen 1984, A411-416) bedding, widely developed by high-energy, wave-induced flows on gently-sloping, sandy beaches, and also of the 'storm-bedding', which can also be wave-influenced, recorded from inshore marine sandstones (Allen 1984, 3 fig. 12–15).

Thin-sections for examination by petrographic microscope were cut from three broken bars (bags 81–90, 101–110, 111–122). The rock is a very well-sorted, very fine- to fine-grained sandstone dominated by subangular, occasionally etched grains of mainly simple quartz (Fig. 1). There are rare-common muscovite flakes and grains of finely to coarsely microcrystalline chert. Feldspars, chiefly plagioclase, but with some microcline, are very rare. Grains of bright-green glauconite are present, but are no more abundant than several to a thin-section. The main bioclastic debris, very variable in quantity and chiefly concentrated in laminae, takes the form of generally fragmented, thin-walled shells which are unlikely when whole to have been more than several millimetres across. These are interpreted as ostracods. There are occasional larger shell fragments, foraminifera and small sea-urchin spines. Scattered fish bones, teeth and scales have also been seen. The carbonaceous debris is also variable in distribution and amount. Some granules appear to be pyritized and other fragments exhibit anatomical structure; some large fragments exhibit intricate fractures. The cement is finely poikilotopic (lustre-mottled) calcite, associated here and there with clay minerals.

From two of the bars used for thin-sectioning a composite sample was formed for heavy-mineral analysis (bags 81–90, 111–122). The sample was first decalcified in cold, dilute hydrochloric acid and the insoluble part afterwards washed and dried. The heavy-minerals present in the dried sample were separated off using sodium metatungstate (S.G. 2.95) in standard equipment and then mounted on a glass slide for identification under the petrographic microscope. A total of 398 non-opaque grains were counted, the full result appearing in Table 1 and a critical summary in the first results column of Table 2. The heavy-mineral assemblage is a mixture of species originating ultimately in acid-igneous and regionally metamorphosed rocks. It is dominated by zircon, but there are significant amounts of rutile, tourmaline and garnet, along with small quantities of epidote, kyanite, sillimanite and staurolite, also from a regionally metamorphosed source. In an attempt to resolve the issue of provenance, this assemblage is compared below with suites recorded from a number of candidate geological sources of the blanks.

Palaeontology

The blanks also contain occasional macrofossils that could also help to date them geologically. Cantrill (1931, 97), who examined the bars shorty after their discovery, reported the presence of 'several species of lamellibranchs' (bivalve molluscs), but this is not clear in the archived material. What is present includes a small species of oyster that was referred by his colleague J. Pringle at the Geological Survey to *Ostrea acuminata* J. Sowerby, a form 'that clearly points to the rock having been obtained from a narrow, well-defined band in the [Middle Jurassic]
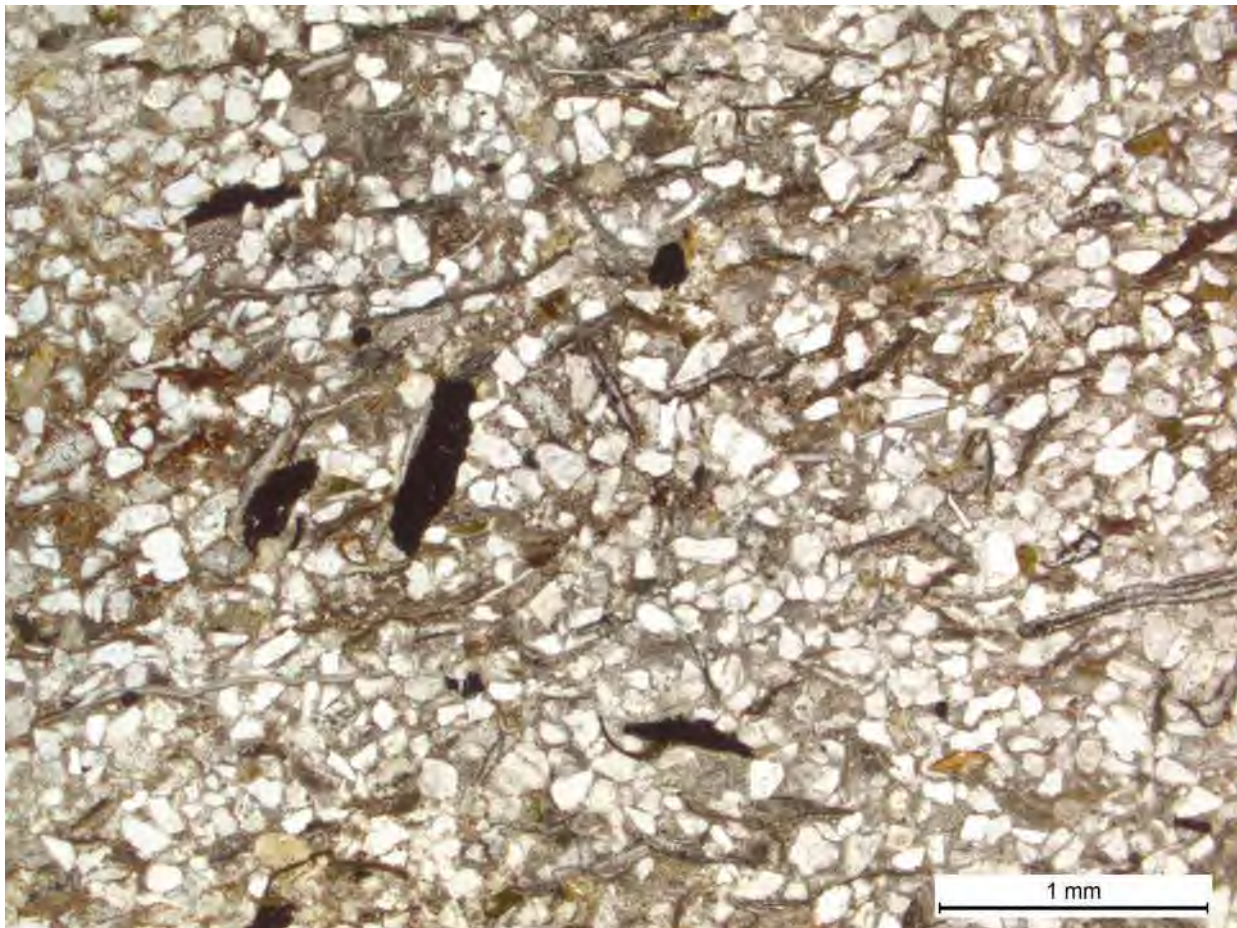
Figure 1 Photomicrograph of a Wroxeter whetstone in thin-section (Shrewswbury Museum, Forum Gutter 20.00001, bag 111–122). Ordinary light.

Table 1 Composition of the heavy-mineral suite (non-opaque) recovered from a composite sample of whetstones from Roman Wroxeter (Shrewsbury Museum, Forum Gutter 20.00001, Bags 81–90, 111–122).

Mineral Species	No. of Grains	No. %
epidote	4	1.01
garnet	26	6.53
kyanite	6	1.51
sillimanite	4	1.01
staurolite	9	2.26
zoisite	1	0.25
zircon	226	56.78
tourmaline	29	7.29
amphibole	3	0.75
pyroxene	1	0.25
rutile	80	20.10
titanite	6	1.51
monazite	1	0.25
brookite	2	0.50
totals	398	100.00

Great Oolite Series' outcropping perhaps where 'Watling Street traverses an area between Stony Stratford and Towcester' near the Buckinghamshire-Northamptonshire border. The presence of an ostreid is unquestionable, but the evidence for the attribution to this particular species is doubtful; oysters are a geologically long-ranging group and other small species merit consideration. One of the foraminifera seen in thin-section could be identified as a biserial form restricted to the Middle Jurassic onward (Haslett per. comm. 2012).

Table 2 Summary of the heavy-mineral composition of whetstones from Wroxeter (see Table 1) compared to candidate late Jurassic and early Cretaceous geological sources.

Species/ratio	W	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	J	K	L
zircon (%)	56.8	25.0	21.0	31.0	25.0	4.4	76.6	55.6	78.0	16.0	57.1	28.0
tourmaline (%)	7.3	7.0	20.0	8.3	7.2	27.9	7.6	4.4	4.0	9.4	13.2	9.4
tourmaline:zircon	0.129	0.280	0.952	0.268	0.288	6.34	0.099	0.079	0.051	0.588	0.231	0.336
rutile:zircon	0.354	0.312	0.352	0.187	0.232	1.18	0.020	0.034	0.013	0.113	0.305	0.307
metamorphic:igneous	0.192	0.213	0.117	0.181	0.112	1.51	0.176	0.637	0.146	–	0.077	0.136
kyanite:garnet	0.231	0.208	1.71	0.279	1.20	83.5	–	–	1.00	–	0.007	6.5
staurolite:garnet	0.346	0.188	1.64	0.302	1.40	47.1	–	–	3.00	–	0.138	5.0
kyanite:staurolite	0.670	1.11	1.06	0.923	0.857	1.78	0.287	2.21	0.333	–	0.050	1.30
glauconite	pr.	pr.	pr.	pr.	pr.	–	pr.	pr.	–	–	pr.	pr.

Sources of data by column: W (Wroxeter, this paper); A (Portland Sand, Swindon, Allen and Parker 1995, table 4); B (Portland Sand, Oxon-Bucks, Allen and Parker 1995, table 4); C (sandstones, Weald Clay Formation, Surrey-Sussex, Allen and Parker 1995, table 4); D (basal Sandringham Sand, Norfolk, Allen and Parker 1995, table 4); E (Leziate Beds, topmost Sandringham Sand, Norfolk, Allen 2004, table 11.1); F (Hythe Beds, western Weald, Wood 1956, table I); G (Folkestone Beds, western Weald, Wood 1956, table I); H (Folkestone Beds, Kent, Worrall 1954, table I); J (Hastings Beds, east Kent Coalfield, Allen 1967, table I); K (Hastings Beds, central Weald, Allen 1949, table II); L (Whitchurch Sand Formation, Oxon-Bucks, Allen and Parker 1995, table 4). Values for the candidate source-rocks are based on means calculated from the primary counts.

The chief microfossils present are plant fragments. They are seen as scattered, dark specks dispersed through all the whetstone blanks, but in some examples as millimetre-sized charcoal (Scott 2010) and other non-charred plant debris that densely strew certain laminae. Part of a blank with such a strew (bag 101–110) was macerated in a mixture of 10% hydrochloric acid and 40% hydrofluoric acid to release the plant material (Pearson and Scott 1999). Organic fragments were picked and examined by scanning electron microscopy (SEM, Hitachi S-3000N)) after being mounted on stubs using double-sided sticky carbon discs and coated with gold in a Polaron Coating Unit E5100. Some SEM images were processed in photoshop to increase brightness or contrast. The plant assemblages recovered comprises two distinctive elements.

Uncharred plant fragments are the rarest component. These include a distinctive lycopsid megaspore with an equatorial dimension without the ornament of 1.2 mm. seen in lateral compression (Fig. 2A, B). The specimen shows a distinctive subgula where the leasurae expand into a small rounded gula (see Hemsley and Scott 1991). The remnants of the ornament (Fig. 2B), which is considerably eroded, occur between the equator and curvaturae and include projections which have rounded ends. The area outside the curvaturae is smooth.

Much more common are charcoal fragments of 1–3 mm. in maximum dimension (Fig. 2C). Under SEM the particles appear to represent gymnospermous secondary wood. While identification of such small wood fragments is not possible, a number of instructive observations can be made. The cell walls are homogenized (Fig. 2D), indicating that the charring temperature was above 325°C (Scott 2010). Some charcoal fragments show evidence of representing compression wood (Fig. 2F). In tangential longitudinal section (TLS) some specimens show axial parenchyma and rays. The rays are predominantly uniseriate and of varying height (Fig. 2G), some with crossfields and others a single pit. Uniseriate circular bordered pits are evident on radial tracheid walls (Fig. 2H). Some non-woody, possibly fern, charcoal also occurs, as do some unidentified axes (Frig. 2E) which maybe fern in origin.

There is little doubt that the megaspore belongs to the genus *Setosisporites* Zerndt and is most similar to the species *S. praetextus* (Zerndt) Potonie and Kremp. This could be significant, as the genus is of late Palaeozoic age and the species is Carboniferous, commonly occurring in the British Westphalian Coal Measures (Hemsley and Scott 1991, Scott and Hemsley 1996). However, the specimen is eroded and, being small, might easily along with megaspores recovered from other deposits have been reworked (Collinson *et al*. 1983, and references therein). The charcoal is not age-diagnostic, but some caveats should be made. There is no evidence of any lycopsid charcoal that might be expected if the rock used to make the whetstone blanks was from a Carboniferous source. In addition, the most common late Carboniferous gymnosperm charcoal is that of *Dadaxylon*, the large tree *Cordaites* (Falcon-Lang and Scott 2000), but the anatomy differs from that recovered from the blank. The charcoal is well-preserved, suggesting that it is of the same age as the enclosing sediment. There are no rounded fragments showing evidence of long transport or reworking (Nichols *et al*. 2000). Charcoal is abundant throughout the British Mesozoic (Scott 2000), but in the Cenozoic (Tertiary) of Britain is only found in the earliest part, the Paleocene (Collinson *et al*. 2007). Charcoal is most common in the Lower Cretaceous of southern England (Collinson *et al*. 2000, Brown *et al*. 2012). Many of the fragments from the blank are identical to those described by Collinson *et al*. (2000) from the Wealden of the Isle of Wight, although these cannot be taxonomically assigned. Charcoalified plant material is found both in non-marine and marine Cretaceous sediments (Brown *et al*. 2012).

From these observations it can be suggested that the whetstone blanks were made from a Cretaceous sandstone, but with reworked Carboniferous elements, a feature of late Jurassic and early Cretaceous arenaceous sediments in southern England (e.g. Allen 1961). It is possible, however, that another Mesozoic unit was exploited, but a Palaeozoic source for the whetstones is not favoured by the plant content.

The Geological Source of the Whetstone Blanks

The palaeontological features recorded above from the blanks are insufficient to yield a specific age for the geological source, but they do urge a later Mesozoic rather than an earlier or perhaps subsequent provenance. One mineralogical feature, the presence of glauconite, rules out a Mesozoic source dating to before the Upper Jurassic and, therefore, Pugh's (in Cantrill 1931) attribution of the blanks to an horizon in the Middle Jurassic Great Oolite Series.

Of the many candidate sandstones, the blanks on a hand-specimen basis most closely resemble sandstones present in the early Cretaceous Weald Clay Formation outcropping in the Weald of Kent, Surrey and especially Sussex (Dines and Edmunds 1933, Worssam 1963, Shephard-Thorn *et al*. 1966, Thurrell *et al*. 1968, Allen 1976, Gallois and Worssam 1993). This formation, with a greatest thickness of *c*.450 m., is of mixed freshwater, brackish and marine origin and complex lithologically, but predominantly argillaceous (MacDougall and Prentice 1964). Present are upward of 30 mappable sandstone units, mostly from a few to a few tens of metres in thickness, which can be traced laterally for distances of hundreds of metres to many kilometres. Like the Wroxeter blanks, the Wealden sandstones are typically very fine-to fine-grained and, when unweathered, calcareous, lustre-mottled and
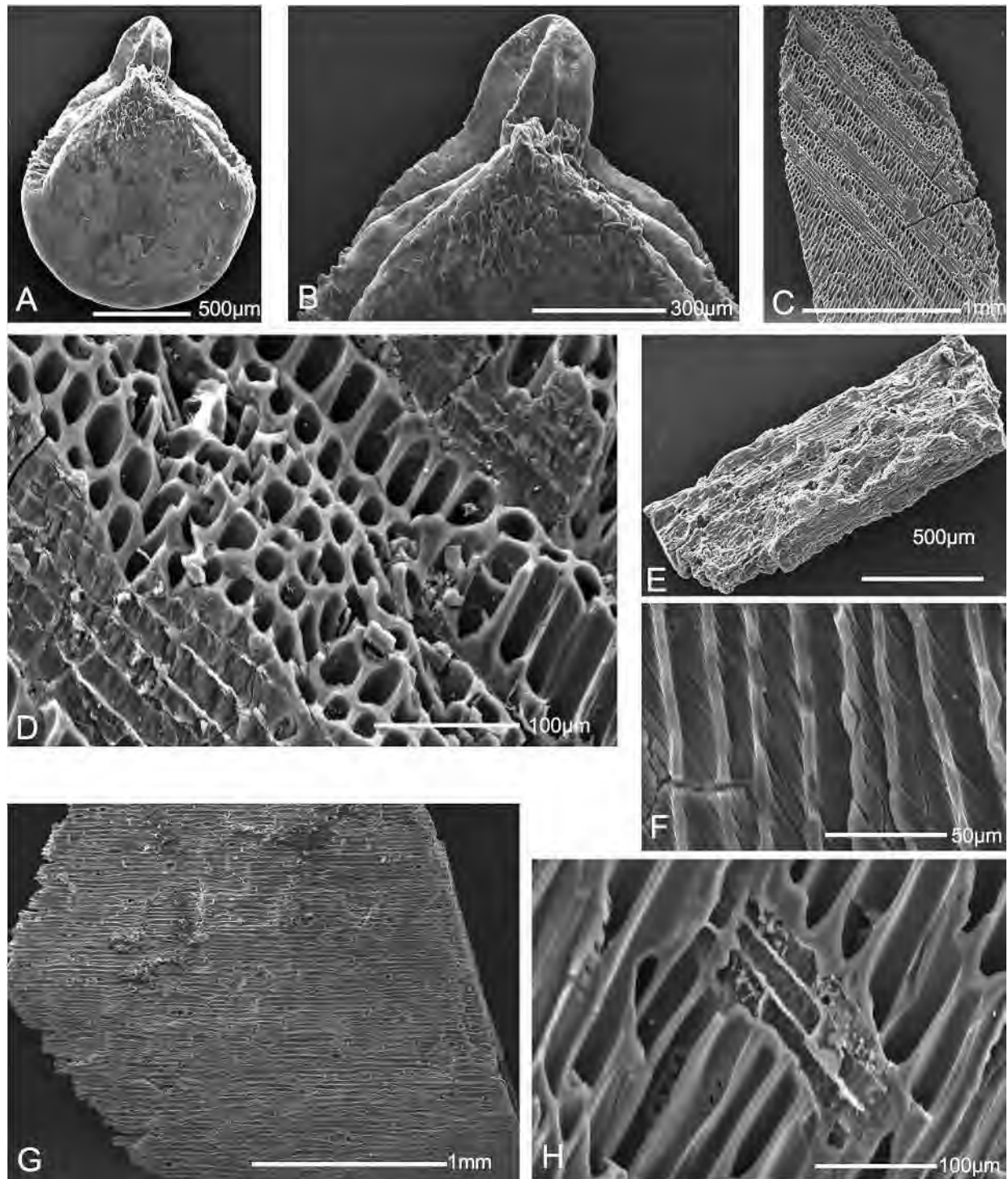
Figure 2 Scanning Electron Micrograph of plant material from a Wroxeter whetstone (Shrewsbury Museum, Forum Gutter 20.00001, bag 101–110). A, B: megaspore, C-H charcoal. A: lateral compression of megaspore with subgula, belonging to the genus *Setosisporites* of Carboniferous age (WROX 1a). B: detail of A showing eroded ornament and subgula (WROX 1a). C: gymnosperm wood charcoal fragment (WROX 2f). D: detail of C showing tracheids with homogenized cell walls. E: unidentified charcoalified axis (WROX 3e). F: radial longitudinal section of gymnosperm wood showing checking interpreted as compression wood (WROX 2b). G: tangential longitudinal section of gymnosperm wood fragment with uniseriate rays (WROX 2a). H: detail of radial longitudinal section of C with ray and uniseriate bordered pits in wood tracheids.

greenish grey (MacDougall and Prentice 1964, quoting the same Munsell colour of 5GY 6/1). They are variably micaceous and some are glauconitic (Thurrell *et al*. 1993, 29, 52, 53; Gallois and Worssam 1993, 69, 76, 79, 80). Others are described as containing granular carbonaceous matter (Thurrell *et al*. 1968, 22, 35, 47, 52). Many were found to include 'plant fragments' or 'plant remains', 'coalified wood' or 'lignite' (Prentice 1962, 182; Worssam 1963, 13; Shephard-Thorn *et al*. 1966, 81; Thurrell *et al*. 1968, 19, 22, 32, 34, 48, 49, 53, 59, 61; Gallois and

Worssam 1993, 82). Rootlet horizons and soil-beds are occasionally seen in the formation (Thurrell *et al*. 1968, 53; Gallois and Worssam 1993, 73, 80, 81). Brown *et al*. (2012, table 1) recently reviewed botanical studies of charcoal and charred plant material in the Wealden sediments of the Weald and the Isle of Wight. Also present in these areas, which are distinct in terms of the provenance of the sediments, are the remains of aquatic and aerial insects and the famous dinosaurs.

The other fossils recorded from Weald Clay Formation are a narrow variety of marine-freshwater molluscs and especially ostracods of freshwater, brackish and marine origins, so plentiful and widely distributed as to be of zonal value (Dines and Edmunds 1933, Worssam 1963, Kilenyi and Allen 1968, Thurrell *et al*. 1968). Brackish-marine influences on sedimentation are evident at many levels throughout the formation, especially in the northwest Weald, but are strongest about one-third of the way up and near the top (Gallois and Worssam 1993, fig. 17). At the latter level, in the Reigate area, Dines and Edmunds (1963, 114–115) recorded an assemblage that included *Ostrea* and *Cardium*. A summary and further details from the western Weald are provided by Kilenyi and Allen (1968).

Heavy-mineral assemblages offer a complementary route to the source of the whetstones. Compared with the suite from Wroxeter summarized in Table 2, several candidate formations can be quickly dismissed. Boswell (1916, 578–579, table IV) describes the early Cenozoic, commonly glauconitic Reading Beds of the London Basin as yielding common-extremely abundant tourmaline, absent-common garnet, common-abundant staurolite and abundant kyanite. The Reading Beds according to Wooldridge and Gill (1925) have very abundant staurolite and abundant kyanite, again at variance with the Wroxeter findings. The early Cretaceous deposits of the West of England and East Anglia can also be dismissed. Boswell (1923, 207–212) finds the former to have predominant tourmaline, exceedingly plentiful staurolite, rare-abundant kyanite and absent-extremely rare garnet. The non-glauconitic Leziate Beds (Sandringham Sands) and basal Sandringham Sands of west Norfolk, equated with the Hastings Beds of the Weald (see Table 2D, E), are dominated in a quantified assemblage by kyanite and tourmaline with very subordinate zircon (Allen 2004, table 11.1); comparable qualitative findings from East Anglia are provided by Rastall (1919). Although commonly glauconitic, the Lower Greensand (Hythe Beds, Sandgate Beds, Folkestone Beds) of the Weald can also be discounted. As quantified by Worrall (1954; 1956, table I) and Wood (1956, table I), assemblages from the Folkestone Beds in the western Weald are rich in kyanite, whereas in Kent zircon abounds; in the Sandgate and Hythe Beds throughout the area zircon predominates and metamorphic minerals, other than kyanite, are very rare. As listed in Table 2F, G, H, these formations have tourmaline:zircon and rutile:zircon ratios which are clearly distinct from the Wroxeter assemblage. What cannot be correct therefore is the attribution by Rhodes (1986, 241), followed by Anderson *et al*. (2000, 188) and White and Barker (2002, 64), of the Wroxeter whetstones to the Kentish rag facies of the Hythe Beds. The petrography of the rag (Worssam and Tatton-Brown 1994), typified by an abundance of large rhaxellid sponges (e.g. Allen 2007, pl. VIIIB), likewise denies such an attribution. The earliest Cretaceous Hastings Beds of the Weald, although including glauconitic rocks (Allen *et al*. 1964), can also be dismissed as candidates for the blanks. The Hastings Beds in east Kent (Allen 1967, table I) do not match the Wroxeter rock (Table 2J), nor do the much better known sandstones of this age (Allen 1949, table II; assemblages also reported by Milner 1923a, 1923b) in the central Weald (Table 2K). A sandstone formation outcropping in Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire, correlated with the Hastings Beds, also fails to fit the bill. This is the Whitchurch Sand Formation (Horton *et al*. 1995, 81–90), of brackish-freshwater origin, a complex of ferruginous sands with clay and ironstone bands. The quantified heavy-mineral assemblage (Allen and Parker (1995, table 4) is broadly like that of the early Cretaceous sands of Lincolnshire and Norfolk, but very different from the Wroxeter blanks in terms of the ratios between the metamorphic minerals (Table 2L).

Two formations, however, yield heavy-mineral assemblages which closely resemble the Wroxeter suite. Neaverson (1925) gave a qualitative account of assemblages he separated from the Portland Sand (Upper Jurassic) at numerous localities from the Dorset coast through Wiltshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire. In the more northerly of these he found zircon, tourmaline and rutile in association with significant amounts of the metamorphic minerals garnet, kyanite and staurolite. Table 2A, B gives details of quantified assemblages measured by Allen and Parker (1995, table 4) from Oxfordshire-Buckinghamshire sites (Horton *et al*. 1995) and the famous Garden Quarries in Old Swindon in Wiltshire. The Wroxeter whetstones agree best with the Oxon-Bucks samples; the Swindon sandstone differs substantially in the tourmaline:zircon, kyanite:garnet and staurolite:garnet ratios. There is a similarly close and almost equally good match (Table 2C) between the Wroxeter whetstones and sandstones present in the Weald Clay Formation of the central and western Weald (Allen 1975, tables II, III; Allen and Parker 1964, table 4). Which of the Portlandian and the Wealden sandstones is the more likely to have been the source can be settled on the basis of sandstone petrography. All three sandstones are calcareous, very fine- to fine-grained and glauconitic. The Portland Sand, however, typically mixes generally abundant peloids of calcite mud with the quartz and includes a much greater variety of often coarser bioclastic material than is found in the Wroxeter blanks (e.g. Allen 2008, 32); the latter sandstone is conspicuously devoid of peloids and the shell fragments are small and largely of ostracod origin.

Concluding Discussion

The general lithology, petrography, mineralogy and palynology of the whetstone blanks from Wroxeter combine strongly to suggest that these were made from a sandstone present in the Lower Cretaceous Weald Clay Formation cropping out in the western/northwestern Weald. Previous suggestions of a Middle Jurassic source or provenance in the Hythe Beds (Kentish rag facies), also of Lower Cretaceous age, are not sustained by the evidence.

The extreme freshness of the sandstone suggests that it was won perhaps from a mine rather than a deep quarry, as the outcrop of the Weald Clay Formation has a thick weathered zone. Origin in an estuarine-coastal depositional environment seems plausible. Here vigorous waves and other currents shaped beaches and shoals in which, under Cretaceous conditions, sand of fluviomarine origin became mingled and hydraulically sorted with charcoal and charred plant material washed in by episodic floods from the sites of wildfires on the neighbouring land areas (Brown *et al*. 2012, fig. 13; Scott *et al*. 2014).

Could this Wealden sandstone have been the basis, as Atkinson (1942, 130) suggests, of a significant whetstone industry in Roman Britain of the second to fourth century (see also Rhodes 1986, Parker Pearson 2003)? There are many accounts, some supported by thin-section petrography, of whetstones from 19 widely scattered sites of several kinds, but mostly on or near the system of main roads, which are plausibly of the same material as the Wroxeter blanks (Fig. 3). Most of these whetstones are reported or found to be of calcareous sandstone, or the

Figure 3   Distribution of Roman sites with whetstones plausibly of origin in the Weald Clay Formation (Lower Cretaceous) of the Weald (outcrop shown). Sources: Asthall (Roe 1997); Boreham (Major and Lott 2003); Canvey Island (N. Lewin, pers. comm. 2012 and this paper); Catsgore (Moore 1982); Chelmsford (Wickenden 1988); Colchester (Crummy 1983); Fishbourne (Peacock 1971); Dorchester (this paper); Fiskerton (Parker Pearson 2003); London (Rhodes 1986); Tackley (Shaffrey and Allen 2014); Northampton (Rhodes 1986); Puckeridge (Trow and Middleton 1988); Scole (Rogerson 1977); Silchester (Allen 2014); Uley (Roe 1993); Verulamium (Goodburn and Grew 1984); Winchester (Rodwell 2008); Wroxeter (this paper, Anderson *et al*. 2000); York (Berridge 1976).

cementing agent is left unspecified; in the light of the present investigation, their general attribution to Kentish rag (Hythe Beds), as claimed by, for example, Rhodes (1986) and Parker Pearson (2003), is doubtfully correct. The presence of glauconite is commonly mentioned (Peacock 1971, Berridge 1976, Rogerson 1977, Moore 1982, Roe 1992, Major and Lott 2003, Parker Pearson 2003) and muscovite is also reported. Ostracods were found in some of the whetstones (Rhodes 1977, Moore 1982, Crummy 1983, Roe 1993, Parker Pearson 2003. Goodburn and Grew (1984) report the presence of carbonaceous inclusions in a fossiliferous whetstone from Verulamium. Pyritized carbonacerous inclusions with anatomical structure are seen at a mid-Oxfordshire site (Shaffrey and Allen 2014). As at the forum in Wroxeter, many of the whetstones have rectangularly rebated long edges (e.g. Goodburn and Grew 1984, Rhodes 1986, Wickenden 1988, Roe 1997, Anderson *et al*. 2000, Major and Lott 2003, Shaffrey and Allen 2012), the examples from Fiskerton being especially fine (Parker Pearson 2003, fig. 6.4). Whetstones from the Weald Clay Formation are also reported from a Romano-British site dating to the first and second centuries AD at the eastern tip of Canvey Island in the Thames Estuary (M. Lewin pers. comm. 2012). These fragments have rebated long edges and, in thin-section, reveal ostracods and charred pant material with anatomical structure. Unpublished excavations begun in 1937 at Colliton Park, Dorchester, yielded a whetstone of greenish grey calcareous sandstone with rectangularly rebated long edges that, in thin-section under the microscope, is of the same facies as the Wroxeter material.

If claims for significant whetstone industries are to be secure rather than suggestive, however, it is essential that there has been a proper scientific scrutiny of all the items encompassed. Several substantial stone-based industries manufacturing other products have already been successfully identified in Roman Britain, and the evidence for one producing whetstones should not occasion surprise. There could be others to be found.

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Notes

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Aspects of Welsh Settlement in the Upper Teme and Clun Valleys: The Manor of Tempseter in the Lordship of Clun

By P. G. BARTON

Abstract: The Manor of Tempseter in western Shropshire formed part of the Norman marcher lordship of Clun. During the thirteenth century part at least of the territory was in contention between the Fitzalans of Oswestry and Clun and the princes of Gwynedd, notably Llywelyn ap Iorwerth and later Llywelyn ap Gruffudd. This and earlier Welsh incursions are reflected in the siting of castles in the Teme and Clun valleys. After the Edwardian conquest of Wales the whole of the region was, with brief interruption, under the control of the Fitzalans, who were later to become earls of Arundel and Surrey. Much of their vast wealth originated in the revenues from this area. The extensive court rolls, surviving from 1328 onwards, provide detailed records of the main manor court itself and also of the *hallimote wallicorum*. It is noted that the Welsh abbey of Cwmhir held the township of Skyborry through a grant of William Fitzalan, together with the grange of Monachty Poeth and a watermill, probably at Skyborry Green. The court rolls reveal much about ancient Welsh customs, strongly persisting into the later medieval period, and the distinction between the western townships above the Forest of Portlok and those below and closer to the town of Clun itself. A complex pattern of free and bond tenures is also revealed. Many of these elements were swept away only with the acts of Union from 1536 onwards.

Introduction

The restructuring of Shropshire after the Norman Conquest saw the disappearance of the hundred of Rinlau, the western part of which went to Clun lordship and the eastern part to Purslow.[1] In 1070 Roger de Montgomery granted Clun to Picot de Sai. After the banishment of Roger's heir, Robert de Bellême, in 1102 Clun was held by the crown, but was still granted to de Sai as tenant-in-chief. Then, as the power of the crown declined during the anarchy in the reign of Stephen, the lordship of Clun was drawn into the March of Wales. In 1154 Isabel, the daughter and heiress of Helias de Sai, lord of Clun, was married to the young lord of Oswestry, William Fitzalan I (d.1160), thus combining two important Marcher lordships.[2] Isabel survived her husband for many years, living until 1199, and it was only then that their son, William Fitzalan II (d.1210), acquired control of his patrimony. About 1175/6 he had married a daughter of Hugh de Lacy, then an infant, and their eldest child was not born until about 1190. After the death of this William his eldest son, William Fitzalan III (d.1215), was still a minor and so the lordship of Clun was again held by the crown. Eventually possession came to a brother, John Fitzalan I, and it was during his tenure that the attacks of the Welsh prince, Llywelyn ap Iorwerth (Llywelyn Fawr), in the western part of the lordship of Clun first come to attention.

Initially Llywelyn might have been on quite good terms with William Fitzalan II. At Worcester in 1218 Llywelyn was granted custody of the lands of Gwenwynwyn in Powys, and his influence extended well into the vale of Montgomery, but any control he may have had of the border area further to the south is less clear. In 1234 his forces ravaged the Teme valley and it must be assumed that by then any possible understanding with the Fitzalans had long since fallen into abeyance. After the death of Llywelyn Fawr in 1240 the Welsh lost control of territory in the March and it was not until Llywelyn ap Gruffudd succeeded his uncle, Dafydd ap Llywelyn, that any real prospect of recovery could be entertained. In 1260 Llywelyn ap Gruffudd captured Builth from Roger Mortimer and subdued Maelienydd and Elfael, while his forces moved down the Teme valley and burned

Knighton. At the Treaty of Montgomery in 1267 Llywelyn retained, amongst other territories, Ceri and Cedewain. Thus, his surrounding territorial possessions must have looked threateningly towards Clun, and indeed it seems likely that he could have occupied part of Tempseter about this time. There was certainly a rumour in 1274 that he intended to visit the Forest of Clun and build a new castle there.[3]

He was then at the height of his power, but by early 1276 Roger Mortimer had seized *Dyffryn Tefeidiad* [4] and shortly afterwards Llywelyn found himself restricted to his home territory in Gwynedd. In December 1282 Llywelyn ap Gruffydd was killed at Cilmeri, effectively ending Welsh rule in Wales, after which the whole of Clun lordship was firmly in English hands.

The purpose of this article is to examine aspects of Welsh settlement and tradition in the region of the Teme and Clun valleys as they were affected by local and national politics, particularly in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[5]

The Fitzalan Lords of Clun[6]

William Fitzalan I (d.1160)

The Fitzalan family were said to have come to England during the Conquest and to have been granted the lordship of Oswestry in the March of Wales. One member of the family, Walter Fitzalan (d.1177), became steward of Scotland and founded the Stuart line of kings of Scotland. William Fitzalan I (d.1160) was sheriff of Shropshire from 1156 to 1159,[7] and was recorded as holding Shrewsbury Castle against King Stephen, but he escaped when the castle fell, and then supported the Empress Matilda.[8] He regained his property in Shropshire after Henry II was crowned in December 1154. About this time William married Isabel de Say, heiress of Clun, his second, or possibly third, wife, and hence the Fitzalans acquired their second important Marcher lordship. As a young man he had helped to found Haughmond Abbey and he contributed grants and confirmations to other monastic institutions including Shrewsbury Abbey, where he was later buried, witnessed by the abbots of Haughmond, Lilleshall and Buildwas and the Prior of Wenlock. After 1160 Isabel married again and the barony of Clun was held *in capite* by each of her subsequent husbands. As a result William Fitzalan II (d.1210), a minor at the death of his father, had to wait until 1199 before he came into his inheritance.

William Fitzalan II (d.1210)

In about 1175/6 William Fitzalan II (d.1210) married an infant daughter of Hugh de Lacy, and their eldest child was not born until William Fitzalan II was about 35 years old. He was described by Gerald of Wales in 1188 as a 'hospitable young nobleman'.[9] He too is frequently mentioned in connection with monastic charters and we shall examine his grant to the abbey of Cwmhir in more detail below. He was sheriff of Shropshire from about January 1190 and held office up to Easter 1201.[10] In 1204 he was ordered to give safe conduct to Llywelyn Fawr on his way to the English court and at the same time was given custody of Llywelyn's hostages.[11] He himself appeared regularly in King John's court for several years.

William Fitzalan III (d.1215)

When William Fitzalan III[12] was about sixteen years old, his lands were *in manu regis*. There is evidence that he was fined for his lands before May 1213 but the fine was not entered until Michaelmas 1214. However, at the beginning of July 1214 Thomas de Erdington had purchased the wardship of William Fitzalan III together with the marriage rights of the heir. William Fitzalan III was married to Erdington's own daughter, Mary, and on 3 March 1215, while Erdingon's rights were still in force, King John received the homage of William Fitzalan III. The young William Fitzalan III died at Clun in April 1215 and it seems therefore that he never fully gained his inheritance before his death. Erdington's plans were also frustrated as Mary received only a widow's dower, and Erdington himself died in 1218.

John Fitzalan I (d.c.1240)

John Fitzalan (d.*c*.1240) inherited from his brother, William. He married Isabel d'Aubigny, one of four co-heiresses of Hugh d'Aubigny, earl of Arundel, after whose death his widow as dowager countess of Arundel

retained the castle and honour of Arundel, so that the Fitzalans did not at this stage acquire the earldom. In 1233/4, the castles and towns of western Clun were attacked by Llywelyn Fawr as will be shown below. After John's death the Shropshire lordships of Clun and Oswestry were held by John Lestrange for the king until 1244 when John Fitzalan II came of age.

John Fitzalan II (d.1267)[13]

John Fitzalan II (1223–1267) supported Henry III in the conflict with de Montfort and the barons, and in 1257 he was appointed captain for the custody of the March north of Montgomery. In March 1258 he was ordered to lead his men to Chester to participate in an expedition against Llywelyn ap Gruffudd. In July 1263 John Fitzalan seized the adjacent lordship of Bishop's Castle belonging to the bishop of Hereford and retained his hold there for several years.[14] At his death it was found that he held from the king in chief two whole baronies, namely Clun and Oswestry, and [the right to] one quarter of the earldom of Arundel.

John Fitzalan III (d.1272)[15]

John Fitzalan III (1245–1272) married Isabella Mortimer, daughter of Roger Mortimer of Wigmore (d.1282), and after John's death and the recovery of the lands earlier occupied by the Welsh prince she retained her dower in Tempseter until her own death in 1301. It was her son, Richard Fitzalan I, who eventually became the first Fitzalan earl of Arundel.

The Fitzalans, Earls of Arundel and Surrey, Lords of the Welsh Marches.

After the Edwardian Conquest the whole of the Teme valley above Knighton was in the possession of the Fitzalans.[16] Subsequently the Fitzalans acquired through marriage the earldoms of Arundel and Surrey.[17] After the death of Thomas Fitzalan, earl of Arundel and Surrey, in 1415, the titles and holdings passed through the female line, though retaining the Fitzalan name, to the Fitzalan-Howards, dukes of Norfolk. By the mid-seventeenth century Clun had been acquired by Mr. John Walcot of Walcot (d.1702), a prominent Royalist, sheriff of Shropshire in 1661 and later MP for the county. In 1763 the lordship of Clun was acquired by Robert, Lord Clive, and thus came to his heirs, the Clive and Herbert families.

The Fitzalans had thus become amongst the most prestigious and powerful families in the land, while still retaining a good deal of their revenue from the lordships in the Welsh Marches. By 1301, the revenue from Clun, its valley and towns, was £316 17*s*. 0*d*. while the total value of all the earl's revenues 'excepting Dodynton, Chepyngnorton and Isabella's third' was £1,291 7*s*. 10½*d*.[18] By the mid fourteenth century their revenue had increased to about £3,000 of which £2,000 came from the Marches.

The Welsh Princes and their Ambitions in Clun

Llywelyn ap Iorwerth (Llywelyn Fawr)

During the first forty years of the thirteenth century Llywelyn ap Iorwerth of Gwynedd established his overlordship of Wales.[19] He was frequently found contesting his claims against the Anglo-Norman lords of the Marches and for some years after 1218 had custody of Cedewain, Ceri and Maelienydd.[20] It is possible that Llywelyn had entered the Teme valley, however briefly, by 1218 and more certainly before 1227, when he had already been in dispute with Hugh Mortimer (d.1227) over the manors of Knighton and Norton.[21] The main assault however was to come later. Sir John Lloyd says: 'In January 1234 Richard [earl of Pembroke] and he devastated the border far and wide…'. The *Brut y Tywysogion* (Peniarth MS 20 version) records for 1233: 'And as he was returning he burned the town of Clun and gained possession of the land that was attached to it, that is the valley of the Teme'.[22] Similarly, Humphrey Llwyd in 1559 wrote: 'And by the way he brenned the towne of Colunwy or Clun and receaved all the country called the Valley of Tyveidiawc'.[23] On the other hand the Red Book of Hergest version has: 'And thereupon, on his return, he burned the town of Clun and he subdued the valley of the Teme (*ac y darestygawd Dyffryn Teueidat*)[24.], while in *Brenhinedd y Saesson* the word used is *goresgyn* (overran).[25] The recording of the same contemporary events in the *Cronica de Wallia* omits any mention of the Teme valley, but does include the capture and destruction of 'Castelhychoet'.[26] It is not clear from these records, therefore, whether

Llywelyn's attacks were merely raids or something more significant in terms of a claim to lordship. If the latter he may well have retained some control there until his death in April 1240.

Llywelyn ap Gruffudd

Llywelyn ap Gruffudd (d.1282), a grandson of Llywelyn Fawr, first comes to notice in the 1240s, but at this time he was mainly confined to his lands in Gwynedd. It would be early in 1257 before he began to campaign significantly to the south. In 1260 he attacked Builth, which eventually fell to his forces that summer. He also established his overlordship, in part at least, of Elfael, thus making Maelienydd vulnerable, and in 1262 the Welsh attacked Mortimer's castles of Cefnllys and Bleddfa and then moved east into the heart of the borderlands at Knucklas, Knighton and Presteigne. In the following spring Llywelyn moved against Fitzalan's territories of Clun and Tempseter, 'possession of which would take his authority to the furthermost bounds of the territory which maintained a community of the Welsh language'.[27] There was obviously considerable resistance to Llywelyn's advance and the Welsh chronicle says: 'And a little after that, the Welsh were slain near the valley of the Clun'.[28] However, in March 1263 the king attempted to mediate between the parties and it is possible that Fitzalan came to an understanding with the prince.[29] Smith says: 'certainly Llywelyn was to claim that the lord of Clun had ceded Tempseter to him by a formal deed' and 'it is certain that Llywelyn now secured control of the western portion of Clun, his possession of the land of Tempseter formally recognized perhaps by John Fitzalan'.

The Treaty of Montgomery in 1267 defined the possessions conceded to Llywelyn, but in this agreement there was no mention of Tempseter or Clun, though he clearly had not relinquished control there until well after that.[30] Indeed Llywelyn was still active in Clun in 1274, as we find in a letter from Hywel ap Meurig to Lady Matilda Mortimer that 'a party of the great men of England are coming thither to meet with Llywelyn'.[31] The same communication suggested that Llywelyn was coming to the Forest of Clun to select a site for a new castle there. But, before May 1276, Mortimer apparently attacked Llywelyn's holdings in the Teme valley, whence Llywelyn complained to the king that 'Roger Mortimer has seized the land of *Dyfryn Te[yv]idat* and plundered it, and still detains it, notwithstanding that John Fitz Alan, formerly lord of the land, granted it to Llywelyn, as contained in his letters patent.[32] Llywelyn's occupation had lasted no more than fourteen years. By the end of 1277 the Treaty of Aberconwy had confined Llywelyn to a shrunken principality consisting of western Gwynedd and Edeirnion, and although he broke out once again in March 1282 no more is heard of his claims to lands which might be regarded as part of the later manor of Tempseter.

The Townships

Only two of the townships of Clun can be definitely identified from Domesday, namely Obelie [Obley], held by Picot de Say from Earl Roger, and Watredene [Llanfair Waterdine], held by Ralph de Mortimer.[33]

An extent of Clun made in November 1267 as part of John Fitzalan II's inquisition *post mortem* specifically excluded the area around the Forest of Clun in Clun Welshry 'which used to be worth more to the lord of Clun both in demesne rents and other perquisites and profits, concerning which we cannot make an extent on account of the disruption of the Welsh, of which the lord was in full seisin in the town on the day he died, and this disruption was made *per Lewelinum filium griffini et filios alios suos*.[34] It is not until 1272 that we have a fuller list of the townships in the extents of the inquisitions *post mortem* of John Fitzalan III.[35] Then the latter records the townships '…which are in the hands of the prince [Llywelyn], *viz*: Spoot (Spoade), Kevengalankok (Cefncelynnog), Rougantin (Rhiwgantin), Treuntprouere (Trebrodier), …luf…, …[Sky]bore (*sic*), Hicheke [Uwchcoed], Ulle (Hulle) and Edenhope; these towns are above Portloke…[together] with Portloke Forest'.

Before August 1272 the king ordered a survey to be made of 'Cloune and Shrawardine' in order to determine which parts should be assigned to the dower of Isabella Mortimer, the widow of John Fitzalan II. It was decided that the parts of the manor of Clun assigned to John's heirs should remain in the king's hands, except for the townships of Obley, Pentrehodry, Hobendrid, Hobarris, Lurkenhope, Elliston and Menutton below Portlok Forest. Isabella's dower at that time was to be mainly in the manor of Shrawardine with one third of the castle of Clun. It was noted in a memorandum that the Welshry could not yet be surveyed.[36]

A further extent of the dower of John Fitzalan's widow, Isabella Mortimer, in 1283–4, is equally revealing.[37] It distinguishes between those townships which are 'under Portlok and are of the Welshry and members of the manor of Clone which belonged to John' and separately 'also her dower from the Welshry of Temcestre with the Forest of Clone, which is above Portlok [which] was not assigned to her because Llywelyn son of Griffin, sometime prince of Wales, who occupied them during John's lifetime, held that Welshry in his hands until Roger de Mortuo Mari, lately deceased, ejected him thence by the strong hand'. These extents are important because they strongly suggest
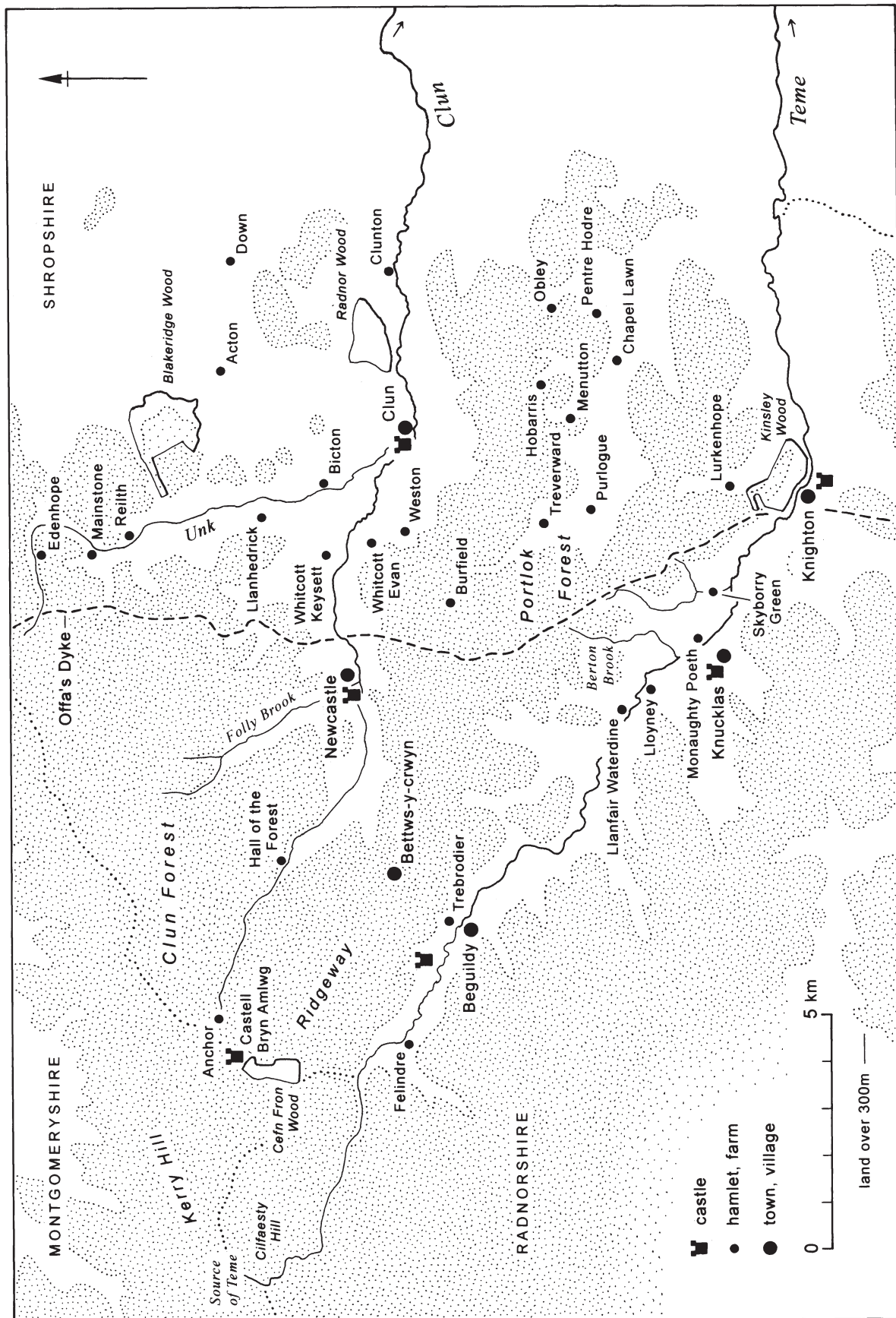
Figure 1 Map of Tempseter and Clun Five Towns showing places mentioned in the text which are to be found marked on current Ordnance Survey maps (1:25,000).
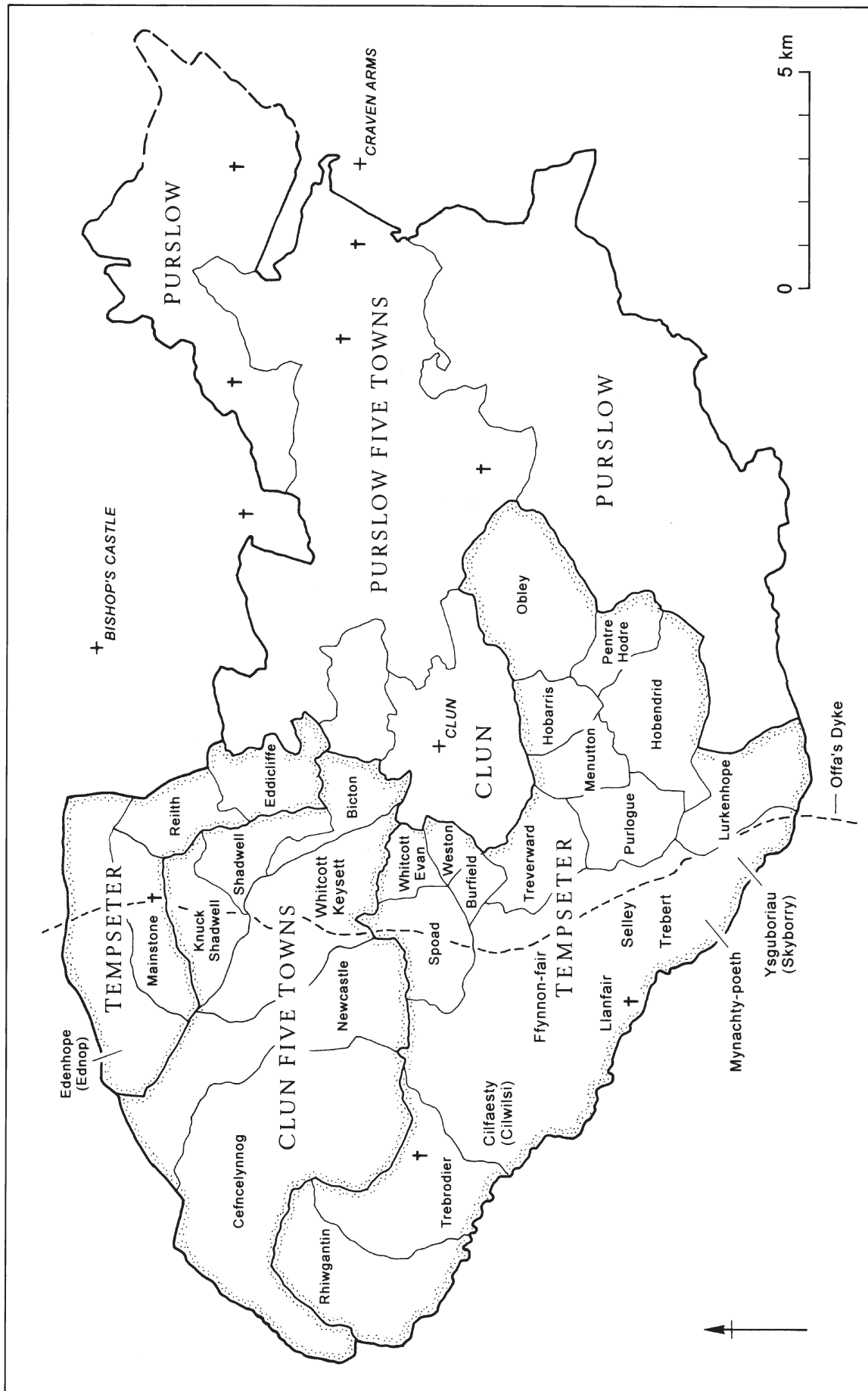
Figure 2 The lordship of Clun with the townships of Tempseter taken from the township map prepared by Murray Chapman for the Powysland Club in which the boundary lines were established from tithe maps, enclosure award maps, estate maps and certain early Ordnance Survey maps. Some uncertainty surrounds the boundaries in the north-eastern part of the lordship. William Rees's map based on data of the fourteenth century shows Myndtown, Sibdon, Stretford and Westhope as being within the lordship.

that Llywelyn's interest fell mainly in the upper part of the territory, above the Forest of Portlok, and adjacent to the lands which he held in Ceri and which he claimed in Maelienydd.

At the very beginning of the fourteenth century a survey was made for Richard Fitzalan, earl of Arundel (d.1302), including his lands in both Shropshire and Sussex and elsewhere.[38] Although the survey goes into great detail as regards the townships in the eastern part of the lordship of Clun there is much less information about the townships in Tempseter to the west of Portlok Forest. There are 9½ knight's fees listed for Clun and all are in the eastern part and all were held by men with English-style names, as indeed were most of the tenants in this part of the manor. It is possible therefore that most of the Welshry of Tempseter had again refused to come before the surveyors, as they had in 1272.

There are of course no local medieval maps of the lordship of Clun and we have therefore to rely on those of later cartographers to identify the locations of the various townships mentioned in the extents and their boundaries. One of the earliest of these is the map of Shropshire engraved by John Cary of the Strand, London, in Camden's Brittania (1695), edition published in 1793.[39] It shows 'Clun Hundred' and 'Purslow Hundred' with the boundary between them, together with the various townships of Tempseter and 'Offa's Dyke commonly called the Devil's Ditch'. The map produced by William Rees in 1933 is also extremely useful as it aims to show features present in the fourteenth century especially the area of Portlok Forest.[40] The township map published by the Powysland Club shows most of the township boundaries and it is on this map that Figure 2 and Table 1 are mainly based.[41]

Table 1   The Townships of the Lordship of Clun.

Tempseter above Portlok
1. Rhiwgantin
2. Trebrodier
3. Cilwilsi
4. Ffynnon fair
5. Llanfair
6. Selley
7. Trebert
8. Mynachdy-poeth
9. Ysguboriau (Skyborry)
10. Spoade
11. Whitcott Evan
12. Weston
13. Burfield
14. Treverward

Portlok
15. Purlogue

Tempseter below Portlok
16. Lurkenhope or Larkenhope (Elliston)*
17. Menutton*
18. Hobendrid*
19. Hobarris*
20. Pentrehodre*
21. Obbley*

Clun Five Towns
1. Cefncelynnog
2. Newcastle
3. Whitcott Keysett (Hudcote)
4. Shadwell (Sedewall)
5. Bicton (Byggedon)

Mainstone (Tempseter)
1. Edenhope
2. Mainstone
3. Reilth
4. Eddicliffe

Purslow Five Towns
1. Acton
2. Lower Down
3. Clunton
4. Clunbury
5. Kempton, Little Brampton, Clunbury, and Hopesay and Aston

Purslow
1. Stowe, Weston
2. Bucknell (Bockenhulle)
3. Bedstone
4. Hagley
5. Hopton
6. Jay (Gay)
7. Abcott, Beckjay, Broadward, Clungunford, and Shelderton
8. Coston
9. Broome

Townships marked with an asterisk in Table 1 are those specified in the king's writ of 1283 as being under Portlok and of the Welshry. The extent of 1284 includes in addition Ruthin, Sned, Eton Lurkenhope, 'which is called Eyleston in the king's writ', and Hulle (or Ulle), which from the perambulation appears to be the later Shadwell. The Clun Five Towns include Addredeleye, now called Llanhedric.[42] Before 1380, however, they are consistently described as the Four Towns.

The Castles

There are several remains of castles, and also documentary records of castles, in the upper Teme and Clun valleys including those at Beguildy, Newcastle, Bryn Amlwg, Clun, Bicton and two at Knighton (see Figure 1).[43] Here I will consider only the first three of these.

The castle on the Moat Farm, Beguildy (SO 189805), adjacent to the farmhouse, is a typical Norman-style motte and bailey structure of the late eleventh and early to mid-twelfth centuries. The mound is 11m. in diameter and 7m. above the adjacent ditch. The D-shaped bailey extends 30m. to the south and has on two sides a rampart 1m. high internally and 3m. high externally.[44] Such a castle when securely pallisaded could easily have continued in use beyond AD 1200. It was most probably constructed either before 1144 by the de Sai lords of Clun or shortly afterwards by William Fitzalan I. Here the valley is fairly narrow, so that it would have been impossible for any military expedition to pass unnoticed into the lower Teme valley. Whether it was still occupied by defensive forces in the time of the Welsh princes is impossible to say. The motte near Newcastle (The Crugyn), although now much decayed, occupied a similarly strategic position in a narrow part of the Clun valley and would have served a parallel function there.

In the *Brut y Tywysogion* it is stated that Llywelyn ap Iorwerth, after his attack on the Teme valley in 1233, 'thereupon…marched to Castle Coch and razed it to the ground. David Stephenson has suggested a possible identification of this castle with Bryn Amlwg.[45] However, in the *Cronica de Wallia* the castle destroyed by Llywelyn is called Castell Hychoet, 'hychoet' being interpreted as *uwch coed*.

Castell Bryn Amlwg occupies a much more elevated position (SO 167846) at the extreme western edge of the lordship of Clun, very close to the borders with Ceri and Maelienydd. It was partially excavated by Alcock *et al*. in 1963.[46] Although the castle was situated just above a tributary to the Teme (the Rhuddwr Brook) it could in no sense be said to command the valley of the Teme, which is separated from it by the considerable Clun ridge, blocking off any view of that valley. Indeed it could also be rather easily by-passed by any force moving into or out of the Clun valley. Therefore Bryn Amlwg is probably a lordship marker, establishing the border between Fitzalan and Mortimer or, at times, between English and Welsh territory, symbolic as much as strategic, as well as a base for further operations.

As a result of the excavations in August 1963 it was suggested that the castle was constructed in several phases. The first phase, a simple earth ring-work with a wooden palisade, was probably built in the second quarter of the twelfth century. Later a keep and curtain wall were added. It was considered that in the decade after the Treaty of Montgomery in 1267 when Llywelyn ap Gruffudd was 'very strong on the border of Clun and even within its bounds…it is not impossible that some of the later work at Bryn Amlwg is his'. In this case, we can visualize the castle watching over Llywelyn's possessions in the valleys below, rather than acting as an obstacle to Welsh invasion. We know that Llywelyn ap Gruffudd was showing interest in castle building in Tempseter in order to establish his claims there when Hywel ap Meurig wrote to Lady Maud de Mortimer, wife of Roger Mortimer, that '…he hears that Llywelyn will go into the forest [of Clun] to arrange a place for a new castle'.[47] There is, however, no indication that any other castle was ever constructed within that area and this letter may therefore refer to the restoration of Bryn Amlwg itself. For Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, its significance was perhaps that it might enable him to threaten Mortimer's territory of Maelienydd.

The Manor Court Rolls

Although the regular pattern of manor courts was probably established in the thirteenth century, the earliest extant court rolls of Tempseter do not commence until 1328, following the execution in 1326 of Edmund, earl of Arundel, and the seizure of his lands and properties by Roger Mortimer.[48] In the roll of 1337 is a reference to an earlier court held in 1317, in the time of Earl Edmund, the roll of which is now lost. The disappearance of such earlier rolls might well be connected to the turbulent events experienced by the Fitzalan family from 1326 to 1330. Then in 1330 Richard Fitzalan II was reinstated to his lands and titles. After this the rolls continue, though with many omissions,[49] at least until Tudor times. They generally distinguish between those of the principal Manor Court, normally held every three weeks on a Monday, and the *Halimote Wallicorum* usually held on the following Wednesday.[50] The latter frequently appear on the *dorse* of the parchment sheet and are always much shorter. On some occasions the halimote would be held but no essoins or other suitors would appear at all. Table 2 shows that the revenues from the *Halimote Wallicorum* in 1332–3 were only a small fraction of those from the main court. In the following year, 1334, only two halimotes were recorded, bringing in a total of 10*s*. 2*d*. The suitors were not to get away quite so lightly, however, as the lord demanded an additional contribution of five marks that year. What is clear, though, is that in the early fourteenth century the halimote was the lesser court, perhaps reflecting the vestiges of an earlier more significant institution. Despite this, each court avoided trespassing on the jurisdiction

of the other, so that, for example, when in 1353 Weyruel verch William sought in the manor court to have advowry within the lordship her case was referred to the succeeding halimote. As Rees Davies noted: 'from the twelfth century onwards the distinction between free and unfree grew increasingly blurred in practice without ever being extinguished in theory'.[51]

Table 2 To Compare the Revenues of the Manor Court of Tempsete6r with those of its Halimote Wallicorum for the year 1332–3: SA 552/1/2.

Manor Court	Sum of Payments	Halimote	Sum of Payments
26 October	£6 12*s*. 2*d*.	none recorded	—
16 November	21*s*. 6*d*.	none recorded	—
14 December	42*s*. 6*d*.	15 December	12*d*.
26 January	£13 7*s*. 8*d*.	28 January	13*s*. 4*d*.
22 February	39*s*. 0*d*.	24 February	6*d*.
22 March	79*s*. 8*d*.	17 March	0*d*.
19 April	£5 15*s*. 4*d*.	21 April	12*s*. 3*d*.
10 May	72*s*. 7*d*.	none recorded	—
31 May	£4 5*s*.	2 June	13*s*. 10*d*.
21 June	£12 15*s*.	23 June	0*d*.
12 July	42*s*.	14 July	2*s*. 4*d*.
2 August	113*s*. 6*d*.	4 August	2*s*. 6*d*.
30 August	£13 8*s*. 6*d*.	none recorded	—
20 September	105*s*. 4*d*.	22 September	7*s*. 5*d*.
Total for year	**£81 19*s*. 9*d*.**	**Total for year**	**£2 13*s*. 6*d*.**

It emerges that particular individuals could appear in either or both courts. For example on 14 December 1332 the name of *Wenllian filia Willelmi* appears as a defendant in the main court and the next day she was amerced by the halimote for failure to appear there at the summons of the bailiffs. This suggests that the principal distinction was based on land-holdings, whether free or bond land, rather than on the personal status of the individuals holding that land. We can certainly find a clear correlation between the township names and the particular court which held jurisdiction in those cases. Thus the suitors at the *Hallimote Wallicorum* were those holding land in the townships of Clun Five Towns,[52] even if the same individuals also held land elsewhere. When John of Wenesbache (Swinbatch) in Hudcote died in 1335 the herriot of one ox fell due in the halimote, and his wife Eva gave the lord five shillings for possession of a messuage and fifteen acres in the same court.[53] The neighbouring bond tenants of Bicton were fined half a mark at the same time. In the following year the tenants of *Novum Castrum*, (Newcastle), *Hudcote* (Whitcott Keysett), *Adderdeley* (Llanhedric) and *Beketon* (Bicton) were amerced for their failure to attend the halimote as they were bound to do. On the other hand the rolls also show that villein status was certainly attached to particular individuals (*nativi domini*) and that some of these had tenures of lands in the free townships.[54] Paradoxically, therefore, by the fourteenth century freemen could hold bond land, and villeins could hold free land, a marked loosening of the strictures of villeinage in earlier times.[55]

After the chaotic plague years of 1348–9 the halimote saw a sharp increase in its business with many records of new names, reflecting changes in tenants and tenure. Thus a single halimote of 26 October 1356 considered some thirty cases and collected over 101 shillings.[56] Indeed by 1375 the status of the halimote had been further enhanced. Twice yearly a Great Court of the halimote was held with a named jury dealing with the presentments of the township officers and on the same day separate small courts dealt with the ordinary business of the people.[57] Thus in the second half of the fourteenth century the halimote had not only increased in significance, but it had progressed to resemble more the English system of Court Leet and Court Baron.

The main business of the courts included disputes about land, trespass, common assault (*trais*), minor injury or insulting behaviour (*sarhayt*) and accusations of rape, theft, destruction of the cross of interdiction used in pleas of land (*pro cruce fracta*), damage to property and failure to repair houses and mills, the concealment of reliefs and other dues, rustling of cattle and sheep and the farm of offices such as that of the *rhingyll* (bailiff), *prepositus* (reeve) or *keisat* or *ceisiad* (sergeant) of a township. The office of *wasmair* or *gwas maer* (the servant of the steward), appears in Kerryvaldwyn and again in 'Isporlog' and 'Ugwporlog', the candidates each paying twenty shillings to hold the office. And finally there were *cadaveratores* whose function was to inspect sheep for murrain, a disease which could potentially decimate the lord's flocks and his revenues. It is perhaps little wonder that in 1317 the tenants complained to the lord of a surfeit of officers.

The obligation to grind at the lord's mill was also evident.[58] For example, in 1336 the unfree tenants were accused of taking their grain to be ground at Bicton mill when they properly owed suit at the mill at Newcastle. A year later Hywel Vychan was charged with building a mill on bond land in Menutton and in 1380 carpenters

working to repair the mills of Newcastle and Bicton, newly leased to Matthew le Cornyser and William Webbe, were accused of carrying away the old wood for their own use. Heriots and reliefs were also recorded in both courts,[59] while issues of inheritance in the unfree townships could be heard either in the main court or in the halimote. In April 1411 David ap Talban was convicted of taking a concubine without licence of the lord and in the same month Ieuan ap ffylly was presented for diverting a stream from its normal course for his own use.[60] Occasionally a grant was recorded in the form of an enrolled charter, as in 1337, when Maredudd Voil ap Maredudd ap Llywelyn granted all his lands and tenements in Trebrodier to his son Hywel ap Maredudd for eighty pounds in silver. Outlawry also fell within the remit of the court and in 1343 Hywel was outlawed, and the bailiffs were ordered to enquire into the issues of the land he held from the abbot of Cwmhir. Outlawry could, however, be revoked by coming to the court and paying a fine. Nor should it be thought that behaviour in the courts was always exemplary or accepting of the court's judgement. There were sometimes amercements for *clamor populi* and *tumultus in curia* and even on one occasion fighting (*pugilatio*). The courts also dealt with waifs and strays coming into the manor and in June 1337 this included a swarm of bees (*una rusca apium waif*) which thus became a benefit to the lord of the manor. Finally, the courts were frequently used to give quasi-legal force to a licensed agreement between two parties, such as an exchange of land, when they would ask for judgement (*de habendo iudicum patrie*).

In some respects the rolls do differ from typical English manor court rolls. Almost always they omit the names of the steward and the homage (members of the jury) at the top of the roll,[61] and there is no indication of the assize of ale or bread as might be found in most urban areas. There are frequent references to advowry payments (*advocationes*),[62] usually relating to incomers such as Philip ap Griffith of Maelienydd, Jevan Gwerthrynneon [Ieuan Gwrtheyrnion] and Ieuan Powys, and until 1357 there is no mention of the usual ceremony of surrendering land to the lord (*sursumreddidit*) and then receiving it back as a mechanism for retaining or acquiring tenancy rights. In that year Gruffudd ap David Wynne surrendered a messuage and land into the hand of the lord, whence it was returned to the new tenant Llywelyn Talren for a fee. There was also transfer by inheritance which occurred in 1372 when Ieuan ap Atha took back from the lord a messuage and virgate of land which his father, Atha ap Philip, had formerly held. It may be noted also that the courts did not incorporate the View of Frankpledge typical of English manor courts but this role was probably performed instead by the sergeants or 'keysetts' (*caisiaid*).[63]

Revenues from the *forinsec* woods were recorded separately at the Forest Courts held at Clun; these included woods named as Kingslyth, Cawrewode, Kempegrene, Radenore, Tonnelyth, Haukeshurst, Blakerigge, Westerwode and 'le more de Skebore'.They record pleas of land, sales of wood and pannage of pigs.[64] The revenues of the Forest of Clun in *Walecheria* normally provided a major contribution to the lord's income, of which a substantial part derived from the breeding of horses,[65] but these did not appear to be within the jurisdiction of the Forest Courts.

The court rolls provide some indication of societal status within the free tenantry. Here the essoins are particularly useful. Thus, we find *Dominus* Roger de Cheyney, who held Cheyney Longville and held land in Longfield and Broome. He was the lord's steward in Tempseter and was sheriff of Shropshire in 1316. Next came *Dominus* Roger de Hauberdeyn, who held Clungunford, John and Walter de la Leghe (Lea), Walter de le Menede (Myndtown), Adam de Acton and *domina* Joanne de Sympflewas, the lady of Clunbury. In 1426 there were twelve such suitors, clearly direct descendants of those above, owing fines of either one or two shillings each at the first court after Michaelmas. They were clearly not 'peasant proprietors'.[66] Their requirement to do suit of court at Tempseter was through the obligation of military service in time of war rather than land holding in the manor *per se*. These persons, predominantly Anglo-Normans, rarely if ever appeared in the court themselves, but they sent their representatives (*servientes*) instead. On the other hand where jurors are named they invariably have Welsh patronymic names and these seem to have represented a second tier of society. When Philip Payne (*pagni*) was outlawed in 1333 judgement in the court was given by twenty four *de melioribus* (the higher status members of society). We find references to Ieuan ap Howel *athro* but as with *clericus* or *capellanus* such terms perhaps refer to status rather than occupation, examples of the latter being found only very rarely *viz* baker (*pistor*), millward, hayward and woodward. Then came those holding *gwelyau* who might now be described as smallholders living on a family plot and paying rents to the lord for their land. There was thus a gradation in society from a 'gentry' class down to the lowest ranks living at subsistence level and having no goods and bringing no heriot to the lord at their death. Not surprisingly English surnames are generally absent from the earlier halimotes and on more than one occasion the reeve of Hudcote was amerced when his freemen refused to appear in these courts. In contrast actions involving bond land were sometimes attempted to be brought into the manor court, but they were immediately referred to the succeeding halimote. In 1334 Gruffudd ap Eigen refused to accept the jurisdiction of the court on the grounds that he was a 'man of the lord of Maelienydd' and was promptly incarcerated until he changed his mind.

We can conclude with Helen Watt that 'Welsh tenants were subject to a local admixture of traditional Welsh law, local customs, English Common Law, precedent, and seigneurial dictat, influenced on a practical level by the lord's officals'.[67]

The Customary Payments

When Richard Fitzalan I died early in 1302 the inquisition *post mortem* described customs due from the villeins of the *Walescheria* of his estates in Oswestry and Clun as *treth cantidion* and *treth morkie*.[68] Records of the receiver's accounts for Tempseter commence only in 1382 and those extant cover a few sporadic dates in the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.[69] The accounts for Tempseter show a distinctly different character from the accounts of the other manors in the lordship of Clun in the extent of their Welshness, customs and payments. By the fourteenth century however many of the traditional customs of the Welsh communities such as *cylch*, *trethwythpunt*,[70] *morkie, cantidion*, *amobyr/amobr*, *galanas* and *sarhayt/sarhad*[71] (see Table 3), some surviving in name only, had been almost completely commuted to money payments.[72] We also learn from the rolls that attempts were often made to conceal the 'kylgh' of the lord's peasants. Similar payments were owed in the lordships of Chirkland and Oswestry, two other Fitzalan lordships.[73] In the Tempseter accounts there is no mention of the Welsh *tunc (twnc)*, itself a commuted *gwestfa* payment, which seems to have been replaced by a rent of assize before the fourteenth century. Possibly the commutation of traditional renders and services had already become prevalent in the thirteenth century at a time when both Welsh and English princes needed financial resources to pursue their military aims.[74] Thus, *cymortha*, a forced exaction, was still demanded of the lord's villeins as late as 1375.[75] What is even more surprising is the tenacity with which remnants of these customary payments and services clung on well into the eighteenth century and beyond. Thus for example:[76]

> The presentments of 'the Townshippe of Obley Given in by George Morgan the Elder one of the Grand Jury and Jury of Survey of the Manor of Tempsiter aforesaid the 7th Day of June 1758.
>
> In answer to the Orticles exhibited and given to us in Charge.
>
> Art.1st.
>
> In the Townshipp are Twenty Eight messuages or mese places…
>
> …And we say that the Freeholders there Do hold their Severall Messuages Lands and Tenements as well divided and undivided in free and common soccage and at the Rent of Ten Shillings being part of a certain Rent of 8^{li}: otherwise Antiently called *Tredd:woyd:pint* due to the Lord of the Said Manor out of the Lordshipp of Tempsiter aforesd upon every St Martin's day every Second year and to be payd unto the Lord or his Bayliff. There is the best four-footed Beast due for Herriott whether it be Horse, Mare, Ox, Cow, Sheep or Swine and Six Shillings and Eight pence due for Relief at the decease of every principal Freeholder dyeing Seized of an Estate in Fee Simple or Fee tail for every Antient Messuage. And in Case he dyeth possessed of no four footed Beast Then 6s:8d to be payed for Herriot by the next Heir. There is no Herriott due upon Alienation untill the Death of the first Alienor. Neither is there any Herriott due upon the alienee or his Heirs until the death of the first Alienor. And there is 6s 8d due for Relief from the alienee or his Heirs when Herriott is paid. There is also due to the said Lord Suit of Court Every three weeks. There is likewise due to the said Lord a Rent called meale Rent which is usually Gathered in our Townshipp by the Lord's Bayliff every yeare but how much it is and by whom payd we refer ourselves to the Court Rolls.

Table 3   Customary Renders and Dues in the Fitzalan Lordships.

Renders and Dues	Interpretation
cylch	originally a food render collected on 'circuit'
trethwythpunt	the 'eight pound tax' owing every second year
morkie	originally for maintaining a garrison
cantidion	a welcome gift for the lord, originally 100 fat beasts and payable every second year in November
amobyr	for the lord's protection of an unmarried woman
galanas	compensation to the kin of a murdered man
sarhayt (*sarhaed*) [77]	compensation for an insult or minor injury

The Grant to to the Welsh Monks of Cwmhir Abbey[78]

It is clear from both the court rolls and the receivers' accounts that the abbot and convent of the Welsh abbey of Cwmhir held land and property in Tempseter by a charter of William Fitzalan. In the first half of the fourteenth century the abbot was repeatedly asked to produce his original charter in court, but he consistently failed to appear.[79] The charter itself is now lost, but a confirmation charter of King John dated 27 December 1214 lists the gifts to the abbey between its second foundation in 1176 and 1214.[80] The donors were Maredudd ap Maelgwyn, Roger Mortimer, Hywel ap Cadwallon, William Fitzalan, Einion Clud, Einion o'r Porth and Llywelyn ab *Amaranth* [Anarawd].

Fitzalan's gift was *t*[*erra*]*de dono Will*[*elm*]*i fil*[*ii*] *Alan*[*i*]*, Heskyborew ex ut*[*ra*]*q*[*ue*] *p*[*ar*]*te rivuli de B*[*er*]*ton*[*i*]. The place name *Heskyborew* here is Welsh *Yscuboriau* or English Skyborry and *rivuli de B*[*er*]*ton*[*i*] is Berton Brook forming the boundary between Skyborry and Trebert townships. William Fitzalan II granted a number of gifts to monastic foundations. He had gained control of Clun from the death of his mother in 1199 and died in 1210. His son William Fitzalan did not gain full control of Clun which was *in manu regis* before his death in April 1215 so he could not have granted Skyborry to Cwmhir. This limits the date of the grant to *c*.1199 x 1210. Roger Mortimer's grant to Cwmhir, after he recovered Maelienydd, was made on 10 March 1200 and as it is likely that he had the support of Fitzalan at this time the probability is that Fitzalan's grant was also about then.[81] The period from 1201 to 1210 was one of relative peace in the region and this too may have facilitated the granting of land to a Welsh institution.[82]

The monks developed a substantial grange at Monachty Poeth and were given prime arable and pasture land in the Teme valley as well as a mill about a mile away probably at the present day Skyborry Green.[83] There were both monks and lay brothers working there. However, the abbot and his Welsh tenants did not always see eye to eye. In 1334 Abbot Llywelyn ap Hywel of Cwmhir was accused by one David Bola of a felony, and failing repeatedly to attend the court he was outlawed and had his goods, lands and beasts taken into the hands of the lord until he paid a fine of £4 to recover them.[84] And three years later Gruffudd ap Meurig, a monk of Cwmhir, was accused of unjustly detaining the cattle of Ieuan ap Hywel. On the other hand the abbot was quite firm in dealing with tenants found breaking down fences, burning his woods and stealing his sheep even though he himself did not consider that he owed suit at the Court of Temseter nor at any other local court. Instead some disputes were to be settled at special March days (*dies marchie*). Thus, after 1344 the abbot for many years no longer appeared in the court records and from thenceforth matters concerning Skyborry would be dealt with as though the township was *in manu domini*.[85] This is not to imply that the township no longer remained a possession of Cwmhir, however, for in 1378 tenure was again in dispute and the abbot was accused of bringing in a tenant, Maredudd ap David, who was not a freeman of Tempseter, contrary to the original charter.[86]

We may ask about Fitzalan's motives in granting a valuable piece of land to the Welsh monks of Cwmhir, a remote abbey some considerable distance from his own demesne.[87] In addition to the well-known medieval concern for the soul after death, Fitzalan would certainly have recognized the valuable wool-producing skills of the monks, which might serve as an encouragement and model to his other tenants in the manor. The early Fitzalans were clearly aware of the economic potential of their land holdings, and much of their revenue was derived from sheep farming.[88] As lords of Oswestry they already possessed what was perhaps the predominant border wool trading centre of the middle ages. From the mid-fourteenth century, however, the greatest concentration of sheep in the Marches was in the lordship of Clun.[89] In 1371–72 the bailiff of Clun managed nine flocks of about 240 sheep, each kept in seven different districts.

Cwmhir was not the only monastic foundation with a stake in the lordship. The abbot of Wigmore seems also to have had an interest in land in Tempseter, but it is not clear where this was, nor how it was acquired. In 1338 he was accused of unjustly retaining wages owed for autumnal works, but like the abbot of Cwmhir he declined to appear in court. In 1339 several of the local 'lords', led by *Dominus* Roger de Cheyney, accused the prior of Wenlock of detaining their cattle at Wenlock, and in 1378 the prior too was amerced for non-appearance in court.

Conclusions and Discussion: Patterns of Welsh Settlement

The generally accepted origin of the name Tempseter or Temsete as Anglo-Saxon 'settlers on the Teme'[90] need not discount a mainly Welsh settlement.[91] It merely indicates the Anglo-Saxon linguistic description of those settlers. Indeed it is likely that there was more than one period of major Welsh settlement in the area of the Teme and Clun valleys.

The pattern of Welsh settlement in the March of Wales has received attention from a variety of sources, but most have considered the Manor of Tempseter only briefly, if at all.[92] However, in his seminal analysis of lordship and society in the March, R. R. Davies utilized the extensive court rolls of Clun to illustrate many aspects of Welsh

culture in the borderlands in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[93] More recently Lieberman has suggested that in 1086 the hills surrounding Clun were only sparsely settled, but that before the end of the twelfth century there was an eastward wave of migrants into these areas. He went on to postulate that after the death of Llywelyn ap Iorwerth in 1240 John Fitzalan II encouraged and organized Welsh settlement there in order to maximise badly needed revenues, thus introducing elements of Welsh and English customs and procedures into Tempseter.[94]

It should first be noted that the whole of the western part of Clun lordship was occupied almost entirely by families with Welsh patronymic names, and it is only to the east of Clun borough that Anglo-Norman names regularly appear mixed in with the Welsh.[95] The same is largely true of place and field names.[96] In Tempseter above Portlok almost all the township names have largely Welsh elements (Table 1). And high in the Teme Valley we find the names *Hendre*, *Hafod Fadog* and at still higher altitude *Lluest*. These names are clearly symptomatic of Welsh settlement. *Hafod* reflects the medieval and post-medieval practice of transhumance, the movement of families from lower down in the valley to summer dwellings or dairy houses closer to the sites of upland grazing for cattle and sheep. The term *lluest*, originally an encampment, later came to represent a temporary shelter for a shepherd higher up the hillside close to the sheepwalks. The existence of several *llan* names in the land above Portlok (*Llanwolley, Llanmadoc, Llanllwyd, Llanhedric*) may point to an earlier Welsh settlement rather than a later re-settlement after the Norman conquest.[97] Further north, the townships of Reilth and Eddicliffe are filled with Welsh place names such as *Cefn Einion*, *Argoed*, *Bryn*, *Cwm* and *Llysty*. The interface between Welsh and English place names here is quite sharp and could thus be used to define a 'racial boundary' coincident with the eastern edge of the lordship of Clun in a manner similar to that suggested for the lordship of Oswestry.[98]

Linguistically, it is almost certain too that in an area 'long subject to alien rule and colonization…but which… had seen extensive Welsh re-settlement' many native Welsh speakers would have had some knowledge also of Norman French.[99] Likewise, some at least of the lord's officers must have been able to speak and understand Welsh, and traders at Knighton market, recorded in 1357, must needs have been at least bilingual to carry on their businesses successfully.[100]

Beyond this broad generalization is evidence of a distinct segregation of free and bond landholders based principally on the territory which they eventually occupied. Thus land in the so-called Clun Five Towns, the townships of Hudcote, Bicton, Newcastle, Adderdeleye and Cefncelynnog, was clearly designated as bond land, where at some time the settlers must have been of villein status, owing labour services to the lord and only able to relocate *ad voluntatem domini*.[101] Although these services were gradually commuted to monetary rents and payments the tradition of Welsh customs remained in the names of the various renders and dues.[102]

Salt ascribed these traditions to the Laws of Hywel Dda and although these laws are now regarded as a progression of codes largely of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries many of the customs were certainly much older than this. The concept of the *cenedl* or clan and its practices is, as Sir John Lloyd says, 'incontestably of ancient origin'.[103] Yet as late as 1374 the inhabitants of the bond lands owed the lord rents for their 'gwelyes' (Welsh *gwelyau*). There are, too, references to g*alanas*, a term a term of great antiquity, which referred to the slaughter of a kinsman and its compensatory consequences, still found to be in use in 1397 as a debt which ought to be paid. In 1357 *de parentela Ieuan Clerici de Obbeleye quam interfecit Howel fratrem euis £8 pro galanas* and in 1380 *galanas £8 de progenie Llywelyn ap David pro morte Cadogan ap Gruffudd tenent advocare que interfecit felonie*. The lord was thus to receive one third while the kin retained two thirds. As this was an obligation on the kin there was no relief when the killer fled abroad.[104] These are all sure signs of a much earlier Welsh culture persisting into the late medieval period in the lordship. It may be noted, too, that in the lordship of Oswestry there were hints of certain unfree townships which appeared to have different tenures from the majority of townships and in which women could inherit as well as men.[105]

In the thirteenth century the Welsh princes Llywelyn ap Iorwerth and Llywelyn ap Gruffudd seem to have imposed a Welsh lordship, particularly in those townships above Portlok Forest. The inquisitions of the Fitzalans and the dower surveys for Isabella Mortimer point clearly to this limit of Welsh princely occupation. Portlok was close to and perhaps at one time even encompassed Offa's Dyke (see map in Figure 1). This separation of polities was certainly recognized by the construction of the Dyke in the eighth century as the boundary between Welsh and Anglo-Saxon territory and it was perhaps the distant memory of this line of segregation that remained into the thirteenth and subsequent centuries. Even by the eighteenth century the men of Obley, below Portlok, were quite ready to acknowledge that they had no claim to Clun Forest above that boundary. The claim of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd in 1263 that John Fitzalan II had formally ceded Tempseter to him, although perhaps a compromise agreement by Fitzalan when under pressure, suggests a specific recognition that there was a concentration of Welsh settlement in the land above Portlok, and hence a political acquiescence in Llywelyn's claim to hold the area. Otherwise, it is difficult to explain Fitzalan's apparent generosity in this matter.

It is not easy to know how the Welsh in different parts of the Teme valley might have reacted to the incursions of each of the two Welsh princes. Did some of the existing population regard them as liberators or as invaders? In 1233 Llywelyn Fawr was said to have ravaged the Teme valley and in 1260 Llywelyn ap Gruffudd's Welsh allies in

Ceri and Cydewain moved down the Teme valley and fired Knighton.[106] Clearly then Knighton itself was regarded at that time as alien to Welsh interests and the destruction of the town might again be seen as a recognition that it was then in Mortimer's possession and beyond the limits of the prince's current ambition for Welsh settlement.

How then might the three castles in the upper reaches of the Teme and Clun valleys fit into to this picture of community boundaries? The position of the Beguildy motte and bailey, if assumed to be an Anglo-Norman construct, appears specifically designed to keep Welsh 'invaders' out of the valley well above any such traditional boundary and perhaps reflects an attempt at western expansion of Anglo-Norman control in the twelfth century. If so, events of the thirteenth century show that such aspirations were not accepted by the Welsh during the years of dominance of the Welsh princes. In contrast with Beguildy the much decayed motte at Newcastle is barely a mile above Offa's Dyke. And despite excavation in the 1960s Castell Bryn Amlwg remains even more enigmatic. Was it like Beguildy there to keep the Welsh out or to act as a protection for the Welsh settlers in the valley below? It may well be that its original construction and its later utilization had completely different and even opposite motives.

Study of the rolls of the Manor Court and of the *Halimote Wallicorum* at first suggested that the latter had by 1328 become a much reduced and impoverished institution, reflecting only a fading memory of a past society. A detailed analysis of the halimotes in the fourteenth century shows that most of the cases heard in that court involved persons who were resident in or had leases in the those townships above Portlok known to have previously been of bond status.[107] Although it is known that West Shropshire suffered greatly from the Black Death, especially during the spring and summer of 1349, unfortunately none of the court rolls survives for 1346–1353.[108] Then in the period between the 'Great Pestilences' and the Peasants Revolt of 1381 the business of the halimote expanded rapidly, reflecting the enlarged ambitions of the villein section of society seeking work outside the lordship, the entry of newcomers into the bond lands and other signs of restlessness and ambition among the lord's villeins.[109] It is likely, too, that many bondmen had become free during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Recruitment into active military units was available only to freemen and it was therefore in the interest of the lords to grant such freedom when they wished to campaign abroad or defend their home territory. Secondly, the aftermath of the plague years meant that landless peasants were able to take over abandoned holdings and thus free themselves from the customary services of feudal villeinage. Certainly, there is ample evidence in the court rolls of new entrants, including women, coming into vacant lands in Tempseter, including the bond townships, during the fourteenth century, whereupon advowry payments were due to the lord. Attempts to convert bond land in Hudcote, Newcastle and Addrederley into free land were however strongly resisted.[110]

A hint of a third and different status concerns the men of Kerryvaldwyn, a region bordering Ceri on the north-western edge of Tempseter. They were frequently accused in court of concealing certain services such as reliefs, *amobyr* and *wormtak* which were owed by the other freemen of Tempseter.[111] They claimed that according to charter they held their lands by different tenures from the other freemen of Tempseter with the implication that their forebears had settled there at a different time and in different circumstances than other communities in the manor.

Conclusion

It is probable that before the construction of Offa's Dyke there was some degree of Welsh settlement, however sparse, in the western uplands of what later became the lordship of Clun, including the Forest of Clun and Kerryvaldwyn. Thus, by the time Welsh monks arrived in the township of Skyborry the greater part of the surrounding population would have been Welsh-speaking. In the activities of the Welsh princes in the thirteenth century there is at least an implication that they sought recognition of an earlier Welsh claim specifically to the land above Portlok Forest and Offa's Dyke. By this time however the Anglo-Norman hegemony had already encompassed and accepted Welsh settlement much further to the east, recognizing therein a lucrative source of revenue. It is suggested that the unfree land and the *nativi domini* with their separate halimote court might reflect the remnants of the earlier phase of settlement while the freemen and their townships would represent a later wave of in-migration.

Postscript: The Final Settlement?

The Act of 28 Henry VIII, chapter 3, gave the king authority to allot the townships, shire divisions and shire towns within the dominion and principality of Wales during the ensuing three years and a further Act of 31 Henry VIII, chapter 11, extended this authority for a further three years. The Acts were designed in part to prevent malefactors escaping from the existing shires into the marcher lordships and this was achieved by adding four new shires along the border including the counties of Montgomery, Denbigh, Radnor and Brecon. A commission was appointed by

the lord chancellor to establish precisely where the new border should be.[112] Although the Act of 1536 specified the lordships which henceforth were to be included in the new county of Montgomery the commission laboured on for a further six years, by which time various adjustments had been made to the original borders. Initially the following were allocated to Montgomeryshire: 'the lordshippes Towneshippes parisshes commotes and cantredes of Mountgomerey Kedewen Kery Cawisland Arustley Kevyliock Doythure Powesland Clunesland Balesley Tempcestre and Alcestre'.

We now consider the reversion of Clun to Shropshire. On 23 November 1545 the parliament at Westminster passed an Act assigning to Lady Mary, wife of Henry, earl of Arundel, numerous castles, lordships and manors in Shropshire as her marriage jointure. These included the 'manors' of Clun, Bicton, Tempseter and Hudcote in the county of Montgomery in the country of Wales, and the Act also specified that 'they shall from Lady Day next be annexed to the county of Salop, otherwise called Shropshire'.[113] The documents were signed 'with his Highness's secret stamp' by William Clerc in the presence of Sir Anthony Denny for 'the assurance of my lady of Arundell's jointure'. Thus it was that on 25 March 1546 the lordship of Clun was returned to the county of Shropshire.

At the beginning of September 1536 a royal commission led by Walter Devereux, Lord Ferrers, and including Richard Herbert, was assigned to the Council in the Marches of Wales, charged with establishing the exact areas and boundaries of the hundreds within the territories set out by the Act passed earlier in the year.[114]

Acknowledgements

Notes

1   For a detailed discussion of the post-conquest geographical and judicial devolution of the Anglo-Saxon hundreds of Rinlau and Leintwardine see M. Lieberman, *The Medieval March of Wales* 2010, 194–208.
2   *VCH Salop*, **III**, 33–53.
3   J. G. Edwards, *Calendar of Ancient Correspondence Concerning* Wales, 1935, 49; J. Conway Davies, *The Welsh Assize Roll* 1277–1284, 1940, 117–8.
4   The Welsh name for the Teme valley. For the interpretation of the place-names Tempseter and *Dyffryn Tefeidiad*, see R. Morgan, *Welsh Place Names in Shropshire*, 1997, 52.
5   For previous accounts see T. Salt, *Trans. Shrops. Archaeol. Soc.*, **11** (1888), 244–277, R. R. Davies, *Lordship and Society in the March of Wales*, 1978, *passim*, and Lieberman, *Op. Cit*. Much of the material in Salt's article had earlier been presented at a meeting of the Archaeological Institute held at Shrewsbury in August 1855 by G. M. Salt and privately printed in 1858.
6   R. W. Eyton, *Antiquities of Shropshire*, **7**, 211–262, and **11**, 225–275. This is the major source of information about the early Fitzalans. For the later Fitzalans (1267–1415) see M. Burtscher, in *The Fitzalans: Earls of Arundel and Surrey, Lords of the Marches (1267–1415)*, 2008.
7   J. B. Blakeway, *The Sheriffs of Shropshire*, 1831; *The Great Rolls of the Pipe 1156–9, Salopescira* (Record Commission, 1844).
8   I. M. Williams (ed.), *Cronica Walliae (Humphrey Llwyd)*, 2002, 151.
9   L. Thorpe (ed.), *Gerald of Wales*, 1978, 201.
10   Blakeway, *Op. Cit*.; *The Great Rolls of the Pipe 1190–1201, Salopescira* (Record Commission, 1844).
11   Eyton, *Op. Cit*.; J. E. Lloyd, *A History of Wales from the Earliest Times to the Edwardian Conquest*, **2**, 1911, 616.
12   Note that the pedigree given by M. Burtscher, *Op. Cit*., shows four successive William Fitzalans.
13   *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem, Hen III*, **1**, no.684, 216; The National Archives: [TNA] C132/35/18.
14   Edwards, *Op. Cit*., 16; W. W. Capes (ed.), *Register of Richard de Swinfield, Bishop of Hereford 1283–1317*, 1909), 86.
15   *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem, Hen III*, **1**, no.812, 278–81; TNA: C132/42/5.
16   There were several brief interruptions. During the minority of John's heir Clun was held by Roger Mortimer (d.1282) and then by the sheriff of Shropshire for the king. Richard Fitzalan I was granted his lands in 1288 but in 1294 King Edward confiscated the hundred of Purslow in Clun and held it until 1297. The Fitzalan lands were again in wardship during the minority of Edmund Fitzalan from 1302–6. And finally, Roger Mortimer (d.1330) briefly gained possession of Clun in 1321 and again after the execution of Earl Edmund in 1326 only for the lordship to be restored to Richard Fitzalan II in 1331.
17   Burtscher, *Op. Cit*.
18   M. Clough (ed.), *Two Estate Surveys of the Fitzalan Earls of Arundel*, Sussex Record Society, **67**, (1969), 65, 89.
19   Lloyd, *Op. Cit*., **2**, 655–693; R. R. Davies, *Conquest, Coexistence and Change*, 1987, 236–251; R. Turvey, *Llywelyn the Great*, 2007, 119.
20   Davies, *Op. Cit*., 244.

21   H. Pryce, (ed.), *The Acts of Welsh Rulers* 1120–1283, 2005, no.259, p.423–4. It is possible that Llywelyn's apparent generosity to Mortimer in this is a reflection of the weakness of his claim to these manors.

22   T. Jones, (ed.), *Brut y Tywysogion* or *The Chronicle of the Princes* (*Peniarth MS. 20 Version*), 1952, 102.

23   Williams, *Op. Cit.*, 204.

24   T. Jones, (ed.), *Brut y Tywysogion* or *The Chronicle of the Princes* (*Red Book of Hergest Version*), 1955, 230/1. Welsh *darostwng*, could mean 'to subdue, to subject, to humiliate, or to degrade'.

25   T. Jones, *Brenhinedd y Saesson* or *The Kings of the Saxons*, 1971, 228–9.

26   T. Jones, *Exeter Cathedral Library MS.3514, Cronica de Wallia*, 507–19, translated/transcribed in *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, **12**, (1946), 37, for the year 1233.

27   J. Beverley Smith, *Llywelyn ap Gruffudd; Prince of Wales*, 1998, *passim*. This is the most detailed and thorough account of the life of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd.

28   T. Jones, *Op. Cit.*, 113 (1263).

29   *Calendar of Close Rolls, Hen III, 1261–1264*, **12**, 294–5.

30   *Calendar of Close Rolls*, Hen III, *1265–1267*, **13**, 496. The king was well aware of the dispute between Llywelyn and Roger Mortimer over the territory of *Dyffryn Tefeidiat* at this time.

31   Edwards, *Op. Cit.*, 49.

32   *Ibid.*, 86–7. This raises questions as to precisely what John granted to Llywelyn and why. It may be that John conceded only the land above Portlok claimed by the prince.

33   T. Hinde (ed.), *The Domesday Book, England's Heritage Then and* Now, 1996, 225. Bichetone [Bicton] is unlikely to be the township of that name in Clun. F. C. Suppe in *Military Institutions on the Welsh Marches: Shropshire, 1066–1300*, 1994, 163, lists Hodecote Yevan, Eton Larquenhope and Meneton as Domesday vills.

34   *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem, Hen III*, **1**, no.684, p.216; TNA: C132/35/18. Inquisition dated 25 November 1267. But Eyton, O*p. Cit.*, **11**, 231, n. 3 has *ballivos suos*.

35   *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem*, Hen III, **1**, no.812, pp.278–81; TNA: C132/42/5. Inquisition dated 21 June 1272; he died 18 March 1272.

36   *Calendar of Close Rolls, Hen III, 1268–1272*, **14**, 506–7.

37   *Calendar of Close Rolls, Edw I, 1279–1288*, **2**, 226–7 and 260–2; TNA: C54/100 and C54/101. The writ to the eschaetor is dated 10 November 1282 at Hereford and the schedule is dated 15 April 1284 at Caernarvon. The extent itself had been made at Clun on 8 October 1283 by a jury of twelve Welshmen. See also *Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellaneous* (*1219– 1307*), **1**, no.1272, p.371 and TNA: C132/42/7. The jurors were unable to seal the extent as the Welsh did not use seals. For Isabella Mortimer, see E. Cavell, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* **17** (2007), 57–82.

38   Clough, *Op. Cit.* The survey is dated by internal evidence to 1301. Richard Fitzalan died in 1302 and his inquisition *post mortem* also includes a detailed extent in *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem, Edw I*, (*25–35*), **4**, no.90, p.50; TNA: C132/104/21.

39   Shropshire Archives [SA]: CM1/37.

40   W. Rees, *South Wales and the Border in the Fourteenth Century (North East Sheet),* 1933. It appears that the men of Tempseter were granted a right of chase in the Forest of Portlok in 1292 for which they paid £200, for which grant see T. Salt, *Trans. Shrops. Archaeol. Soc.*, **11** (1888), 248.

41   But see also the survey of miltary institutions by F. C. Suppe, *Military Institutions on the Welsh Marches: Shropshire, 1066–1300*, 42, which lists the manors and townships contributing to the guarding of Clun Castle in 1272. The designations from other sources may vary slightly. See, for example, the twenty four named townships making presentments at the manor court on 8 July 1382 (SA: 552/1/20).

42   Morgan, *Op. Cit.*, interprets this as *Llanerch-edred*. This may also be the place called Erkley in the ministers accounts of 1541/2 in SA: 552/1/1195.

43   D. J. Cathcart King, *Castellarium Anglicanum*, 1983, 420, 423, 563.

44   *VCH Salop*, **I**, 391; M. Salter, *The Castles and Moated Manors of Shropshire*, 2001, 4, 5, and 23.

45   D. Stephenson, 'Castell Coch/Castell Hychoet: a possible identification', in *Trans. Shrops. Archaeol. Soc.*, **77** (2002), 120–2.

46   L. Alcock, D. J. C. King, W. G. Putnam and C. J. Spurgeon, 'Excavations at Bryn Amlwg', *Montgomeryshire Collections*, **60** (1967/8), 8–27.

47   Edwards, *Op. Cit.*, 49.

48   SA: 552/1/1–55. There is a full transcription of 552/1/1 and part of 552/1/2 with detailed notes of the remaining rolls in G. E. A. Raspin, *Transcript and Descriptive List of the Medieval Lordship of Clun*, (thesis, University of London, 1963), copy in SA: (q)T63. For lands acquired by Mortimer at this time see Davies, *Lordship and Society in the March of Wales*, 405–7.

49   The series of court records for Tempseter is amongst the most extensive for the Marcher lordships in the period between 1328 and 1437; despite this less than 15% of the total court records survive.

50   The halimote was held on the same day as the court for the borough of Clun; probably both were held in the town.

51   Davies, *Op. Cit.*, 120.

52   In the earlier court rolls commonly described as the *four* towns. The first mention of five towns is not until 1380. Those most frequently mentioned are Hudcote, Bicton, Newcastle and Addredeley though Cefncelynnog and Sedewall (Shadwell) also appear regularly. See also *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem, Edw I, 25–35*, **4,** no.90, pp.51–2 and TNA: C133/104/21 wherein the four towns are described as 'hamlets'.

53   SA: 552/1/5A.

54   SA: 552/1/18. Villeins are recorded as owing services such as haymaking, autumnal works and carrying for the lord; there were some villeins of the lord also in the 'free' townships of Down *iuxta* Clun and Lurkenhope owing suit in the halimote.

55   '*De nativis*' in *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England* (Record Commission, 1840), **1**, 481.

56   SA: 552/1/15.

57 By 1395 a few English or at least Anglicised names had begun to appear amongst the twelve jurors of the great halimote, including William Arthur, John Hardy and William Carewet. While the great halimote was probably held in Clun the small courts of the halimote might have been held locally in the named townships of Hudcote, Bicton and Lurkenhope.

58 The obligation of suit of mill was very much an English custom not known under the laws of Wales, but introduced in the thirteenth century in order to raise revenue.

59 The value of these varied according to the wealth of the deceased. Normally, the heriot was a four footed beast which might vary from a sheep worth twelve pence up to an ox worth half a mark or more. Sometimes the deceased had nothing in goods (*nichil habuit in bonis*). Then both the heriot and the relief were paid into the court by the heir. When John de Cheyney died in 1343/4 the heriot was one lance kept at Clun Castle.

60 SA: 552/1/39.

61 The first appearance of a list of names of the homage occurs in the halimote of 11 October 1375 (SA: 552/1/18).

62 This was a payment for having the protection of the lord for new tenants coming into his lands. See for example SA: 552/1/3 and 7. In 1343/4 Jevan Gwerthrynion was charged with residing in the lordship without advowry, SA: 552/1/10.

63 See A. L. Poole, *The Oxford History of England:Domesday Book to Magna Carta*, 2nd edition, 1987, 319–2, n.1.

64 SA: 552/1/4; 552/1/9; 552/1/17.

65 SA: 552/1/1172. In the collector's account for Clun Forest in 1400/1 the *stodhari* (stud grooms) reported 12 stallions, 151 mares and 32 foals, but rustling was evidently a major problem. The revenues of the Forest of Clun would have been lost to the Fitzalans during the occupation by Llywelyn ap Gruffudd in the thirteenth century.

66 SA: 552/1/47. See Smith, *Op. Cit.*, 260. For a list of knight's fees of Clun in the thirteenth century see *Calendar of Close Rolls, 56 Henry III*, **14**, 513–4.

67 H. Watt, *Welsh Manors and their Records*, 2000, 26.

68 *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem, Edw I, 25–35*, **4**, no.90, pp.51–2.

69 SA: 552/1/1164–1183. Not all of these documents can be produced owing to their poor condition.

70 In June 1337 William ap Llywelyn gave the lord 6*d*. to have an enquiry as to how muchWilliam ap Hugh and Ieuan his brother held of 'the land of *tretheroythpunt*'.

71 For a detailed discussion of the survival and evolution of *galanas* in Clun and other marcher lordships see R. R. Davies, 'The Survival of the Bloodfeud in Medieval Wales', in *History* **54**, (1969), 338–357. Davies argues that the survival of ancient customs such as *galanas* and *sarhad* in the Marcher lordships was because they were not subject to the Edwardian statutes, but more importantly because the Marcher lords had an interest in gaining one third of any compensation for themselves.

72 But as late as 1337 the tenants of Tempseter owed twenty four head of cattle, twelve to the lord, the earl of Arundel, and twelve to the heirs of Roger Mortimer whose daughter had earlier married John Fitzalan III, SA: 552/1/7.

73 For more detail on these payments in the Fitzalan lordships see for example G. P. Jones, *The Extent of Chirkland 1392–3*, 1933 and W. J. Slack, *The Lordship of Oswestry, 1393–1607*, 'Extenta Manerii, 1393', 1951. Both surveys were made by Robert Egerley for Richard Fitzalan III, earl of Arundel.

74 D. Stephenson, 'From Llywelyn ap Gruffudd to Edward I: Expansionist Rulers and Society in Thirteenth-Century Gwynedd', in D. M. Williams and J. R. Kenyon, (eds), *The Impact of the Edwardian Castles in Wales*, 2010; J . B. Smith, *Op. Cit., 259*. The Statute of Rhuddlan (1284), which attempted to enforce certain English legal practices, did not apply directly to the Marcher lordships, but nonetheless may well have presaged changes in traditional customs there.

75 SA: 552/1/18. The exaction of *cymortha* was not officially banned in Wales until 1537. See T. G. Watkin, *The Legal History of Wales*, 2007, 124, 140. Note the distinction between *cymortha* and *commorth*, the latter a tribute of cows owed to the lord.

76 SA: 552/1/1489. Manor of Tempseter within the hundred of Clun.

77 H. Lewis, *The Ancient Laws of Wales*, 1889, 48; D. Jenkins, *The Law of Hywel Dda*, 1986), 379. There are various spellings of this word, but it occurs as *sarhayt* in several of the rolls of Tempseter.

78 For Cwmhir Abbey see, for example, C. A. Raleigh Radford, 'The Cistercian Abbey of Cwmhir, Radnorshire', in *Archaeologia Cambrensis, 131* (1982), 58–76 and P. M. Remfry, *A Political History of Abbey Cwmhir and its Patrons, 1176 to 1282*, 1994.

79 See for example SA: 552/1/7. The Abbot of Cwmhir pledged to show the original charter of the lord of Clun, but he did not come. It is hardly surprising that the abbot should have failed to make regular appearances when the abbey was at least twenty miles away from the court at Clun over difficult and dangerous terrain while he was carrying the precious charter.

80 T. D. Hardy (ed), *Rotuli Chartarum in Turri Londinensis, 1*, part1, (Record Commission, 1838), entries for 16 John (8 May 1214 to 27 May 1215), TNA: SC8/323/E561. Confirmation charters were subsequently issued by Henry III (*Calendar of Charter Rolls*, *Hen. III,(1226–1257)*, **1**, 155) and Edward II (*Calendar of Patent Rolls, Edw. II, (1317–1321)*, **3**, 163).

81 B. G. Charles, 'An early charter of the abbey of Cwmhir', in *Transactions of the Radnorshire Society*, **40** (1970), 68–74.

82 Fitzalan may well have been one of the *baronibus multis* present at the 1201 peace agreement, transcribed in I. W. Rowlands, 'The 1201 Peace between King John and Iorwerth Llywelyn', in *Studia Celtica*, **34** (2000), 149–166, esp.165.

83 First mentioned in 1284 (see note 37 *supra*) and leased for 6*s*. 8*d*. *per annum* from the abbot until the suppression of the abbey in 1537. The mill has long since disappeared, but there are traces of a weir in the stream above, and some way below that is a pond. Possibly the old stone barns there may represent the site of the original *yscuboriau*. Another ancient mill recorded in the court rolls was at Pentrehodre (The Quern) on the River Redlake.

84 SA: 552/1/3. In 1335 Abbot Richard of Wigmore was also accused of a felony and likewise when summoned failed to appear on a number of occasions (SA: 552/1/5A). Similarly, Richard, vicar of Clun was called repeatedly to appear in the court.

85 SA: 552/1/10.

86 SA: 552/1/19. The abbot was represented by his resident monk, Ieuan ap Hywel. The abbot's successor in 1400/1, John, Abbot of Cwmhir, was again in dispute over land rights.

87 In 1347 the farm of 'Scubore' alone was worth six marks (SA: 552/1/1164).

88 Clough, *Op. Cit.*

89   Burtscher, *Op*. *Cit*., 140–144, esp. 141.

90   From Anglo-Saxon *temede* and *saete*, J. E. Lloyd, *Bulletin Board Celtic Studies*, **11**, 53–4; M. Gelling, *The West Midlands in the Early Middle Ages*, 1992, esp.106–111; Morgan, *Op*. *Cit*.

91   Suppe, *Op*. *Cit*., 139, 163n; Suppe suggests that there may originally have been a [Welsh] *maenor* focused upon Clun.

92   A.N.Palmer, 'Welsh Settlements East of Offa's Dyke during the Eleventh Century', in *Y Cymmrodor*, **10**, (1899) 29–45; W. Rees, *South Wales and the March 1284–1415,* 1924; M. Richards, 'The Population of the Welsh Border', in *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, (1971), 77–100.

93   R. R. Davies, *Op*. *Cit*.

94   M. Lieberman, *Op*. *Cit*., 205–6. See also R. R. Davies, *Op*. *Cit*., 282–4.

95   *Calendar of Close Rolls, 1268–1272,* **14**, 513.

96   H. D. G. Foxall, *Shropshire Field-Names*, 1980; also the Foxall field-name maps at Shropshire Archives based on the Tithe Maps. See for example the map of Pentrehodry. Many places have both English and Welsh names, as for example, Trebert and Berton: Lieberman, *Op*. *Cit*., 48.

97   B. G. Charles, 'The Welsh, their Language and Place-names in Archenfield and Oswestry', in *Angles and Britons (O'Donnell Lectures),* 1963, 85–110. *Llan* here may have the earlier meaning of 'enclosure' rather than the later 'church'. For example, Llanhedric appears as *yderthescastell* in 1400/1 (SA: 552/1/1172).

98   Slack, *Op*. *Cit*., 21.

99   Llinos B. Smith, 'The Welsh Language before 1536', in G. H. Jenkins, (ed.), *The Welsh Language before the Industrial Revolution,* 1997, 15–44.

100 SA: 552/1/15.

101 An order in the halimote in 1337 forbade all bond holders to carry out work outside the Welshry, and Ieuan Tew of Selley was subsequently convicted of doing so. In 1354 Ieuan Gethyn of Purlogue and Ieuan ap Ieuan ap Dilwyn were amerced because their brothers had gone into England without permission. The transportation of personal goods out of the lordship was also forbidden (SA: 552/1/20). After the plague years there were many examples of men and women moving to seek work in England.

102 T. Salt, *Op*. *Cit*.

103 Lloyd, *Op*. *Cit*., **I**, 284, 287–8.

104 In 1387 Llywelyn ap Iorwerth fled into Maelienydd but his *parentela* were still obliged to pay the lord £8 (SA: 552/1/22).

105 Slack, *Op*. *Cit*., 24–26.

106 Lloyd, *Op*. *Cit*., **I**, 727.

107 Similarly, matters involving bond status in Purslow Five Towns were heard in the *Halimote Anglicorum*.

108 The rolls for 1361 and 1369, the two other years of the 'great pestilences', are also missing.

109 In 1375 the township of Hodecote (Hudcote) presented Griffith Gam for remaining in Maelienydd and thus failing in suit of court.

110 SA: 552/1/10.

111 SA: 552/1/2 and 10; T. Salt, *Op*. *Cit*.

112 I. Bowen, *The Statutes of Wales*, 1908, 75–93; Rees,'The Union of England and Wales', in *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmro*dorion, 1937, 27–100, esp. 86–7 and map; J. D. Mackie*, The Earlier Tudors, 1485–1558,* Oxford History of England, 1992 edn., 366–9.

113 *Letters and Papers Foreign and Domestic, Hen VIII*, **20**, (part 2), 411–414. Earlier reports seem to have confused this Act for the jointure of *Lady* Mary with a supposed Act in the time of *Queen* Mary – see T. Salt, *Op*. *Cit*., and discussion by E. R. Morris, 'History of the Parish of Kerry', in *Montgomeryshire Collections*, **25** (1891), in which the exact boundaries of the Forest of Clun are described.

114 The commission was directed out of the Court of Chancery and returned to the same; the names of the commissioners were recorded by George Owen of Henllys (1552–1613), whose folios are reproduced in E. M. Pritchard, *The Taylors Cussion*, 1906, part 2, f. 34.

A Medieval Tombstone at St. Martins, Near Oswestry

By LAWRENCE BUTLER

Introduction

In 1992–3 a new chapter-house or parish room was built on the north-east side of St. Martin's church, with a linking corridor to the north aisle. During the course of this work, whilst a new entrance was being cut through the north aisle north wall, three fragments of a medieval sculptured grave slab were found, used as building material within the core of the late medieval external wall.[1]

Description

There are three separate fragments of the tomb slab which form the upper right-hand side portion of the memorial (viewed from the foot of the slab). Two fragments join, with a total length of 62 cm. and a maximum width of 34 cm., forming part of the slab's long side. The third fragment, measuring a maximum of 30 cm. by 20 cm., was originally located at the top right-hand corner. Each fragment is 10 cm. thick and carved from a fine-grained yellow sandstone, possibly from a quarry near Cefn-y-fedw (SJ2443) on the lower slopes of Ruabon Mountain north of Trefor. The original dimensions of the slab are likely to have been 180 cm. by 90cm. (head), perhaps tapering to 75 cm. (foot). The fragments are badly damaged from their reuse as building material, which has also resulted in buff sandy mortar adhering to their face and edges. It is almost certain that this slab was flat, and not slightly coped.

The surviving low-relief decoration is in two parts: the floral design in the centre of the tomb slab and the inscription around the edge. The overall design of the leaves, shoots and grape cluster(s) is not immediately clear. Only parts of three leaves and one grape cluster are now easily visible. Pecking at the grape cluster is a long-billed bird (?crow) with wing, neck and tail feathers lightly incised. Its feet are without claws and standing on a short leaf shoot. The border inscription is 9 cm. wide, set between low relief fillets. The Lombardic letters are also raised in low relief. At the top of the slab are the letters C E. Along the side are E V A : F I L I A : C . A discussion of the design and inscription follows.

Discussion

Although fragmentary this is an interesting example of the 'North Wales School' of sculpture in Shropshire and is its most easterly example. However, in the medieval period the Oswestry area was predominantly one of Welsh speakers and it is only 9 miles (15 km.) from Valle Crucis abbey, where the largest collection of this school's products may be seen, and where Gresham has suggested that a school of carvers was based.[2]

The discussion best begins with the most distinctive feature, the inscription, dated from the ornate forms of its lettering, especially A, to the late 14th century. The Latin inscription could be read as [+ HIC : IA]CE[T :] EVA : FILIA : C[… and translated as 'Here lies Eva, daughter of...'. Her father's name starts with a curved letter, probably C, E, G or O. The letter forms have been fully discussed by Gresham (pp. 25–35).[3] Of the letters represented here the C and E are standard Lombardic forms (fig. 12, No. 179) in use until 1350, though the forms used here have more angular serifs, emphasised by grooves incised in the surface. The forms of F, I, L and V are equally acceptable in Lombardic and in plain later Latin capitals (fig. 12, Nos. 129, 179), but here at St. Martins
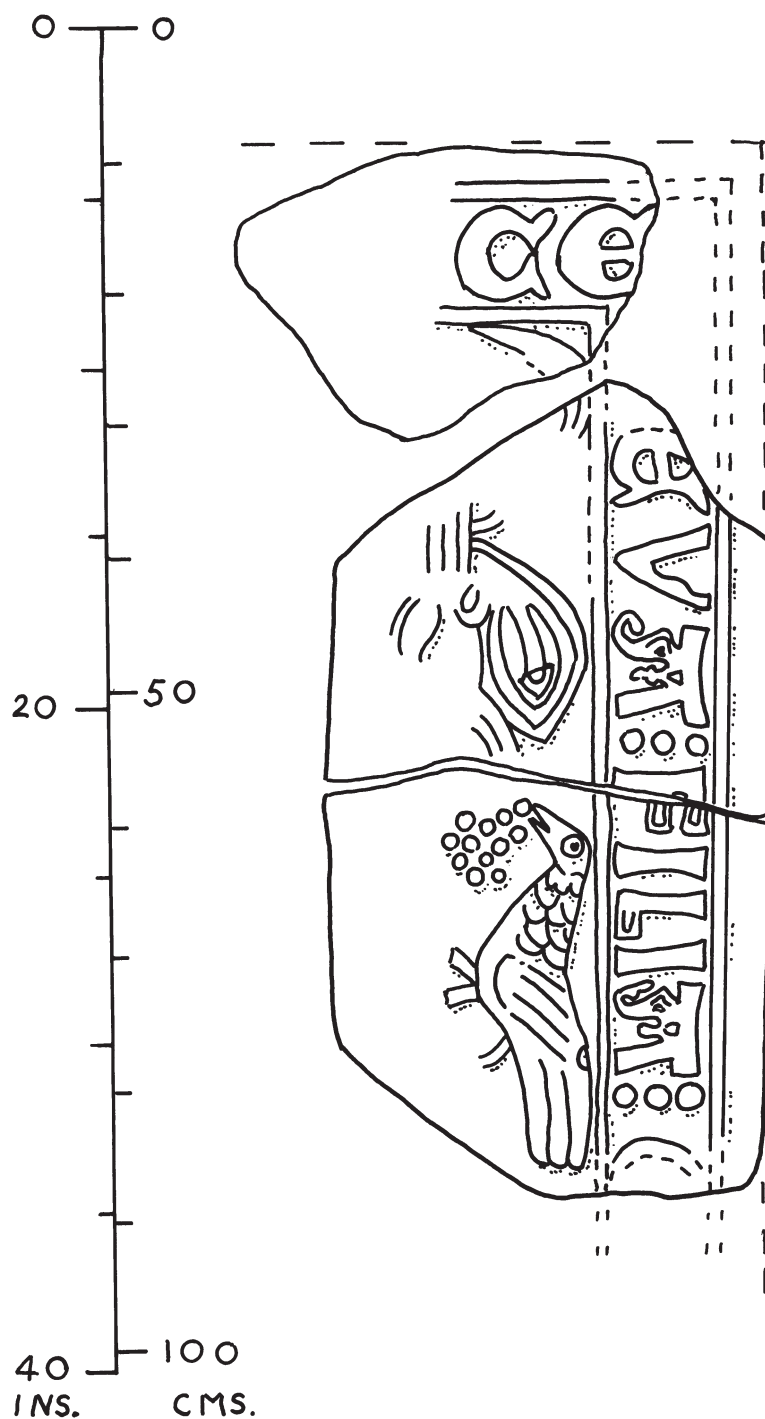
Figure 1   The Tombstone at St. Martins, (70% actual size.)

show incised lines for emphasis on the F and L, a detail which might have been lost on slabs which have been exposed to the elements for a much longer time. The letter A is a distinctively mid 14th-century ornate form, as illustrated by Gresham: figs. 12, 13, 15, 19 (Nos. 173, 179, 205). The cross-bar at St. Martins is exceptionally ornate; the plain right leg of the letter A in IACET can also be discerned. All the punctuation between the words is formed of three stops arranged vertically; this occurs on nearly all the inscriptions recorded by Gresham. It is unfortunate that the letters H of HIC and T of IACET do not survive, as these are letter forms in transition between the earlier uncial form and the later Latin form, which could give a useful dating indication (p. 31, figs. 14, and 15). On some inscriptions the T of IACET is at the end of the first line along the head of the slab (fig. 36, Nos. 35, 36), whilst on others it is placed at the start of the long side (fig. 37, Nos. 39, 40). The absence of the initial cross at the start of the inscription has removed another useful confirmation of this slab's date (figs. 16, 17).

Plate 1 The Tombstone at St. Martins

The foliage in the top right-hand corner of the slab is also distinctive of the North Wales School. Gresham discusses the types of foliage (pp. 19–24). That found at St. Martins has large fleshy rounded palmette leaves, as at Newborough (No. 197). However the use of this leaf type seems to be both a reversion to Romanesque models (Gresham, p. 21) and a continuation of 13th-century stiff-leaf traditions. The form of the head design can be reconstructed from the presence of a three-strand band placed below the two leaves with a short bud between them. The three lines of the cross-band or tie occur at the junction between the foliage leaves and the arms of a central cross head. This head might be formed of four short straight cross-arms or of four segments of quarter-circles forming a central diamond. There are examples of such a cross-band on Nos. 83, 85–6, 88–93, 95, 97–8. Nos. 92 and 95 have palmette leaves on the stem, but no slab in Gresham is exactly comparable to the site at St. Martins. The closest example is a fragmentary slab built into Caerwys churchyard wall, recently recorded by Brian and Moira Gittos.

The vine strand with large fleshy rounded palmette leaves and grape clusters is first found on late 13th-century slabs at Valle Crucis (No. 39) and Llangollen (No. 40). Seven examples of fruit clusters occur in early 14th-century slabs at Bangor Iscoed (now lost, see No. 119), Valle Crucis (No. 122), Bryneglwys (No. 123), Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd (No. 129), Llandudno (No. 131), Caerhun Hall (No. 132) and Ruabon (No. 138). The use of the vine strand with fruit clusters continues in popularity into the late 14th century, being found on two slabs at Yspyty Ifan (Nos. 194–5). This is the closest parallel in date to the slab at St. Martins. Other foliage strands show oak leaves and acorns, sometimes on the same slab as the vine leaves.

In the material collected by Gresham no slab with palmette leaves emerging from a tie band at the head has this design in association with vine leaves and grape clusters. This unique combination adds a further puzzling element to the unusual character of this unpublished slab. The pecking bird does not occur on any of the slabs recorded by Gresham, though dragons sometimes do. There are no heraldic birds, such as the three crows for Llywarch ap Bran. Parallels for this pecking bird must be discussed next.

Parallels for Bird on Grape Cluster

Birds frequently occur with grape clusters on late Anglo-Saxon sculpture within inhabited vine scrolls, as at Bakewell (Derbyshire) and Sandbach (Cheshire). Birds also occur in Romanesque sculpture, especially in the Herefordshire school.[4] At the highly-decorated church of Kilpeck they are found on corbels, in medallions over the arch of the south door and, as an opposed pair, at the base of the shaft column on the right (east) side of the same doorway (figs. 5, 32, 57, 60, 61). Other examples in Herefordshire occur in similar positions, as at Brinsop (fig.

176), Shobdon (fig. 139), Ribbesford (Worcestershire) (fig. 158), Rowlestone (figs. 179–181) and Leominster (figs. 211, 213); two are on tympana: Fownhope (fig. 222) and Billesley (Warwickshire) (fig. 238). Some birds may be identified as eagles and a few as doves associated with purity, whilst others are hawks, cocks and a phoenix. Seven are linked to *The Bestiary* scene of a larger bird pecking at a captive smaller bird (p. 150). Although some birds are depicted in foliage as at Billesley, Fownhope, Leominster and Rowlestone, none of them feeds on grape or fruit clusters.

Birds depicted on fonts may have a different symbolism, notably at Castle Frome with a dove representing the Holy Spirit at Christ's baptism, and an eagle of St. John (figs. 187, 188, 190, 192), but at Edwin Loach (fig. 244) the birds in medallions can be linked to decorative schemes at Brinsop and Shobdon, while at Stottesdon, Shropshire, one scene has the Bestiary-derived larger bird pecking a smaller captive one (fig. 234).

However, further afield there are three examples on Romanesque tympana of birds feeding on fruit within trees.[5] One is at Little Langford, Wiltshire, where three birds perching within a tree are placed alongside a bishop (?St. Nicholas), with his hand raised in blessing, while on the lintel below is a vigorous wild boar hunt (p. lxxiv and fig. 148). The second is at Stoke-sub-Hamdon, Somerset, where three birds perching and feeding within a centrally-placed tree are flanked by an archer (*Sagittarius*), a lion (*Leo*) and the Lamb of God (pp. xl–xli and fig. 69). The third tympanum is at Lower Swell, Gloucestershire, where a bird (?dove) feeds within a tree (pp. xl, 56). Although there are other examples of birds on Romanesque tympana, none are in trees or amid foliage and they do not seem to be closely related to the slab at St. Martins. For an interpretation of these birds on a tree, Allen has suggested either that this is the Tree of Life or that it has an origin in *The Bestiary*.[6]

This type of imagery is relatively prevalent in the period up to 1220, and was probably in part transmitted by manuscript illustrations. However it does not continue far into the 13th century. This leads to the possibility that the North Wales school took its inspiration largely from local Romanesque sculptural sources, in part imitating the palmette leaves of the late Romanesque. By the late thirteenth century the other decorative features had lost their didactic purpose and had also become divorced from mainstream architectural and sculptural developments.

Conclusion

This is an important new discovery, extending the geographical range and subject matter of the 'North Wales School' discussed by Gresham. The grave slab has now been placed on display in a glass-topped cabinet in the north aisle close to the place of its discovery. There is no information label within the showcase.[7] This present report is intended to fill that gap.

Acknowledgements

My thanks to the Revd. John Webb for bringing this memorial slab to my attention, and especial thanks to Brian and Moira Gittos for enthusiastically sharing the fruits of their recent fieldwork in North Wales and, from their excellent photographs, enabling me to correct my initial interpretation of the floral design.

Notes

1   W. Bliss, *The Parish Church of St. Martin of Tours, St. Martins, Shropshire*, 2004. Although I was consulted by the Rev. John Webb early in 1997, neither my report nor a briefer report of 1996 by Michael Watson, Head of Archaeology at Shropshire County Council, was used in the revised guide book.
2   C. A. Gresham, *Medieval Stone Carving in North Wales: Sepulchral Slabs and Effigies of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*, 1968.
3   References in this paragraph and the next two paragraphs are to the catalogue numbers which Gresham gave to the slabs which he recorded.
4   M. Thurlby, *The Herefordshire School of Romanesque Sculpture*, 1999. All the references in this and the following paragraphs are to Thurlby's work.
5   C. E. Keyser, *Norman Tympana and Lintels in the Churches of Great Britain*, 1927. The references in this paragraph are to Keyser's work.
6   J. Romilly Allen, *Early Christian Symbolism*, 1887, 387.
7   Dr. Bliss (as note 1) has misread the inscription and gives a wildly speculative interpretation of this stone's date and purpose.

THE DEPICTION OF CHILDREN ON THE FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CENTURY TOMBS IN KINLET CHURCH

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Abstract: Kinlet Church is dominated by four main tombs: those of a young woman assumed to be Elizabeth Cornwall; Sir Humphrey Blount and his wife, Elizabeth Winnington; Sir John Blount and his wife, Katherine Pershall; and Sir George Blount and his wife, Constance Talbot. All lived in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and all were holders of the manor of Kinlet. What is interesting is that each tomb depicts some, or all, of the children of the incumbent. The study of the depiction of children on tombs has undergone a great deal of revision in recent years and it is therefore pertinent now to analyse the very different ways in which children (in the sense of minors rather than issue) were depicted on memorials in the late medieval and Tudor periods.

It has been argued that the common loss of children in the medieval and Tudor periods led to parents being less emotionally attached to their children, due to their probable loss. However, as one historian has pointed out, the evidence of tombs across Europe does not support this. Far from children being rarely depicted on tombs, their representations on monuments are often the only proof that they existed at all.[1] The evidence from Kinlet supports the view that medieval and Tudor parents did engage emotionally with their offspring and that this emotion could be expressed through a desire to remember and record the lives of children who died in childhood, often alongside their still living siblings. Certainly, all four of the tombs described here include depictions of children who died in infancy or childhood, although in each case these children are represented in different ways with different intentions behind their depictions.

The Depiction of Children on Tombs in the Late Medieval and Tudor Periods

By the fifteenth century minor children had long been commemorated on tombs, with Henry III and his wife, Eleanor of Provence, for example, providing a lavish tomb for their young daughter, Katherine, in Westminster Abbey following her death in 1257.[2] Katherine was commemorated with a silver effigy placed over her tomb. There is also evidence in England from at least the fourteenth century of combined parent and child monuments, such as one of a lady and boy at Bodenham Church in Herefordshire.[3]

The depiction of infants on tombs was common in the medieval period, and one such occurs on the tomb of Elizabeth Cornwall at Kinlet. These effigies are known as chrysoms and they can appear as individuals, with their mother, or as weepers on tombs.[4] As has been recently pointed out, the effigies of adults tend to show the person depicted as he or she would have appeared alive, rather than in his or her burial clothes. It can therefore be supposed that the depiction of swaddled children was also an attempt to depict the infant as it would have been known, before its early death. As such, chrysom effigies can be considered distinct from the other main way of depicting a deceased infant or young child: as a fully grown adult weeper.

With the exception of the tomb of Elizabeth Cornwall, the smaller figures on the tombs at Kinlet fall into the category of weepers, a design which appeared on tombs during the medieval and later periods.[5] Weepers have been divided into three categories by historians: angels, saints and relatives of the deceased – generally their children.[6] It is the third category of weeper that is pertinent to the memorials at Kinlet and this was also the most common form of weeper in general. The practice of decorating a tomb chest with images of the deceased's children dates in England from at least the tomb of Edward III in 1377. Whilst the practice of including issue as weepers on tombs

was common in England, the diversity of ways in which they could be presented is striking. This can be seen in Kinlet itself where three of the four tombs depict the children of the deceased as weepers. One point of interest is that deceased offspring were often not distinguished from their living siblings, as can be seen again in the tomb of Edward III which depicted all twelve of his children, regardless of whether or not they were then deceased.[7] In addition to this, deceased children could be depicted on their own tombs as adult figures, regardless of their actual age at death. For example, two graves in Westminster Abbey: those of Edward III's children Blanche of the Tower and William of Windsor also show them as adults, in spite of the fact that both children died in early childhood.[8]

Regardless of the different ways in which they were depicted, it is clear that the deceased children depicted on the four tombs at Kinlet were all considered worthy of some memorial and of being remembered by their parents and siblings. As such, they provide a useful body of evidence in support of the argument that medieval and Tudor parents did indeed value and invest emotionally in their children, rather than simply focussing their attentions on those children who survived to adulthood. As the leading historian on this topic, S. Oosterwijk, has pointed out in relation to the tomb of Joan, Lady Cobham, who died in 1434, her six sons and four daughters were depicted as adults on her tomb, with nothing to distinguish the only surviving child, a daughter, from her siblings, something which would point against deceased children being portrayed merely as evidence of 'marital achievement'. Instead, the deceased children 'were clearly considered worth remembering long after their early deaths, perhaps not just because of their family status and immortal souls but also because of fond memories'.[9] The evidence from the four tombs at Kinlet supports this, with all four sets of parents or, at least, their heirs, seeking to reference and remember children who had been lost and to provide them with a still enduring role as part of their immediate family.

Elizabeth Cornwall

The tomb of a young woman in a side chapel at Kinlet Church has been identified since at least the nineteenth century as Elizabeth Cornwall, the heiress of Kinlet.[10] This is a probable identification given the style of the lady's dress, but her location beneath a window depicting one of her Cornwall ancestors should not necessarily be used to confirm the identification. It is clear from a nineteenth century drawing contained in a manuscript held by the British Library that the tomb has been moved, since the effigy was drawn from the side which is now obscured by the church wall, an angle which entirely obscures the effigy of the baby that lies on her left side.[11] The fact, however, that the lady was buried without her husband in an elaborate tomb would support an identification of Elizabeth Cornwall who, as the heiress to Kinlet enjoyed a certain prestige at the manor far above that of the usual wife of the lord of the manor.

For the purposes of this paper, the main focus of interest on Elizabeth Cornwall's tomb is the effigy of a swaddled baby which lies close to her side, within the folds of her cloak (Plate 1). It has been suggested that the presence of this child indicates that the lady died in childbirth.[12]

The swaddled child beside Elizabeth Cornwall falls into the category of a chrysom child. However, the assertion that it was placed there to indicate that its mother died in childbirth is very problematic. As set out above, the presence of a swaddled baby on its mother's tomb is more likely to be an attempt to commemorate the infant itself rather than to depict it as it would have appeared in death, something which discounts the assertion that it must have been placed there to indicate the cause of the mother's death.

Although chrysom effigies have in the past been suggested to have been used to depict infants who died before their mother's churching (which generally happened forty days after the birth of a son and eighty days after the birth of a daughter), this can also not necessarily be considered accurate. As has been pointed out, it is not possible to know the infant's age at death from the effigies, and the evidence of tombs in England supports the view that the effigies may not have been depicted entirely realistically. As Dr. Oosterwijk has pointed out, swaddled infants which appear in a line of weepers amongst their adult siblings were often shown disproportionately large in size.[13] In these cases the swaddled infant was used as a convention to record a deceased infant, rather than to depict it specifically as a child who died before its mother's churching. Such an effigy in fact appears as a weeper on the tomb of Elizabeth Cornwall's later kinsman, Thomas Blount, at Kidderminster, whose five children are depicted as weepers above recumbent effigies of him and his wife. The fifth child depicted, who is identified by his initials as George, was an infant who was christened in 1552.[14] George was not in fact the youngest child of the family, since his sister, Mary, who appears before him on the monument, was christened in 1561. However, his place in the family was remembered and commemorated. He was also depicted as the same size as his surviving adult siblings. The case of George Blount of Kidderminster, as well as other examples known in England, does strongly support the contention that the depiction of a swaddled infant was more an attempt to commemorate the infant itself than to make any statement about the mother, the mode of her death, or the fact that the infant died within a particular period of time (albeit it is certain that they died at some point in infancy). In addition to this, the contention that Elizabeth Cornwall must have died in childbirth due to the depiction of the chrysom child is unsustainable on

Plate 1   Elizabeth Cornwall and her Infant.

the evidence. It is perfectly possible that Elizabeth might have died in childbirth. However, there is no surviving evidence for this, particularly as there is no evidence of a convention for depicting a person's mode of death on his or her tomb. Far from it, effigies tended to depict the deceased as they would have appeared when they were alive. To confound this identification further, Elizabeth's dress does not show signs of pregnancy, as some effigies of mothers who died in childbirth did, something which also demonstrates that an attempt was made to depict them as they had appeared in life, in some cases even in the last few months of life. A brass of an Anne Astley at Blickling, who died in 1512, for example, shows her holding effigies of her twin sons who died in infancy, whilst her dress shows the open lacing indicative of pregnancy.[15] Elizabeth Cornwall's monument should therefore be interpreted as a commemoration of a mother and a child who died in infancy, with both being considered worthy of remembrance. The child may have died soon after the mother or it may have died during her lifetime, with its effigy being added to the tomb of its mother after her death. This is also supported by the fact that the swaddled baby cannot be classed as a weeper in the sense that all the children of the deceased were depicted, since Elizabeth Cornwall is known to have borne at least two children.

Elizabeth Cornwall married Sir William Lichfield before 1415, and she is known to have died in 1422, with her husband retaining Kinlet until his own death in 1446, when the manor passed to the Blount family, who were descended from Elizabeth's aunt. Elizabeth bore two daughters: Elizabeth and Alice, both minors at the time of their mother's death.[16] The elder of these two daughters, Elizabeth, married Roger Corbet, who died on 15 July 1430, leaving a daughter, Margaret, who was then aged three as his heir.[17] This Margaret was certainly the daughter of Elizabeth Lichfield who, along with her sister Alice, had died by the time of Roger Corbet's death, as Margaret was named as Sir William Lichfield's heir in the *Inquisition Post Mortem* taken after his death.[18] Elizabeth Cornwall was aged twenty-four in 1415 at the time of the death of her father, Sir John Cornwall.[19] She was therefore still a young woman at the time of her death, aged only thirty-one. Her elder daughter, Elizabeth Lichfield, must have been born by at least 1415 to have produced a daughter in 1427, and, given the fact that members of the gentry did not tend to marry especially young, she was probably somewhat older.

J.B. Blakeway, the Vicar of Kinlet, speculated in the early years of the nineteenth century that the swaddled baby represented Elizabeth Cornwall's son and heir, who died in infancy.[20] This is possible. Elizabeth Cornwall's

swaddled child is not a weeper in the traditional sense; there is no indication of its gender on the tomb, and so Blakeway's identification is suspect. It might just as well be Alice Lichfield, given the fact that the child depicted died in infancy, but not necessarily within weeks of birth. The only surviving reference to Alice Lichfield dates to the year of her mother's death and so it is certainly not impossible that she is the swaddled infant, who died soon after her mother, and was commemorated with her. Alternatively, the swaddled baby could simply be a third child, male or female, who died either before, or within a short enough period of time after, the mother for them to be included on her memorial as a way of also commemorating the brief life of the child. At the very least, Elizabeth Cornwall's monument is an interesting one in the fact that the absence of at least one of her children makes it clear that the swaddled baby is not a weeper. Instead, it was an attempt to depict and commemorate a deceased infant as he or she would have appeared in life, alongside its mother who was similarly depicted. The other tombs at Kinlet Church take the more usual approach of weepers.

Humphrey Blount and Elizabeth Winnington

The second tomb to be considered is that of a grandson of Elizabeth Cornwall's aunt, whose descendants inherited Kinlet after the death of Sir William Lichfield. It is a large tomb chest centrally placed in the church, depicting recumbent effigies of Humphrey Blount and his wife, Elizabeth Winnington. Stylistically, the tomb suggests that it was completed within a few years of Humphrey's death in 1478, during the lifetime of his wife who died in 1502. Certainly, Humphrey's dress has been described as the last phase of the Yorkist knight, due to the fact that the armour is depicted as less flamboyant than in earlier periods and the effigy has longer hair.[21] Elizabeth Winnington's dress also supports a late medieval date, with her depiction in a late fifteenth century butterfly headdress with the very late addition of broad flap turned back at the front.[22]

Two of the sides of the tomb chest are decorated with weepers. A late nineteenth century historian considered that 'according to the figures portrayed on his monument in Kinlet Church, he [Humphrey] had six sons and four daughters, of whom the youngest died an infant. The names only of five sons and one of the daughters have escaped oblivion'.[23] This is a misidentification. Instead the three female figures on the end of the tomb chest can be identified as the daughters of Humphrey and Elizabeth (Plate 2). The seven figures on the side, rather than representing one daughter followed by a row of six sons have, since at least 1940, been identified as the Virgin Mary, followed by representations of five sons, with the line completed by an angel[24] (Plate 3). This is the most likely explanation as, given the preference for male issue over female in the late medieval period, it is highly improbable that the couple's sons would have been depicted as preceded by a daughter. The dress of the female figure on the side is also considerably more elaborate than that of the daughters at the end, who are all dressed identically, and it would seem logical to suppose that she represents a female saint. Given the absence of any other identifying feature, the Virgin is likely. The figure at the end of the row is plainly an angel. Whilst, as discussed, it was very common for deceased children to be depicted beside their still living siblings, these depictions tended to fall into two categories: either with the deceased child depicted as an adult next to their siblings or as a swaddled infant, as can be seen on the tomb of Humphrey's great-grandson, Thomas Blount at Kidderminster. The depiction of a deceased child as an angel is therefore highly unlikely. The couple were represented with only three daughters and five sons as weepers on their tomb.

All the children depicted on the tomb chest are displayed as adults and it is therefore necessary to consider the identity of these children in order to determine whether any are, in fact, the depictions of minor children. As one historian has argued in a study of the depiction of minors on tombs, 'it became quite common to show deceased children among the living sons and daughters, although they were not necessarily differentiated in any way'.[25] Unlike the swaddled infant on Elizabeth Cornwall's tomb, which was plainly an attempt to portray a deceased child as it had been in its lifetime, any deceased children of Humphrey and Elizabeth must have been depicted as adults, regardless of their age at death. This has been suggested to be part of the belief that everyone would attain the age of Christ (i.e. their early thirties) in Heaven, regardless of their age at death.[26]

Humphrey Blount's will refers to sons named Thomas, John and William, as well as a daughter, Mary, who was then the wife of Robert Pigot.[27] The three sons were treated generously and fairly evenly, with Thomas, the eldest, for example, receiving Humphrey's best gilt sword, John, the second, his second gilt sword, and William, the youngest a gilt wood knife. The three sons also received other bequests of personal property, such as a furred gown bequeathed to John, something which does make it unlikely that Humphrey entirely ignored any further younger sons who were then living.

In her PhD thesis on the life of Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Richmond and Somerset, Dr. Beverley Murphy suggests that the will of Elizabeth Winnington, which dates to 1502, referred to her younger sons, John, William and Roger.[28] In fact, whilst John and William are indeed identified as Elizabeth's sons in her will, her relationship with Roger is not stated and must therefore be open to question. He is simply referred to as Roger Blount, and listed at

Plate 2   The Daughters of Humphrey Blount from his Tomb.

Plate 3   The Sons of Humphrey Blount from his Tomb, flanked by the Virgin Mary and an Angel

the end of the specific bequests, behind a John Pigot, who can perhaps be identified as one of the children of her daughter, and an Elizabeth Eyton who is perhaps her daughter or granddaughter but, again, the relationship is not stated.[29] It seems more likely from this that Roger was a grandson or more distant kinsman, rather than a younger son, particularly as Elizabeth made considerably more lavish bequests to John and William, as well as making them her executors.

The records of the Shropshire Visitation of 1623 provide other candidates for the sons of Humphrey Blount and Elizabeth Winnington. William is not listed amongst the sons, with the names instead given as Thomas, John, Edmund and Walter.[30] Caution should be taken when using this Visitation, which was far from contemporary, particularly given the obvious inaccuracies in relation to Humphrey's daughters (as set out below). However, since there are five male figures on the tomb, it may be that they represent five sons: Thomas, John, William, Edmund and Walter. If this is the case, Edmund and Walter presumably died in childhood, given the absence of contemporary records of their lives, particularly in their parents' wills. An alternative explanation is that there were only three sons and that the first and last of the five central figures on the tomb, which appear in secular rather than martial dress, should be identified as saints, flanking the couples' three sons. However, there is nothing on the figures to identify specific saints, making this unlikely. Perhaps, instead, the two secular figures represent the infant sons who would not have had an opportunity to complete military service. Certainly, the eldest son, Sir Thomas Blount, was a soldier, winning his knighthood at the Battle of Stoke during Henry VII's reign and serving with Henry VIII in France.

The position of Humphrey and Elizabeth's daughters is also not entirely clear. None of the daughters is recorded in the Shropshire Visitation of 1623, with a number of daughters instead being attributed to Humphrey's father, John Blount. One of these, a Mary Blount, who married a man named Pigot, can almost certainly be identified with the daughter mentioned in Humphrey Blount's will, particularly given the likely age of this lady.[31] Additionally, Margaret, the wife of Richard Oteley, who is described in the 1623 Visitation as Humphrey's sister, is also almost certainly the daughter of his who is known to have married a Thomas Otteley.[32] The third daughter of Humphrey Blount is unknown. She might also be included in error in the 1623 Visitation amongst his sisters, all three of whom apparently lived long enough to marry. Alternatively, she may have died in infancy. The position of the third daughter, given the fact that the lives of daughters tended to be fairly poorly recorded in this period, cannot be concluded with any certainty, but it is possible that one of the three adult female figures on the tomb represents an infant child.

As discussed earlier, it does appear likely that Humphrey Blount and Elizabeth Winnington sought to present a complete list of their children as weepers on their tomb, regardless of whether or not they survived to adulthood. The lack of information about two of their five sons strongly suggests that they died in childhood, whilst this is also possible in relation to one of their daughters. The reasons behind including these children on the tomb were very different to those in relation to the tomb of Elizabeth Cornwall. Here, it was intended that the family would be shown in its entirety, rather than the intention being to commemorate an individual child. However, whilst no attempt was made to depict the minor children as they would have appeared during their lifetime, much of the rationale behind their inclusion was the same. As with Elizabeth Cornwall's chrysom child, the infant children hidden amongst the weepers on Humphrey Blount and Elizabeth Winnington's tomb were also included as an act of remembrance, with their importance to their parents, and their importance within the family recalled and recorded, with the depiction of them as adults in fact placing them on an equal footing with their living siblings, as they would have been during their lifetimes.

Sir John Blount and Katherine Pershall

The third tomb, that of Humphrey and Elizabeth's grandson, Sir John Blount (*d*.1531), and his wife, Katherine Pershall (*d*.1540), is also a tomb chest, with an effigy of the couple above, surrounded with images of their children as mourners. The weepers, of which there are five sons depicted in armour on the side beneath John (Plates 4 and 5) and six daughters on the side beneath Katherine (Plates 6 and 7), are stylistically more developed than the weepers on the earlier tomb, with one analysis pointing out that 'we have added refinement and an attempt to show the young warriors [i.e. the male weepers] in attitudes indicative of grief'.[33] Stylistically, the tomb is consistent with a date in Henry VIII's reign, suggesting that it was completed during the lifetime of John Blount or soon afterwards.[34]

The identities of the weepers have been discussed in a previous article and it is therefore not proposed to go into these in detail again.[35] The couple are known to have had three sons who survived to adulthood: George, William and Henry. They also had five surviving daughters: Elizabeth (the well-known mistress of Henry VIII), Anne, Rose, Isabel and Albora. Elizabeth is likely to have been the eldest child, due to the fact that she was taken into royal service in 1512 as a maid of honour to the Queen, a position for which the minimum age was twelve

Plate 4   The Three Elder Sons of Sir John Blount from his Tomb.

Plate 5   The Two Younger Sons of Sir John Blount from his Tomb.

Plate 6 The Three Elder Daughters of Sir John Blount from his Tomb.

Plate 7 The Three Younger Daughters of Sir John Blount from his Tomb.

and which was highly sought after. Anne is named as the second daughter on the tomb. Since the previous article was published, further evidence of her birth date has been uncovered with the reference to her youngest child, a son by her second marriage to Thomas Ridley of Much Wenlock, being buried in late 1554, whilst still 'a sucking child'.[36] This refers to a child still nursed by its mother and would suggest that he can have been, at most, around three years old in 1554. Anne was evidently a very mature mother, with her first marriage made in the 1520s. However, she is known to have borne a final child to her first husband in 1541, and then two further children to her second husband, suggesting that her date of birth cannot be earlier than around 1504 or possibly a year or two later.[37] Since George, the eldest surviving son of Sir John Blount and Katherine Pershall, is known to have been born in 1513, it would seem probable that his birth was preceded by the two sons who did not survive to adulthood, with both perhaps being born in the years between the births of Elizabeth and Anne. Albora appears to be named as the fifth daughter on the tomb and the evidence of her life also fits with her being amongst the youngest in the family, for example, with her maternal grandmother making a bequest to her in her will of 1519 of 'the small bed upon which I raised my daughter', suggesting that she was then very young.[38] Certainly, the marriage dates of the two remaining sisters, Rose and Isabel support the contention that they were older than Albora, leaving the sixth represented daughter to be identified as a child that did not survive to adulthood.

As with the tomb of Humphrey Blount and Elizabeth Winnington, it is clear that Sir John Blount and Katherine Pershall chose to remember and reference all their children on their monument, regardless of whether they were living or not. Assuming that the children are placed in birth order, then the two minor sons would be the first two represented in the line of sons on their parents' tomb, whilst the minor daughter is the last daughter depicted. Alternatively, it is not impossible that the deceased minors were placed at the end of their respective rows, as is the case with the infant George depicted on the monument to Thomas Blount of Kidderminster, John Blount's great-nephew. This would obviously affect only the identification of the two sons in any event, and all the sons are depicted in a largely identical manner, in the same armour as their father and in standing poses indicative of mourning. The daughters are also all adults, although some attempt has been made at likenesses, as can be seen in their different poses and faces.[39] Unlike her more animated sisters, the sixth daughter stands in a pose with widespread hands, nearly identical to that of her brothers on the other side of the tomb, whilst the other five daughters appear considerably more lively, for example holding up the folds of their dresses or holding their hands in prayer. This does serve to distinguish her somewhat, although, as with her brothers, the fact that she died a minor would be impossible to identify from an analysis of the tomb alone, something that must have been a conscious decision by the tomb's commissioner. The rationale behind the decision to depict the minors in the line of weepers as adults is the same as that behind the tomb of Humphrey Blount and Elizabeth Winnington: to recall and remember the children and to demonstrate their continuing importance within the family, in spite of their early deaths.

Sir George Blount and Constance Talbot

The final tomb analysed here is that of Sir George Blount, who died in 1581, and his wife, Constance Talbot. The tomb is the most elaborate of the four and was paid for by George's nephew and heir, Rowland Lacon. Unlike the earlier tombs, the couple are depicted kneeling at the top of their tomb, rather than reclining. They are flanked by the considerably smaller figures of their two children: John and Dorothy.

The evidence suggests that John and Dorothy were the only children of their parents and this, coupled with the fact that, although they are presented as statues on the tomb rather than relief carvings, they are considerably smaller than their parents suggests that they should be classed as weepers, rather than as monuments to the children themselves. This is particularly likely given the fact that Dorothy was still living when the tomb was commissioned. Dorothy survived to adulthood and married twice, apparently to her father's dissatisfaction since he disinherited her.[40] She remained on reasonably friendly terms with her cousin, Rowland Lacon, however, who inherited Kinlet in her place, and is known to have named one of her sons after him in February 1582, shortly after the death of her father.[41] This may account for Lacon's inclination to place both children on the monument, in spite of the estrangement between Dorothy and her father.

Dorothy's brother, John, died in childhood, apparently after choking on an apple.[41] He and his sister are depicted as the same size, with John depicted behind the considerably larger figure of his father and Dorothy behind her mother. Both statues retain traces of coloured paint and, with Dorothy's red cloak, must have stood out when fully painted. Dorothy, like her mother is dressed as an upper class Elizabethan woman and kneels with her hands clasped in prayer (Plate 8). John on the other hand, although depicted as a young adult in Elizabethan dress, stands in a considerably different pose to his father, who kneels with an open prayer book in his hand (Plate 9). Rather than kneeling, John stands with his left arm on one hip, holding a skull in his other hand on which he appears to lean. Given the fact that John appears as an adult, rather than a child, it is clear that his depiction is not a memorial

Plate 8 Dorothy Blount from the Tomb of her Father, Sir George Blount.

Plate 9 John Blount from the Tomb of his Father, Sir George Blount.

to him in the strictest sense, with him instead included as a mourner alongside his sister in the same manner as his aunts and uncles appeared on the tomb of his grandparents, as well as the children of his great-great-grandparents, Humphrey Blount and Elizabeth Winnington. That said, however, there is a considerable difference in John's depiction with the presence of the skull in his hand. This object is there to denote the fact that he was deceased, a device which was not employed with the earlier tombs, when the deceased children were largely indistinguishable from their living siblings. The rationale behind this is likely to be due to Rowland Lacon's intention to assert himself as the male heir to Kinlet, with a demonstration both of the completeness of his uncle's family as a way of commemorating the older man, as well as demonstrating that his uncle's only son was deceased, allowing for his own inheritance. As with the minor children on the earlier tombs, John Blount's existence was fully recognised, with his place in the family considered worthy of commemoration in spite of his early death.

Conclusions

The four tombs at Kinlet were constructed over a period of 160 years, spanning the last years of the medieval period and much of the Tudor period. As holders of Kinlet, the individuals interred in the tomb all enjoyed very similar social status, and how they, or their heirs, chose to decorate their tombs provides a useful indication into the lives of individuals in the late medieval and Tudor periods. As set out above, it is not immediately apparent that all four tombs include representations of minor children, often depicted amongst then still living offspring.

The reasons for including these depictions were varied, with Elizabeth Cornwall's chrysom child, for example, appearing as a commemoration of the child itself, rather than as a mourner, as the deceased children on the tombs of Humphrey Blount and John Blount were depicted. Similarly, the representation of another John Blount on the tomb of his father, George, had a dual purpose, both as a mourner and as a commemoration of a child who was deceased, with his parents' memorial really the only appropriate place for such an inclusion.

What is very clear from the evidence of Kinlet is that the minor children were not forgotten by their parents and kin, and that their short lives were also not considered unworthy of commemoration. To the grieving parents, the fact that they often made no distinction between their living and deceased offspring and, instead, placed the dead in their proper sequence amongst the living is testament enough to the strength of parental feeling in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, as well as to the understanding of the importance of human life, however briefly lived. As Dr. Oosterwijk points out in a recent article on chrysom children, '"chrysom" effigies are touching reminders, not just of the high infant mortality rates of the past, but often also of the sense of loss, remembered long afterwards by their bereft parents and siblings'.[43] The same can be said of the minor children depicted as adult mourners on a tomb. The evidence of Kinlet makes it clear that, for the parents and kin of the deceased child, his or her memory lived on, and it was appropriate that his or her brief life should be marked and the child placed within the proper context of its family, regardless of how briefly it lived.

Notes

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'Noyfull Fowles and Vermin': The Statutory Control of Wildlife in Shropshire, 1532–1861

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Abstract: Man has for centuries waged a continual battle to preserve his crops from losses by pests. Such losses were particularly critical in England in the early years of the 16th century when the population began to significantly grow exerting a pressing demand on food production. As a consequence in 1532 and 1556 acts were passed to deal with various pests which were not repealed until 1861. This paper attempts to assess the effect of these acts on the 'noyful Fowles and Vermyn' of Shropshire.

Introduction

Over the centuries man has waged a continual battle to preserve his crops for his own use against a variety of pests. In England and Wales during the sixteenth century, concerns about losses of food by vermin grew, and control measures were enacted in an attempt to deal with the problem. Lovegrove in his book, *Silent Fields*, investigated the long-term effect on the status of a number of birds and mammals in England and Wales resulting from man's efforts to control their depredation of his crops and domesticated animals. He concluded that centuries of unremitting harassment have impoverished our countryside of many wildlife species, and he posed the question: are we capable of finding acceptable solutions to meeting the needs of both human interests and the interests of our native wildlife with which we share our green and pleasant land?[1] This paper looks, in rather more detail than Lovegrove was able to do, at the effect on the Shropshire fauna of a series of control measures starting in 1532 and continuing until the end of the 19th century.

Control by Statute

As the population of England began to increase in the early sixteenth century, following long years of little growth after the Black Death, farming was slow to adjust to the increased demand for food and, as a result, losses due to pests became more critical, especially when harvests were poor. In an attempt to control those species considered to be threats, an Act was passed, in 1532, that all townships should possess nets, and keep them in good repair, to catch and destroy jackdaws, crows and rooks because of their 'great destruction and consumption of the great part of corn and grain'.[2] The Act was to be enforced by the manor courts leet and the steward was to arrange a day for the people of the manor to assemble and make a plan to destroy all the young jackdaws, crows and rooks for that year. Any township failing to comply was to be amerced 20*s*., half of the fine going to the king and half to the informant. It was laid down that the traps were to be baited with chaff to attract the birds and 2*d*. was to be paid for every dozen birds caught, 1*d*. for six birds and ½*d*. for three. The money was to be provided by the owners and farmers of lands worth over £5 per annum, on whose land the birds were caught. Any man with the daily consent of the farmer or landowner was allowed to enter the land to catch the offending birds and take them away.

The effectiveness of the Act is impossible to assess, as the farmers have left no records of the money they paid out, and the manor courts record only the number of townships that were amerced for not having nets. The court rolls of 21 Shropshire manors showed that only one of the townships was amerced for not having a net, so it would seem, albeit from a small sample, that this particular law was widely obeyed.[3] The manor of Redcastle was

another exception, and in 1579 a pain of 10*s*. was put on each of its townships that they should have a crow net by Christmas and that they 'shall at sundrye tymes sett the same and use the same for taking of Crowes in the best maner and skyll'.[4] From this it would appear that previously either not all its townships had nets or did not have them in good repair or that they were failing to use them 'at sundrye tymes…in the best maner and skyll'. Some of the townships of the manor of Ditton Priors, on the side of the Brown Clee, were also regular offenders, and were amerced for not having crow nets, but the fine, although only stated once, was 12*d*. and not the 20*s*. proposed.[5] Child's Ercall was similarly amerced 12*d*. in 1589 for failing to have a crow net.[6]

Other laws affecting wildlife, however, were being broken, and the manor courts provide evidence of such destruction, some by *bona fide* hunters and some by poachers, although they rarely give any indication of the numbers killed. The manor court of Ditton Priors fined William Bent, a common waster, the considerable sum of 6*s*. 8*d*. in 1540 for breaking the pain and taking partridges with traps and nets and using 'engines' (any mechanical device or trap),[7] while in 1541 Owen Holcrofte, the rector of Cleobury North, also wasted the king's warren by taking a pheasant, and he was fined 8*d*. Hares were poached either using 'pipes' or by tracking them in the snow. Richard Smallman was fined 12*d*. for keeping a greyhound and for tracking hares in the snow. John Reynolds was a regular offender, and in 1597 he was also fined 12*d*., for tracking hares in the snow and for shooting wildfowl and pigeons, but that did not deter him and he was fined again in 1599 and in 1602 for the same offences. He and Thomas Cooke were the first men recorded as owning a 'gun or piece' and they were joined by George Smallman in 1602, for which he was fined 12*d*., which seems to have been the payment to the lord of the manor to license a gun rather than a punishment for a misdeed. Thomas Wonwood, however, in 1607, was fined the very large sum of 40*s*. for shooting crows with a gun, which seems strange, as to kill crows by netting was approved. This might have been due to his lacking the necessary social status to own a gun, for in 1541 an Act had been passed which placed a penalty of £10 on anyone possessing a crossbow or a gun who was worth less than £100.[8] Guns could be used out of cities for the defence of the house, and licences could be obtained, but no one, of any degree, could have a gun longer than a yard in length.

A book of pains covering a number of manors in north Shropshire forbad the setting of snares in Moreton Corbet in 1567/8 to catch woodcock and partridges under a pain of 10*s*. for every offence; the fact that the pain needed to be repeated in 1580/81 is an indication that the first pain had not met with great success.[9] In the neighbouring manor of Hatton Hineheath no man, contrary to the law, was permitted to keep a 'grayhound or graybyche, fyrrett, haye or nott' unless he had over 40*s*. per annum of freehold income. The use to which these animals were being put is suggested in another pain of 1548/9 that laid down that anyone taking rabbits in any part of that manor without a licence from the lord would be fined 3*s*. 4*d*.[10] At Shavington[11] in 1526 a man was amerced for hunting rabbits with nets and ferrets while at Caynham two men were amerced for taking partridges and a pain was put on all the inhabitants not to take either partridges or pheasants without a licence.[12] In Caus, in 1591, several cockshuts remained in the lord's hands for want of a tenant[13] while in Hinstock a pain was put on all the inhabitants not to hunt hares by tracking them in the snow.[14] In Stanton Lacy[15] and Hatton Hineheath[16] rabbits were caught using ferrets, while in Hope Bowdler two pheasants were trapped in nets and tunnels.[17] In Claverley, in 1510, hares were hunted and ferrets used to catch rabbits, for which the perpetrators were amerced, and a pain was put on the inhabitants that no one was to hunt or hawk with a freehold income of less than 40*s*. per annum, according to the statute. In 1623, five Claverley men were fined for having guns and in 1627 William Perry was fined 6*d*. for shooting rabbits. These Claverley offences, however, cover nearly 120 years.[18] Nearby Worfield was very law abiding and from 1495 to 1590 only one offence was committed, when partridges were taken without a licence.[19]

Interpretation of the manor court records is difficult. It is not possible to quantify how many animals were killed, as numbers are rarely given, but they do show that there were licensed hunters as well as poachers, some of whom were caught and, no doubt, many others who were not, hunting wildlife in the early years of the 16th century. Similarly the effectiveness of crow nets cannot be quantified as the number of birds caught is not recorded and in the manors where nets are not mentioned does this mean that they had them and that they were being 'at sundrye tymes sett…in the best maner and skyll', or they had them but were not using them, or they did not have them and this had conveniently been overlooked? In largely pastoral townships, for example Ditton Priors, the need for crow nets might not have been thought worthwhile, and it was cheaper to pay the amercement than buy a net.

Pigeons and doves were not to be killed, and wildfowl were also protected, at least from *hoi polloi*, by a later Act passed in 1533/4.[20] The preamble to this Act noted that ducks, mallards, widgeon, teals, wild geese and other wildfowl had once been plentiful and reasonably priced, but that owing to the use of nets and engines when the birds were in moult and the young not fully feathered this was no longer the case. It was enacted therefore that from 31 May to 30 August it would be unlawful to take wildfowl under penalty of 4*d*. per bird. However gentlemen or others, who 'dispend xl*s*. by year of freehold', were permitted to hunt wildfowl with spaniels and longbow, but not with any engine or net. The taking of eggs from 1 March to 30 June was also unlawful and the fine for taking an egg of a crane or bustard was 20*d*., for bittern, heron and shoveler 13*d*. and for mallard, teal or

other wildfowl 1*d*. It is impossible to assess the effect of this Act, as there are no records of how many birds were caught or how many eggs were taken, either by the gentlemen or by clandestine poachers.

Further Legislation

Concerns about the depredation by vermin continued as the population carried on increasing and, in particular, when harvests all too commonly failed. Hoskins found that in an average decade 25% of harvests were bad and, to make matters worse, one bad harvest was quite frequently followed by another.[21] More positive action was therefore deemed necessary to control vermin and a further Act, 'AN ACTE for preservacion of Grayne' was passed in 1566, offering financial rewards for the heads of animals thought to be harmful.[22] At this time the influence of the manor courts was in decline in some areas, and so the administration of the Act was passed to the churchwardens who were empowered to levy a tax from every 'Propriatour, Farmour and other person having possession of any Lande or Tythes within their severall Parishes, to pay suche soome of Money as they shall think meete, according to the Quantytie and Portion of suche Landes or Tythes as the same person so assessed do or shall have or holde'. The churchwardens were granted authority to distrain the goods and cattle of anyone refusing to pay and to appoint 'two honest and substanciall persons' who were to be called the 'distributours of the Provysion for the destruccyon of noyfull Fowles and Vermyn'. The money raised was used to pay anyone presenting the heads of a variety of 'ravenyng Byrdes and Vermyn' (see below) to the churchwardens. The heads and unbroken eggs were to be taken to the churchyard where the hunters would be paid, and the heads were to be kept for a month by the distributors before they presented them to the churchwardens, along with a true account, in writing, of the money spent. After which the heads and eggs were to be 'burned consumed or cut in sunder', presumably to stop artful dodgers presenting them for a second time. In Shropshire, with one possible exception, no mention of these distributors occurs in any of the parish records, and their function seems to have fallen directly on the churchwardens themselves, who recorded the payments they made in the churchwardens' accounts, and raised the money to pay for the heads by increasing the church rate, in Shropshire known as the lewn. Claverley provides a possible exception for in 1678/9, John Clayton was paid 2*s*. 6*d*. for keeping the accounts 'concerning urchins'; unfortunately none of his accounts has survived.

To enable the catching to be done the use of 'Nettes, Engynes and other reasonable Devyses' was permitted on any land with the owner's permission. However on no account should 'the Disturbaunce Lett or Destruccyon of the building or breeding of any kynde of Hawkes, Herons, Egrytes, paupers (see Glossary for the modern equivalents of earlier names), Swannes or Shovelers, or to the 'hurte or destruction of any Doves, dove Howses, Deere or Warren of Conyes' be allowed. Furthermore the Act was not to apply to any 'Busarde, Ringtayle, Yerne, Polcatte, Fytchewe, or Stote taken in any Parke, Warren or Grounde employed to the maintenaunce of any game of Conyes, or to Stares taken in Dovehouses, nor to the killing and bringing the Head of any Kyte or Raven killed in any City or Towne Corporate, or within two Myles of the same'. Kites and ravens were excluded in towns, as they were valued scavengers of street refuse.

It was intended that the Act should continue in force only to the end of the next parliament, but it was not repealed until 1861. The list of animals is surprising if the sole purpose of the Act was to preserve grain:

- *for old Crowes, Chawghes, Pyes, or Rookes a penny for three heads and for young birds and unbroken eggs of the same species a penny for six heads and the same for six eggs.*
- *for every twelve heads of Stares a penny.*
- *for every head of Martyn Hawkes, Fursekytte, Moldkytte, Busarde, Schagge or Carmerant, Ryngtayle two pence and for every two eggs of them one penny*
- *for every Iron or Osprayes head four pence*
- *for every Woodwall, Pye, Jaye, Raven or Kyte one penny*
- *for every head of the Kynge Fyssher one penny*
- *for the head of every Bulfynche or other Byrde that devoureth the Blowth of Fruite one penny*
- *for the heads of every Foxe or Gray twelve pence*
- *for the head of every Fitchewe, Polcatte, Wesell, Stote, Fayre bade or Wilde Catte one penny*
- *for the heads of every Otter or Hedgehogges two pence*
- *for the heads of every three Rattes or twelve Myse one penny*
- *for the heads of every Moldwarpe or Wante one halfpenny*

No obligation was placed on the churchwardens to implement the Act. The legislators seem to have assumed that the financial rewards were sufficient incentive to achieve their purpose, a not unreasonable assumption as a labourer in the early 16th century earned 4*d*. per day increasing to 6*d*. by the end of the century. So a fox's head at

a shilling and even a hedgehog's at 2*d*. would have represented a significant and welcome addition to a labourer's wages, provided that he had sufficient leisure time to hunt. John Stirrop of Westbury in 1733 received poor relief and supplemented that with 4*s*. 2*d*. paid for the heads of 25 hedgehogs.[23]

Some of the listed animals, stoats, polecats, pine martins and foxes, would have benefited the preservation of grain by their predatory activities, so why were they included? Was this due to ignorance? Did the Tudor lawmakers know how the creatures around them lived? The countryman would have seen foxes and birds of prey taking poultry and young sickly lambs and rabbits, but did the lawmakers of the 16th century have any real knowledge of the wild animals which co-existed with them? From the publications available in the 16th century it seems doubtful. They often plagiarised the writings of earlier authors whose writings were based more on fantasy than fact. Seager reviewed the natural history publications available during Shakespeare's life and concluded that Bartholomew's book *'De Proprietatibus Rerum'* published in 1535 was the standard work on natural history. Bartholomew wrote of the hedgehog that it 'climbeth upon a vine or an apple-tree and shaketh down grapes and apples. And when they be felled he walloweth on them and sticketh his pricks in them and so beareth meat to his children'.[24] Tipsell, writing in 1607, related that 'The fox with his breath draweth field-mice out of their holes, like as a hart draweth out serpents with his breath and devoureth them'.[25] Francis Bacon argued against such mistaken attitudes and urged that 'if men based their thoughts on **experience and observation**, they would have the facts and not opinions to reason about'.[26] John Ray, 1627 to 1705, embraced Bacon's philosophy and made significant contributions to our knowledge of both plants and animals, based on observation. His interests were mainly taxonomical and anatomical in order to name them and arrange them systematically into natural groupings. To do this he dissected the animals and in some cases identified their gut contents, as witness his note that he found three mice in the stomach of an adder.[27] He also mocked those who claimed that the sudden appearance of lemmings was due to their spontaneous generation in decaying matter in clouds when he commented that 'recently eaten grass has been found by dissection in the bodies of these creatures rained down from the sky: so grass as well as mice are born in the clouds: curious that the sky does not ever seem to rain down hay'. But it took a long time for Francis Bacon's advice to be adopted, and John Ray was still pleading the cause in 1691 when he wrote 'Let it not suffice to be book-learned, to read what others have written and to take upon trust more falsehood than truth, but to let ourselves examine things as we shall have opportunity and converse with nature as well as with books'.[28] Despite Bacon and Ray, old beliefs lingered on for many years. Pennant, the recipient of many of Gilbert White's letters which formed the nub of his famous book, *'The Natural History of Selborne'*, wrote in 1769 'it is well known that stags do eat serpents; goats also'.[29] Gilbert White has been dubbed the father of natural history in this country, one of the earliest to respond to the scientific approach urged by Bacon and Ray and apply it to natural history.

What is clear is the depth of ignorance that existed in the 16th century of natural history, and this, combined with the attitude expressed by Knapp[30] that 'In those wild creatures that are not immediately applicable to our use or amusement, we are generally inclined to seek out their bad than their good qualities' resulted in some of the 'noyfull Fowles and Vermyn' included in the Act of 1566. It is also possible that the legislators, once they had started to draw up the Act, went far beyond its original purpose, the preservation of grain, and included animals that they regarded as pests for other reasons, without changing the preamble to the Act.

It is worth noting that owls, woodpigeons, house sparrows, red squirrels, rabbits and hares were not considered to be pests at this time. Pigeons, presumably feral pigeons, although not included in the Act, were a nuisance because they got into the church and made a mess, and money had to be spent in keeping them out. It has been claimed that woodpigeons in the 17th century were thinly distributed woodland birds, and it was not until they left the woods, sometime in the 18th century, to forage on the newly introduced turnip and clover fields that they became widespread pests.[31] Tusser however, who farmed in East Anglia in the 1550s, would not have agreed with that assessment and urged that mother and boy be armed 'with sling or with bowe to skare away piggen, the rooke and the crowe'.[32] This was a view supported by Harrison, an Essex man, who at the end of the 16th century considered them to be 'hurtful by reason of their multitudes'.[33] The woodpigeon, as such, does not make an appearance in any Shropshire accounts.

Attitudes towards house sparrows eventually changed and by the mid 18th century they were regarded as pests of grain, and the cost of their control was accepted by some parishes without any further legislation.

The Effect of Statutory Control

Without churchwardens' accounts neither this study nor that of Lovegrove would have been possible. The accounts record the annual receipts and the disbursements needed to maintain the nave of the church and the churchyard; the chancel was maintained by the impropriator. The receipts often record the names of all the lewn payers and how much they paid, while the disbursements detail the costs of keeping the church in good repair. So it is rather

surprising to find, among the many and varied items of expenditure relating to the upkeep of the church, payments for the heads, particularly of foxes and hedgehogs, the latter often under their older name of urchins.

Lovegrove based his nation-wide investigation of the effect of the Act on the fauna of England and Wales by taking a sample of the churchwardens' accounts deposited in each of the county archives, a mammoth task. In the case of Shropshire his sample consisted of 36 parishes.[34] The present study is based on an analysis of all the parishes in Shropshire which have accounts, in an attempt to assess the impact of the Act on the fauna of Shropshire during the years 1566 to 1872; 1872 was the year of the last payment made for vermin by the churchwardens. There were 204 ancient parishes in Shropshire prior to 1837,[35] of which accounts have survived for 153. (See Appendix 1, Map 1, Parishes with Accounts.) None of the accounts covers the whole period. (See Table 1.) Indeed the potential number of account years covered by the 204 parishes for the 307 years from 1566 to 1872 is 65,628 whereas the total number of years for which accounts have survived is only 13,878, that is about 20%. Table 1 also shows that the data are heavily weighted to the later years of the study period. Despite the sample being smaller than desired, and the skewed nature of the data, it was thought worthwhile to continue with the investigation, while bearing in mind that any conclusions must take these limitations into consideration.

Table 1   Parishes with Accounts and those Paying for Vermin.

Century	Parishes with Accounts	Parishes Paying for Vermin (%)
16th	7	3 (43)
17th	52	39 (75)
18th	108	65 (60)
19th	137	26 (26)
Total	153	95 (62)

The Early Implementation of the Act

Only three early accounts have survived which made payments for vermin, and they show that by 1569 the Act was being implemented. The accounts for Worfield are the most complete,[36] starting in 1500, before the Act was passed, and running to 1851. A payment of iiij*d*. was made in 1514 'to William Hitchecox for an 'yron' while in 1554–5 'netes to distroye the choyes that dyd defowle the Church' were purchased. There were no further payments until 1569–75, during which time 12 foxes, 4 badgers, 16 moles, 4 ravens and 6 polecats were killed, but this was not enough to satisfy the Commissioners at Bridgnorth, who in 1575 amerced the parish the considerable sum of £1 10*s*. 10*d*. for not destroying 'foules and varmynt according to the statute'. As a result the parishioners responded with vigour and during the next two years the following slaughter was wrought:

Imprimis to Rychard ffelton for iiij moldywarpes on pye and ij crowes	*iijd.*
Item to William barret for ij urchins	*iiijd.*
Item to John Whithedge for vj yonge crowe heades	*jd.*
Item to ffrauncis warter for vj crowe heades	*jd.*
Item to John walker of borcote for ij moldywarpes	*jd.*
Item to Nicolas barney for iiij rates j crowe and iiij yonge choughs	*ijd.*
Item to Rychard Clare for a caryons head	*ijd.*
Item to ffrauncis barret for ten moldywartes	*iijd.*
Item to John butler for towe moldywartes	*jd.*
Item to John false for a moldiwarpe and myse	*jd.*
Item to Rychard Sonnd for ij moldywartes	*jd.*
Item to Nicolas barney for xij rates and ix myse	*vd.*
Item for ij croes and a chough	*jd.*
Item to Roger frodysley for on fychewe	*jd.*
Item to Rychard Rowley of hanland for ij fitchewes	*ijd.*
Item to Rychard Sonnd for on fychewe	*jd.*
Item to Rychard Clare for ij foxes heades	*ijs.*
Item to Jhon Cureton for ij otters	*iiijd.*
Item to Jhon haselwoode for j fychewe and j urchine	*iiijd.*
Item to Jhon marwalle for vij nopp	*vijd.*
Item to Roger hoggines for croes rates and moldywartes	*iijd.*
Item to Jhon morwall for rattes croes and nopes	*xjd.*

Item to Thomas warter for an urchine   *ijd.*
Item to Arthur Whittington for vj crowes heades   *ijd.*
Item to John Tyrland a bausons head   *iijd.*
Item to Rychard Clare for a bausons head   *xijd.*
Item to Jhon Roweley for iij fychewes   *iijd.*
Item to nicolas barney for xij moldywartes iiij pyes xix choughs
*   and croes and j nope*   *xvd.*
Item to Rychard Clare for a foxe heade   *xijd.*
Item to Jhon bradburne j coyte   *ijd.*
Item to Mr bartleys man for iij nopes and a bullfynche   *iiijd.*
Item to Clare for a bausones head   *[xijd.]*
Item to Clare for a bausones head   *xijd.*
Item to Thomas Newton for foure moldywartes   *ijd.*

The purge, however, was short-lived, and in 1578 the kills were back to previous levels, and in 1579 and 1580 not a single payment was made for vermin. Thereafter payments were made only for the odd hedgehog and fox, all of which seems to have escaped the notice of the Commissioners. Who these Commissioners were and by what authority they acted is not known at present, as no other records of them appear to have survived? No accounts of this date have survived for any other parish near Bridgnorth, so it is impossible to say if the Commissioners amerced them too. Ludlow was the only parish with accounts contemporary with those of Worfield, but they were not amerced though they were not any more active.

Ludlow recorded its first payments in 1569: 17*d*. for 17 dozen mice, 5*d*. for 15 crows and 1*d*. for half a dozen jackdaws; followed in 1571 with 12*d*. for 'raits' heads and in 1576 11*d*. for a rat and 21 'wonts'. The earliest entry for Oswestry records a payment of 12*d*. for two wildcats in 1593, but then nothing more until 1598, when another one was killed. The accounts for Cheswardine also predate the Act; they start in 1555, but no payments were made before 1628, after which there is a break in the accounts until 1717, when 3*s* was paid for the heads of three foxes. The heads were brought to the churchyard, as laid down in the Act, where the payments were made, so William Whitmore of Chetton, for example, received 2*s*. for 'killing twoe foxes and bringinge there heades into the churchyard to be seene.'

The Species Caught

Considering all the animals named in the Act, and the wide range of habitats which Shropshire would have offered, the number of species caught, with the exception of Worfield, Oswestry and Alderbury, was very few, and payments for the heads of animals others than foxes, hedgehogs and, much later, sparrows were not common. The number of species caught can be seen in Graph 1, which shows that of the 153 parishes 39% made no payments for vermin of any kind, 27% paid for only one species and 84% for not more than two species. Chetton, Chirbury and Ludlow accounted for five species each, while Alderbury and Oswestry managed seven, and way beyond all the others Worfield with seventeen species. Chirbury, Alberbury and Oswestry are all on the Welsh border and in wilder country, which could account for a greater diversity of animals but that does not explain why Chetton, Ludlow and Worfield should have performed as they did. The performance of Worfield, however, during its purge
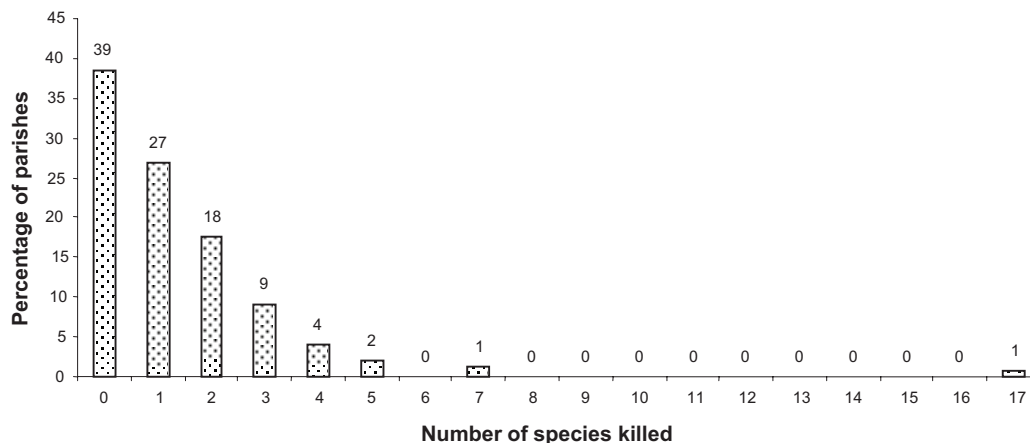
Graph 1 Percentage of Parishes with Number of Species Killed.

suggests that the number of species caught was more to do with the effort put into the cull rather than a more species-diverse habitat. Graph 2 shows the species killed, and Appendix 2 the parishes killing them.
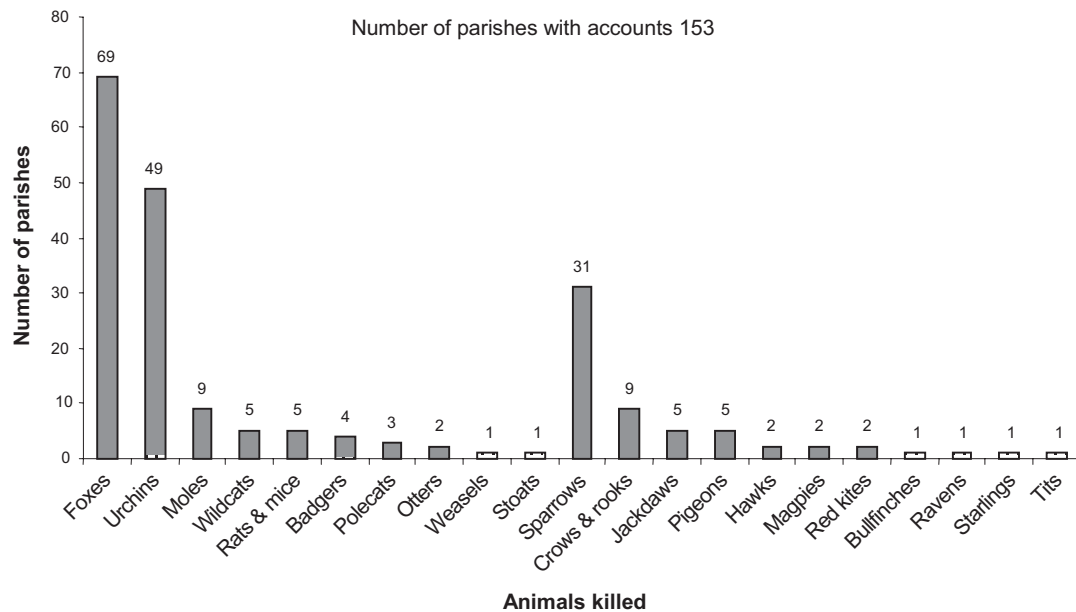
Graph 2   Number of Parishes with the Animals Killed, 1566–1872.

Wildcats

The *Victoria County History* assumed that the wildcat had once occurred in Shropshire, as it was found in adjoining Wales, but there was no tangible proof of a locally killed specimen of the pure breed.[37] The term wildcat presents a difficulty in interpretation as to whether it truly means a specimen of *Felis sylvestris,* the wildcat, or a feral specimen of the domestic cat, *Felis cattus* or indeed a hybrid of the two. There is no way to resolve this difficulty, but it has been assumed here that the churchwardens would have paid only for the true wildcat and not for the much smaller ubiquitous feral domestic cat. Five parishes paid for wildcats, Oswestry, Chirbury, Llanyblodwel, Kinlet and Sutton Maddock. Oswestry made the first kill in 1593, when two were destroyed, and another one five years later, each priced at 6*d*. Chirbury killed the most, 32, during the years 1649 to 1781 followed by Llanyblodwel with 30, but in a much shorter time, 1730–81. Kinlet accounted for two wildcats, both in 1749, while six were killed in Sutton Maddock in the years 1743–56. The first three parishes bordered Wales, where wildcats were known to be relatively plentiful, and Kinlet was in the Wyre Forest, which would have provided a suitable habitat for them, but why they should have appeared in Sutton Maddock is a mystery. All the parishes, apart from Oswestry, paid one shilling a head for wildcats, despite the Act recommending only one penny per head.

Polecats

Llanyblodwel accounted for an unspecified, but largish, number of polecats and foxes at a combined cost of 15*s*. 7*d*. Oswestry paid 4*d*. each for two polecats, one in 1601 and the other in 1608. The only other parish paying for polecats was Worfield: in 1570 when Richard Barret received 10*d*. for the heads of 6 polecats, while, during Worfield's vermin purge of 1576–77, eight more were killed at 1*d*. each.

Otters

John Cureton obtained 4*d*. for the heads of two otters during the Worfield purge while St. Mary's, Shrewsbury, paid 2*d*. for 'a notter', the only other one caught.

Badgers

Only four parishes made payments for badgers, which is surprising as they must have been relatively common and they commanded a good price at 1*s*. per head. Chirbury led the field and during a period of 72 years the parish paid for 95 badgers' heads. In 1681 three badgers were killed in Alberbury, but none thereafter, while in Chetton 10 were destroyed during the years 1633 to 1668 and in Worfield four during its purge.

Moles

Moles were destroyed, but mainly as pests in the churchyard. In Shrewsbury, however, the problem was 'behynde the Walles' and in 1632 Barret received 3*s*. for trapping 18 'mouldiwarts' there; the problem recurred in 1643 and 3*s*. was again paid to deal with it.[38] Worfield accounted for about 40 'moldywarpes' during its purge, the price varying from 3*d*. for 10 moles to ¾*d*. for a single mole. The Badger churchwardens paid 4*d*. for four 'moals Cacht in the Church Yard' in 1746, and Hodnet, in 1839, paid 5*s*. to deal with a similar problem. Baschurch employed a mole catcher at 1*s*. per annum from 1893–95, while Richard's Castle, during 1882–92, were rather more generous, and gave their mole catcher an annual wage of 2*s*. 6*d*. Ludlow in 1576 paid 10*d*. for 20 'wonts', and Alberbury in 1891 and Burford in 1884–86 each paid 12*d*. for moles, while Elijah Biggs of Llanyblodwel in 1900 received 3*s*. for his efforts. Moreton Say was very unusual in that the moles were caught in the church itself. The 16th-century church provided home for a variety of animals: jackdaws, crows, pigeons, sparrows, moles, rats and mice, not to mention dogs, for which many churchwardens paid the 'dog whiper' to whip them out of church. Such a menagerie might well have provided a welcome diversion during a long, dreary sermon.

Rats and Mice

Remarkably, rats and mice, for long regarded as a nuisance, do not figure prominently and are mentioned in the accounts of only five parishes, but they must have been plentiful. They were, no doubt, trapped in the house, but possibly in insufficient numbers to present for payment; Ludlow for example, paid only 1*d*. a dozen for mice in 1569. Tusser, writing in 1557, urged good housewives to set traps in the dairy to catch mice, even if the cat was a good mouser, and to put down 'bane' to kill the rats, taking care not to poison the servants, themselves and their families.[39] An 18th-century Shropshire recipe for a bane or rat poison consisted of a quart of oatmeal sweetened with four drops of oil of rhodium (the distillate from the wood of a number of trees known as rosewood), to which were added two powdered nuts of *nux vomica* (strychnine).[40] In 1576 Ludlow paid for a rat's head, but this was the last payment made for rats by any parish, for which accounts have survived, for almost 200 years.

The Norway or brown rat (*Rattus norvegicus*) was introduced into England in about 1728–29 and quickly spread, ousting the black rat (*Rattus rattus*), which is now mainly restricted to ports.[41] In 1760 Ellesmere embarked on a substantial cull, and during the next 18 years 3,891 rats were destroyed at a cost of £32 8*s*. 6*d*. Then, in 1778, the cull ceased as abruptly as it had started, and no further payments were made for rats. Atcham paid its rat catcher 1*s*., while at Woore rats were troublesome in the churchyard and in 1839 John Dunn was given a shilling to control them. Rats were trapped, poisoned and hunted with dogs. Longford church had mice in 1811, and a mousetrap costing 3*d*. was bought to deal with them; the problem recurred twenty years later and they then bought two traps. Worfield also paid for rats and mice but only during the purge years.

Crows, Rooks, Jackdaws and Magpies

Crows and rooks, which were frequently confused, and here are grouped together as crows, were often troublesome. Chetton, during the years 1655 to 1684, waged war on crows and, to a much lesser extent, on magpies, and destroyed 639 paying 2*d*. per dozen. Alberbury, in 1681, paid 12*d*. for crows' eggs, and in Ludlow, in 1569, 4*d*. was paid for 12 crows and 2*d*. for 6 jackdaws, while Chirbury, in 1637, paid 8*s*. for the heads of rooks and 6*s*. for crows. Holy Cross, Shrewsbury, was concerned by the damage done to crops by crows and, in 1596, a year when the harvest was particularly bad, gave Richard Byrde 6*d*. for 4lbs. of lead to make bullets to shoot them in the fields; this was the earliest reference found to the use of a gun for killing vermin. Crows, however, figure most often as nuisances in the church. Martin was paid 4*s*. for killing crows in Holy Cross church, Shrewsbury, in 1588, and, four years later, Richard Norton, received 4*d*. for killing jackdaws in the same church and 'mending the holes' where they were getting in. Oswestry church, in 1591, was similarly troubled and paid 2*s*. to keep the crows out while in 1660 George Thomas was paid 5*s*. for pulling down the rooks' nests.

Ravens

Ravens figure only once, when Richard Felton of Worfield, in 1570, received 2*d*. for the heads of four ravens.

Pigeons

What do the accounts mean by the term pigeon? Is it a feral pigeon, or a stock dove, or a woodpigeon? One cannot be certain, but as many of the references are to them living in churches it is unlikely that they were woodpigeons and more likely that they were feral pigeons or stock doves. Whatever they were, in 1597 Richard Goughe, a tailor, was fined 3*s*. 4*d*. for shooting pigeons in St. Chad's church. He appealed to the bailiffs on two accounts, one that he was 'farr in debte' by 'reson of the extremity of the derth', and the other that 'supposinge it Rather A good deed to kill pigeons for fowlinge the Church then any offence of the Lawe'.[42] His plea met with some success as the fine was commuted to 2*s*. At Prees, in 1751 and 1769, pigeons were a nuisance in the church, while at Lydbury North, in 1623, 1630 and 1727, both crows and pigeons fouled the church. The purchase of moss is an item often met with in churchwardens' accounts, and it is likely it was bought to pack the gaps in the eaves and roof tiles to keep out both the weather and birds.

Plymley referring to domestic pigeons, says that they usefully pick up much of the grain otherwise lost during harvesting, but they do much damage in newly sown fields and when the grain is ripe. He thought that if there were any profit to be made from pigeons it would come from their manure, but concluded that pigeons were probably more expensive than profitable.[43] Pigeon dung was particularly valued in tan yards in 'reducing hides' after they had been treated with lime.[44]

Birds of Prey

Birds of prey are rarely mentioned in the Shropshire parish accounts despite Tusser urging, in his widely circulated '*Points of Good Husbandry*', that buzzards and ravens, as well as crows, magpies and jackdaws, should be destroyed.[45] This was a view earlier recommended by Master Fitzherbert in *'The Boke of Hvsbandry'* of 1534, that one of the duties of a wife was to see that all the chicks, ducklings and goslings should be protected against 'gleyds, crowes, fullymartes and other vermyne'. This, however, was his only comment on vermin in an otherwise detailed treatise on farming practices and suggests that he did not regard vermin of major importance as far as crops were concerned.[46] In 1615, Oswestry had a bird catcher, the only parish known to have such an officer, who was paid 4*d*. for two dozen unidentified birds and half a dozen hawks. He is mentioned on a couple of other occasions when he received 12*d*. for 12 dozen birds and an amount lost by damage to the document, for a further four dozen. In Whitchurch in 1797 the heads of a hawk and some urchins earned the hunter 12*d*. The hawks were never identified beyond 'hawk'. At Alberbury in 1681 6*d*. was paid for the eggs of red kites and crows, while in the Worfield purge John Bradburne was paid 2*d*. for a 'coyte' which is, most probably, a deviant spelling of kite. Prior to the Act, in Worfield in 1511 William Hitchecox received 4*d*. for an 'yron', an eagle. This was the only reference found to an eagle in Shropshire, but why the churchwardens should have felt obliged to pay for it at that time is not known.

Starlings, Bullfinches and Tits

The only other birds which are mentioned are starlings, but only once, in the accounts of St. Mary's, Shrewsbury, of 1621, when shot and powder were bought to kill the 'steares', and bullfinches and 'nopes' or 'nopps' during the Worfield purge. The nope is misleading, as it usually meant a bullfinch, but here, as can be seen from the entry: 'Item to Mr bartleys man for iij nopes and a bullfinch iiij*d*.', this cannot be so. The Oxford English Dictionary, however, offers tit as a less frequently used alternative meaning, so presumably that is the usage here. Another Worfield mystery is a 'caryon'; carrion crow springs to mind as a possibility, but the price paid, 2*d*., is far too much for a single crow.

Foxes, Hedgehogs and Sparrows

Foxes, hedgehogs and sparrows were the main species targeted in Shropshire and were destroyed in many more parishes than any of the other animals covered by the Act. (See Graph 2.) As such they merit a more detailed analysis.

Foxes

Foxes, although specifically described as vermin in the 1566 Act, are not a threat to grain and must have been included in ignorance or because of their predation of poultry, rabbits and young sickly lambs. The attitude to the fox has always been ambivalent; on the one hand it is despised for its indiscriminate killing habits, on the other it is admired for both the beauty of its pelt and its cunning, and it has long been preserved to provide sport for the hunt. Edward I kept a pack of fox hounds.[47] Harrison writing towards the end of the Elizabethan era claimed that if foxes were not preserved for the 'pleasure of gentlemen they should have been utterly destroyed by many years agone'.[48] He also added that while we have some foxes there is 'no great store' and they feed, at will, upon the 'warrens of conies'.[49] While this does not help us to quantify their numbers at that time, it does suggest that they were perhaps not as plentiful as now.

The common method of catching foxes by parishioners was to place a net about part of a covert and then drive the fox into it, possibly with the help of dogs, and once the fox was caught in the net to beat it to death with cudgels. Perusal of the accounts shows there were two kinds of recipients of payments: the lucky ones who happened to come upon a dead or dying fox and the dedicated hunters, who saw foxes as useful supplements to their incomes. Samuel Beech of Worfield was such a dedicated hunter, and, during 1684–91, either on his own or with others killed 43 foxes. Worfield had a 'keeper' who hunted foxes regularly, and presented 11 heads to the churchwardens during the years 1669–73. Nathaniel Warter, on the other hand, is an example of an opportunist; he presented his first fox in 1669, for which he received 1s., but was not heard of again.

The Act laid down that the churchwardens should pay one shilling for a fox's head and this was the norm from 1566 to the 1830s, but thereafter there were some notable exceptions. Mainstone in 1834 paid 3s. 4d. each for two foxes, but only 1s. 8d. for another, with no explanation. Were they distinguishing between young and old animals or between bitches and dogs? Worthen did the latter, and in 1833 paid 5s. for a bitch and 2s. 6d. for a dog. This was a sensible decision, for killing a bitch would have a far greater effect on the fox population than killing a dog. Several other parishes paid more for a bitch than a dog. In 1825 Trelystan paid the considerable sum of 7s. 6d. for the only fox's head ever presented for payment there, a sum not matched elsewhere.

Of the 153 parishes with accounts 69 (45%) made payments for foxes, see Appendix 1, Map 2, Parishes Killing Foxes, and Appendix 3 Foxes killed. The distribution is patchy, with many parishes in the south Shropshire hills and on Wenlock Edge, extending up to Shifnal, apparently not paying for foxes, and a second group of non-paying parishes centred on Baschurch. Graph 3 shows that the number killed peaked in 1725–49, and then fairly rapidly declined; Mainstone and Llanyblodwel made the last payments for foxes in 1836.

The greatest number of foxes killed by any parish was in Worfield; 551 over a period of 284 years, giving an annual mean of 1.9 while the maximum annual kill was 17 in 1776. During those 284 years foxes were killed in 257 of them. Ellesmere accounted for 304 foxes in 92 years, giving the highest annual mean in the county of 3.3 and a maximum of 30 in 1748. The rate varied, however, so during the years 1725–49 the annual mean was 8.9. In 1750–74 it fell to 3.2, while in 1775–99 it was only 0.2, after which no further kills were recorded. Alberbury paid for 278 foxes over 117 years giving an annual mean of 2.4, while its peak kill of 44 in 1696 was the highest recorded. The Shropshire figures are low compared with some other counties: Hartland in Devon, for instance, destroyed more than 20 foxes each year from 1599 to 1705, and at Much Cowarne in Herefordshire double figures were achieved during most years from 1764 to 1810, and even in the final year 29 foxes were killed.[50]

After the 1740s the numbers of foxes presented to the churchwardens fell. This fall was closely followed by a decrease in the number of parishes paying for foxes. (See Graph 3.) Whether this decline was due to a fall in the fox population, making them more difficult to catch, or to a fall in the number of parishes prepared to pay for them is not known. The hunts provide some evidence to indicate that the fox population was in decline, as the sport at this time was very poor. Disease might have contributed, as the game book of the Hawkstone estate for 1820 mentions that a mangy fox was taken and a few months later a second 'miserable animal' was killed.[51]

Loss of habitat might have played a part as clearance reached its peak at the end of the 18th century.[52] Plymley, however, writing at the beginning of the 19th century noted that despite there being more woods destroyed than preserved there were still some fine oak woods in the county and that despite enclosures large wastes and commons still remained.[53] What actually caused the decline can only be guessed at, but the hunts at that time spent considerable sums on leasing and planting coverts to preserve foxes, so loss of habitat seems an unlikely explanation.[54] Unfortunately there are no data available to explore the relationship between the hunts and the parishioner trappers. In Mainstone in 1717 it would seem that there was no conflict and the Clun hunt was quite happy to present its kill to the churchwardens, along with the parishioners, for payment. Whether or not this tolerance continued into later years, especially following the decline in the fox population, is not known.

Did the cull have a significant effect on the fox population? Estimating animal populations is fraught with difficulties, so even today the number of foxes in Britain is only an approximation based on limited data.[55] To project backwards therefore to what the population was in the 18th and 19th centuries is even more problematic,

although it is generally felt that there were fewer then than now.[56] To add to the difficulty is the incompleteness of the data provided by the churchwardens' accounts; none covers the whole period of the study, some cover only a few years, while others are fragmentary with years of data interspersed with gaps when the accounts are missing. With these limitations it is obvious that the result of any analysis is, at best, a very approximate estimate.

Harris *et al.*,[57] using the land classification scheme proposed by the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology,[58] estimated that the density of foxes in the 1970s was about a pair per 2.5 km^2 of land classes 9 and 10, which are the classes in which Shropshire lies. During the years 1566 to 1861 4,130 foxes were destroyed. They were killed in 153 parishes, giving a mean kill for each parish of 4,130/153 = 26.9, and this kill took place over a period of 295 years, with a mean annual kill per parish of 26.9/295 = 0.09 foxes. Assuming the same level of kill for the parishes with no accounts, then the total annual kill for Shropshire's 204 parishes would have been 0.09 × 204 = *c*.18 foxes a year. Shropshire[59] covers an area of 3,490.14 km^2, and assuming a density of foxes of one 1 pair per 5km.^{2}, that is half of the suggested density above, and assuming that 25% of the vixens were barren and the average litter size was 5[60] then each year, on average, 3,490.14 /5 × 0.75 × 5 = 2,618 foxes would be produced, and if the population were not increasing then as many would die each year. It is obvious then, based on these assumptions, that an average annual cull of 18 foxes would have had no impact on the fox population.

At the local level, however, the cull might have had some effect. Taking Ellesmere, a large parish of some 104 km^2 and with the greatest mean annual kill of 3.3 of any parish, and making the same assumptions as above, then the population would have been *c*.21 pairs, which would have produced about 80 cubs each year, and if the population was not increasing then, on average, the same number would die each year. On this basis, and assuming that the fox population in the 18th century was a pair per 5km^2, then the mean annual kill of just over three foxes in Ellesmere would have had no significant effect on the fox population of the parish. Berrington, on the other hand, a small parish of about 3.6 km^2, killed, on average, 1.8 foxes a year. Using the same assumptions again, the Berrington foxes would have produced 2 to 3 cubs annually, so even here the production of cubs would have about matched the number of foxes killed. It would appear then that if the fox population had not been less than a pair per 5 km^2, then the population of the county would have been little affected by the annual cull recorded here. There would have been temporary local dips in the population, for example, in Alberbury, after 44 foxes were destroyed in 1696, until the numbers recovered by breeding and recruitment from neighbouring parishes.

In the 1970s 100,000 foxes were killed annually in Britain for their skins, but this appeared to have had no discernible effect on the population. In 1995 the British population was estimated to be about 240,000 which potentially would have produced about 425,000 cubs each year.[61] Predation by foxes has a direct economic cost to agriculture and was estimated at £12 million annually in 2002. However rabbits, which form 45–70% of the diet of foxes in lowland Britain, cause over £100 million of damage per annum to farming, so, on balance, foxes are a benefit to farmers.[62]
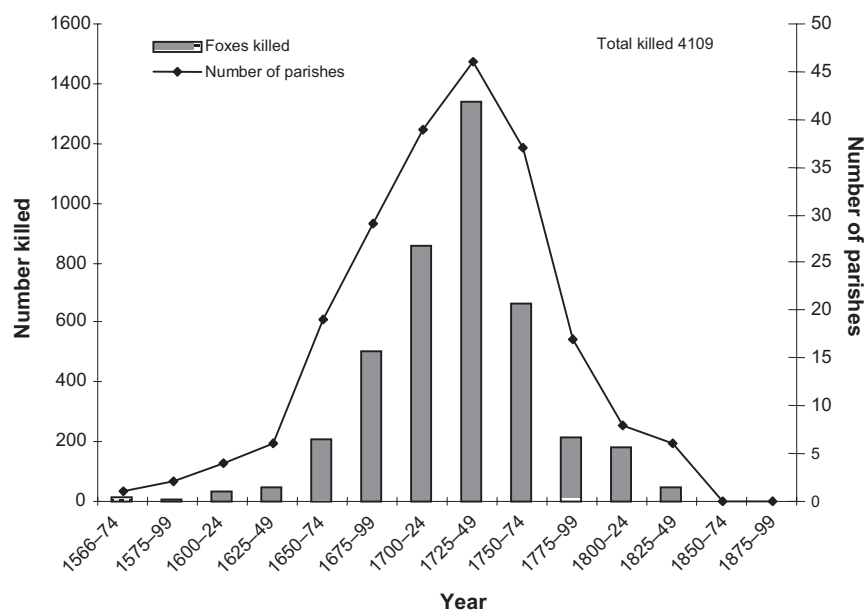
Graph 3   Shropshire, 1566–1899: Foxes Killed and the Number of Parishes Involved.

Hedgehogs or Urchins

Of all the animals mentioned in the Act the hedgehog or urchin, an earlier name often found in the churchwardens' accounts, was by far the easiest to catch. Not only are they easy to catch when active, but, as Knapp noted, even in winter, when dormant, they must produce some strong odours, as they were frequently found by his dogs'.[63] The hedgehog is a harmless insectivore, which we now know benefits our gardens and fields by eating slugs and snails and other invertebrates. However, at sometime in the distant past it earned the reputation of suckling reclining cows and eating birds' eggs. The former is a biological impossibility which has long been known; Knapp, for example, who was born in 1767 bemoaned that '..even we who should know better, give rewards for the wretched urchins' heads…on the misapprehension…of its drawing milk from resting cows…without any consideration of its impracticability from the smallness of the hedgehog's mouth'.[64] It is true that hedgehogs will eat birds' eggs, and hence the need for the cull in the Hebrides, where, after their thoughtless introduction some years ago, they have become a serious pest to ground-nesting sea birds. Hedgehogs, however, when presented with hens' eggs in captivity were unable to break them open.[65]

Worfield, in 1577, was the first parish in Shropshire to pay for the heads of hedgehogs and the last was Withington in 1854. The annual slaughter varied from none in 104 parishes (68%) to hundreds in the 49 other parishes. See Appendix 1, Map 3, Parishes Killing Hedgehogs. Why some parishes chose to destroy hedgehogs while others did not is a question to which there is no ready answer. Possibly the parishioners wanted to spare themselves the cost, or possibly they did not regard the hedgehog as a pest. Whatever the reason there are no leads in the accounts pointing to what it might have been.

The accounts for Claverley, Shawbury, Shifnal, Wem and Whitchurch record the slaughter of large numbers of hedgehogs, while their neighbours destroyed few or none at all. The kills are summarised in Appendix 4 and Graph 4. The kills peaked in 1725–49, but as can be seen from the graph there were a greater number of parishes involved in the cull in both the two preceding 25-year periods, while in the following three periods, the number of hedgehogs killed fell sharply, despite the fact that the number of parishes involved in the cull changed little and, in 1800–24 actually increased slightly.

The pattern of kills is dissimilar from that for foxes, where there was a marked correlation of foxes killed with the number of parishes involved in the cull. In the case of hedgehogs during the years 1566 to 1724 the same correlation can be seen, but thereafter the numbers killed bear no relationship to the number of parishes taking part. What could have caused this? The recruitment of men to fight in the Napoleonic Wars might have resulted in a lack of hunters, and this might have continued after the war as enclosure drove the small farmers and cottagers from the land and replaced them with larger farmers, who neither saw hedgehogs as pests nor as a source of extra income.

Some accounts give the names of those receiving payments, and it is clear that, as in the case of foxes, there were two groups of people being rewarded – those who were hunting hedgehogs systematically and those who stumbled on them by chance. Thomas Bache of Claverley was a hunter and regularly brought in catches up to as many as 17 hedgehogs, while Joseph Walker was paid for 31 in 1675 alone. In the second group were the widows and maids, who often made only one appearance in the accounts, and usually with a single urchin, having
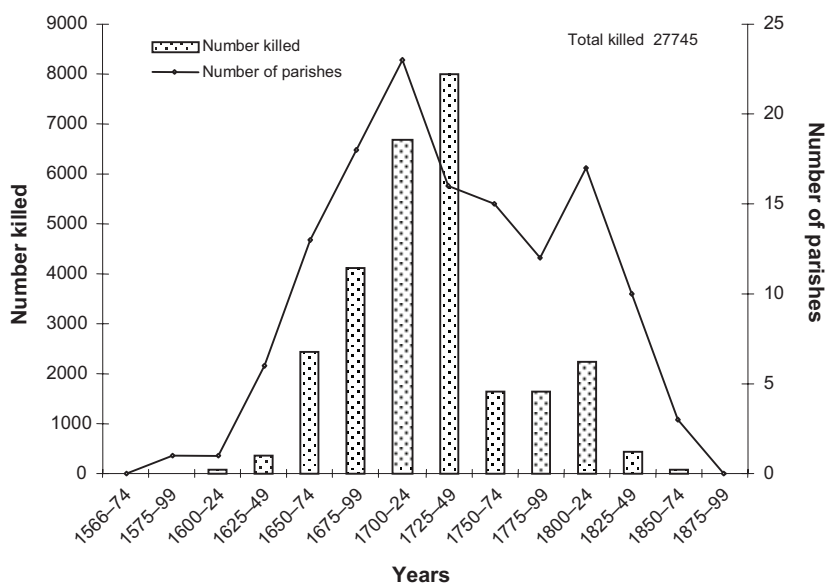
Graph 4   Shropshire, 1566–1899: Hedgehogs Killed with the Number of Parishes Involved in Cull.

chanced on a luckless animal. It was not unusual for widows and maids to present hedgehogs' heads for payment, something that never happened with foxes.

The accounts for Claverley begin in 1663 when 18 urchins were killed, and the cull continued until it reached a climax of 237 in 1676, during which time 1,386 urchins were destroyed at an average of 97 a year. Graph 5 shows the number of hedgehogs killed by 258 Claverley men and women during those years, of whom 60 killed only one hedgehog, while at the other extreme one man presented 40 heads for payment. After the climax kill of 237 only one further payment was made, in 1678. No explanation can be offered for this sudden stop. It was not because of any change in the law, or in a change in attitude in the county as a whole, for, as can be seen in Graph 4, other parishes continued the slaughter. It is just possible, but unlikely, that after the climax year in Claverley, there were so few hedgehogs left that they were not easy to find, but this effect would not have persisted for over 60 years. It seems more likely that the Claverley churchwardens and parishioners had, for some reason, decided to cease further payments as the costs escalated and, possibly, because they were unable to see any benefits from the cull. The peak kill cost £1 19s. 6d. and accounted for 13% of the total annual expenditure for the year. There is however no documentary evidence to support this suggestion, which would have been unlawful.

There are a number of other parishes in which following years of high kills of vermin payments suddenly cease with no explanation. The churchwardens' accounts of Chetton in 1677, however, record that 'Wee whose names are subscribed below doe generally consent and assent that there shall no Hedgehoggs nore Crows heads be payd for in the parish of Chetton for this yere and so continue from the time to come for [document damaged]'. While this does not explain why they did this, it does suggest that there was sufficient discontent in the parish at having to make these payments that they were prepared not to implement the Act. The decision however, was not popular with everyone, and several people claimed reductions of their lewns for hedgehogs, crows and magpies caught. Their objections however were short-lived and they all duly and fully paid their lewns in the following years. The Chetton accounts run until 1838 with only one more payment for hedgehogs, in 1684, although payments for foxes continued. It is possible then that other parishes which suddenly stopped payments for vermin were doing what Chetton had done, but without recording it in the accounts.

The large parish of Whitchurch destroyed more hedgehogs than any other, 6,967 over 218 years, at an average of 32 per annum. The average, however, during the years 1700–50, the years of greatest destruction, when 5,330 were killed, was a little over 104 a year, with a maximum of 191, in 1750. Shifnal followed Whitchurch, and though the total destroyed was much less, 2,883, it was done over 70 years, and at a higher annual average of over 41 and a peak kill of 278 in 1695. Wem was another parish which encouraged the slaughter of hedgehogs, and over 113 years, from 1683 to 1737 and 1773 to 1818, 2,422 were destroyed at a mean of over 21 a year with a maximum of 310 in 1794. Unfortunately this run of data is broken by a gap of 35 years for which there are no accounts, but it seems likely that the cull continued during this gap. Shawbury destroyed 1,897 hedgehogs in 196 years at an annual average of almost 10 a year, but, in the seven years 1725 to 1731 754 hedgehogs were destroyed, at an annual average of 108, and a maximum of 194 in 1729. The accounts continue until 1828, but with only one further payment for 12 hedgehogs in 1796. Before 1725 the Ellesmere accounts are either missing or too fragile to be handled without major conservation. They then run from 1725 to 1803 and, after a break, from 1825 to 1838, during which time 1,280 hedgehogs were killed, at an average of very nearly 14 a year with a peak of 154
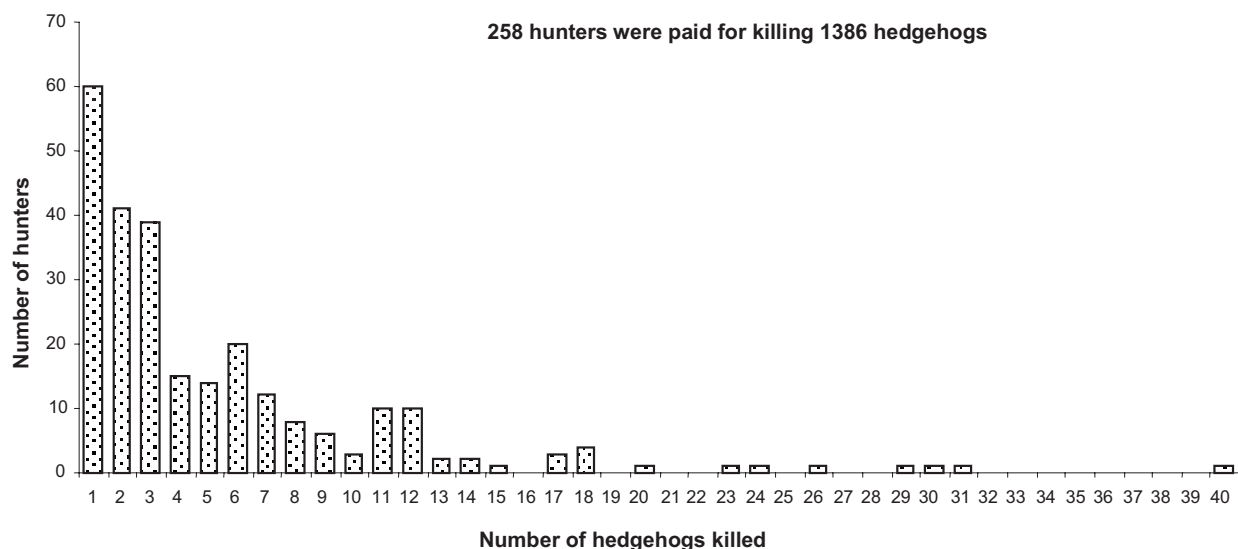
Graph 5   Claverley, 1633–1678: Number of Hunters and Hedgehogs Killed.

in 1749. The Wem and Ellesmere accounts demonstrate the fragmentary and discontinuous nature of some of the churchwardens' accounts. Other parishes paying for more than a thousand hedgehogs were Worfield and, perhaps a little surprisingly, the suburban parish of Holy Cross, Shrewsbury. Only Whitchurch, Shifnal, Wem and Ellesmere killed, on average, more than 10 hedgehogs a year, while of the remaining 45 parishes 39 destroyed fewer than 5.

Were the efforts to control the hedgehog population successful? The present population of hedgehogs in Britain is not accurately known, so what it was in earlier times is even more elusive, though it is generally thought it was greater than now. In addition, as mentioned earlier, the data provided by the churchwardens' accounts are patchy, which makes any estimate based on them, at best, only an approximation.

Burton in the 1950s ventured an estimate of a mean density in Britain of 1 per 0.4 ha., whilst noting that Zimmermann suggested one in 10 ha. for Germany in the 1930s. He added, however, that any estimates were such a matter of guesswork as to be almost worthless.[66] More recent work has suggested a density of 1 in 4.5 ha. in mixed farmland in southern England.[67]

The number of hedgehogs killed in the 153 parishes with accounts was 27,739, and therefore the mean kill per parish was 27,739/153 = 181.3 per parish. The kill took place over 295 years, and so the mean annual kill per parish was 181.3/295 = 0.61. There were 204 parishes in Shropshire during the cull and assuming the same level of kill in the parishes with no accounts then the total annual kill for the county would have been 0.61 × 204 = c.125. What effect would this have had on the hedgehog population of the county? Shropshire covers an area of 349,104 ha.[68] and assuming a density of hedgehogs of 1 per 10 ha., lower than presently suggested, then the county population would have been 34,910. If we assume that half were male and half female, and each pair produced 5 piglets a year,[69] then each year, on average, 34,910 / 2 × 5 = 87,275 piglets would have been produced, and if the population was static then, on average, as many would have died each year. Clearly the county annual average cull of 122 would have had no significant effect on the hedgehog population and that was assuming a low density of hedgehogs.

Would the same conclusion be true of the parishes that pursued hedgehogs vigorously? The highest annual average kill of hedgehogs found in any Shropshire parish was 41 in Shifnal, which covers an area of about 4,627 ha.[70] Using the same assumptions as before, the Shifnal population would have been about 460 and would have produced, on average, about 1,150 piglets a year, and if the population were not increasing then, on average, that many would have died by natural causes each year. So the average annual kill of 41 would not have been significant, and even the maximum annual kill of 278 in 1695 would have had little impact. In any case, with its fairly high breeding rate and recruitment from parishes where culls had not taken place, any local losses would have quickly recovered.

Parishes in other counties appear to have been far more active than Shropshire. In Lincolnshire, for example, Holbeach in 1790 killed 1,132 hedgehogs and in the following year 7,260, all paid for at only 1d. per head.[71] Holbeach parish covers about 9,300 ha. and making the same assumptions as for Shifnal, the breeding population would have been 460 pairs, producing 2,300 piglets. Clearly the population could have coped with the kill of 1,132 in the first year, but not with 7,280 in the next year. This onslaught could have been sustained only by substantial recruitment from neighbouring parishes and/or, perhaps more likely, a density of hedgehogs much greater than has been assumed here. For the population to have matched an onslaught of 7,280 a density of about one per 3.0 ha. would have been necessary. Such densities are not impossible, 1 per ha. was recorded on a golf course with a particularly high density of hedgehogs[72] while a woodland in the Yorkshire Dales was able to support a population of 1 in 1.5 ha.[73]

House Sparrows

The sparrow was known to the Venerable Bede who, in the 7th century, wrote 'So it seems the life of a man, O King, as a sparrow's flight…it flies in one door…tarries a moment…and then flies forth…whence it came'.[74] By the end of the 17th century it was found all over the British Isles, and in 1744 the nursery rhyme first appeared in which the sparrow shamelessly proclaimed itself to be the killer of cock robin.[75] It continued to prosper nevertheless and by the mid 20th century it was the most widespread species of land bird in the world.[76]

The house sparrow was not included in the Act of 1566, and it is not clear when it was added to the list of *'ravenyng'* birds, but from the 1750s the churchwardens of some parishes in Shropshire were prepared to pay for sparrows' heads as if by statute. Opinion as to the damage done by sparrows in eating grain against the good done in eating insect pests is conflicting. Turner in his review of the agriculture of Gloucestershire at the end of the 18th century stressed that sparrows had increased dramatically to the detriment of farmers.[77] This was a view supported by Pitt in his review of the agriculture of Worcestershire.[78] He considered them to be the most injurious pest of wheat to which they did 'great mischief'. He advocated that eggs and fledglings should be destroyed, and in winter mature birds should be trapped in nets. He also noted that some parishes and villages gave bounties

for sparrows, but that they were not now pursued as they formerly had been. He added that some people thought that they were useful in devouring insects, but he had his doubts. However in his review of the agriculture of Staffordshire he made no mention of pests, nor did Duncumb writing of Herefordshire or Young of Oxfordshire.[79] Plymley in his agricultural review of Shropshire in 1813 made no mention of sparrows, and he was a man with wide interests and an inquiring mind.[80] Knapp, a Gloucestershire man, writing in 1829, rated the house sparrow as both 'a plunderer and a benefactor' but considered that 'the insects it consumed made ample restitution for its autumnal theft of corn and other seeds'.[81] This view was upheld by Thursfield writing in 1843, who at the same time rated woodpigeons as 'most injurious to the farmer without a single redeeming quality', and yet woodpigeons never commanded any payments by the churchwardens.[82] Despite these conflicting opinions, house sparrows were generally regarded as pests and attempts to control them were made at various times until well into the 20th century.

The first recorded payment made for sparrows in Shropshire was in 1628 when the Ludlow churchwardens paid 5s. 5d. for sparrows' eggs. An earlier payment of 12d. made by the Oswestry churchwardens in 1615 for 12 dozen birds' heads might have been for sparrows, but we cannot be certain. Whether this was an isolated event or the start of a longer cull is not known, as there is a void in the Oswestry accounts until 1717. These two early references have been excluded from the analysis, as the destruction of sparrows did not start in earnest until much later, in 1759. Appendix 5 records the kills made by the 29 parishes involved in the sparrow cull. Of those 29 parishes seven made payments for sparrows for just one year and another two for only two years. Graph 6 shows that the kill peaked during the years 1800–24 at 182,930 and then fell away progressively until 1875–99 when just 5,456 were killed. The last parish to pay for sparrows, indeed to pay for vermin of any kind, was Child's Ercall in 1872, eleven years after the repeal of the Act. The 5,456 sparrows killed in the last 25 years of the 19th century were financed by the Shifnal and District Agricultural Improvement Society which funded a club devoted to destroying sparrows.[83] This is the only sparrow club in Shropshire for which records of the number of sparrows killed have survived.

Market Drayton destroyed 29,806 sparrows in a 59 year period starting in 1775, though as the accounts are missing for 1778 to 1791 the kill actually took place over 45 years, at an annual mean rate of 662, with a peak of 1866 in 1794. The total number killed was, no doubt, greater than this, as payments were being made right up to the missing accounts and began immediately the accounts restarted. Ellesmere pursued sparrows fitfully: 6,174 sparrows were killed during 1759–61 at an annual mean rate of 2,058, and then followed a lull until 1775 when 2,153 were destroyed during the next three years at a mean annual rate of 717. After another much longer lull of 50 years, partly because the accounts for 21 years are missing, the final onslaught took place in 1829–35 when 16,038 sparrows were butchered at a mean annual rate of 2,291, with a peak kill of 8,757 in 1831. Stockton was another parish which destroyed more than 20,000 sparrows, although again, like Ellesmere, in a haphazard manner. The Stockton accounts start in 1690, although the years 1784 to 1809 are wanting, and the first payments for sparrows were made during 1811–18, when 10,121 were slaughtered. The cull did not restart until 1825–26 when a further 6,594 sparrows were killed. The next payments ran from 1828–32, during which time 4,374 sparrows were destroyed. Then followed another lull of three years until 1836 when 840 were destroyed. The accounts continue
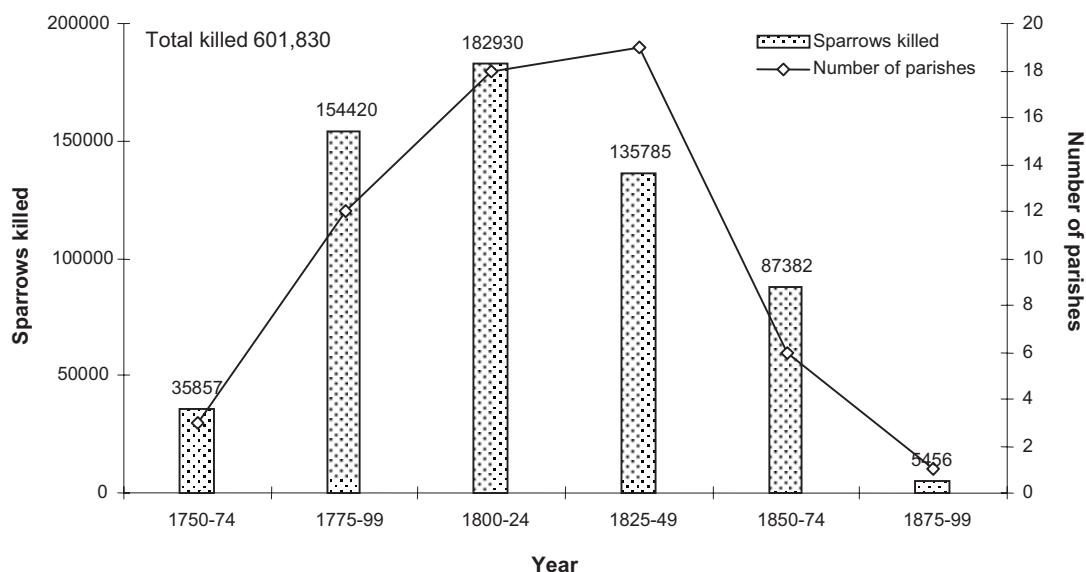
Graph 6   Sparrows Killed and the Number of Parishes Involved.

to 1889, but no further payments were made for sparrows. The mean annual kill over the whole period was 1,371, with a maximum of 4,812 in 1826, when the costs of the cull amounted to over 12% of the churchwardens' disbursements. The rationale behind the erratic way in which Ellesmere and Stockton chose to deal with sparrows is difficult to understand, as each time the cull stopped the sparrow population would have recovered. Possibly it was a reaction to the high costs of the culls, and once a satisfactory reduction in the sparrow population had been achieved payments ceased and were only renewed when the sparrows became troublesome again.

Claverley started its cull in 1762 and it continued until 1770, by which time 14,365 sparrows had been killed. The accounts are then missing until 1785 when the slaughter recommenced and continued until 1831 during which time a further 140,399 sparrows or their eggs were destroyed, giving a total of 154,764. This is probably an underestimate, as it seems likely that the cull continued during the missing years. The annual mean number of sparrows killed during the cull years was 2,764 and the maximum was 7,337 in 1824. The price paid varied and in the vestry minutes of 2 December 1816 it is laid down that '6*d*. a dozen be given for Sparrows Heads from this time until Lady Day next'. A later entry of 31 May 1819 reduced this to 3*d*. a dozen for heads and 1½*d*. a dozen for eggs.[84]

Lilleshall destroyed many more sparrows than any other parish and encouraged the destruction, not just by payments for sparrows' heads and eggs, but also by providing nets to catch them. On nine occasions nets were bought for the parishioners' use at costs varying from 12*s*. in 1773 to 60*s*. in 1830 while a further 9*s* was spent in 1830 for poles, on which to mount the nets. Lilleshall was not alone in providing and maintaining nets; in 1825, the churchwardens of Preston upon the Weald Moors paid 5*s*. 6*d*. for mending their sparrow nets. Lilleshall, like Claverley, was much more consistent in destroying sparrows than Ellesmere or Stockton, and once the cull started in 1768 sparrows were destroyed relentlessly until 1861, when the Act was repealed and payments could be lawfully stopped. Withington and Preston upon the Weald Moors also stopped payments at the same time although Child's Ercall must have missed this change in the law and continued until 1872. During the 94 years of the Lilleshall cull at least 233,042 sparrows were killed at a mean annual rate of 2,479. 'At least 233,042' because this is an underestimate. The accounts almost always record payments for sparrows and eggs together, and the estimate here assumes that both birds and eggs were valued at the same price per dozen, although it was more usual to pay less for eggs.

For the years 1836–41 the Lilleshall payments were recorded monthly. Graph 7 shows that over half the birds were killed in May to July, these being the months when eggs, nestlings and fledglings would have been most plentiful, and when farming was a little less demanding and time could be devoted to catching sparrows before the grain ripened.

A more detailed analysis of the Lilleshall data shows that there were some significant variations in the numbers killed from year to year. Graph 8 shows the annual mean number of sparrows killed each decade from 1758 to 1877.

For the first three decades the numbers killed increased modestly from 2,314 to 2,845, only to fall significantly in the next decade to 1683 and to remain thereabouts for thirty years, and then to fall even lower to 850 in 1828–37. After this a modest increase followed and then an enormous jump to an annual mean kill of 6,015 in the decade 1848–57, falling again to 2,356 in the next decade and then ceasing altogether after the Act was repealed. During
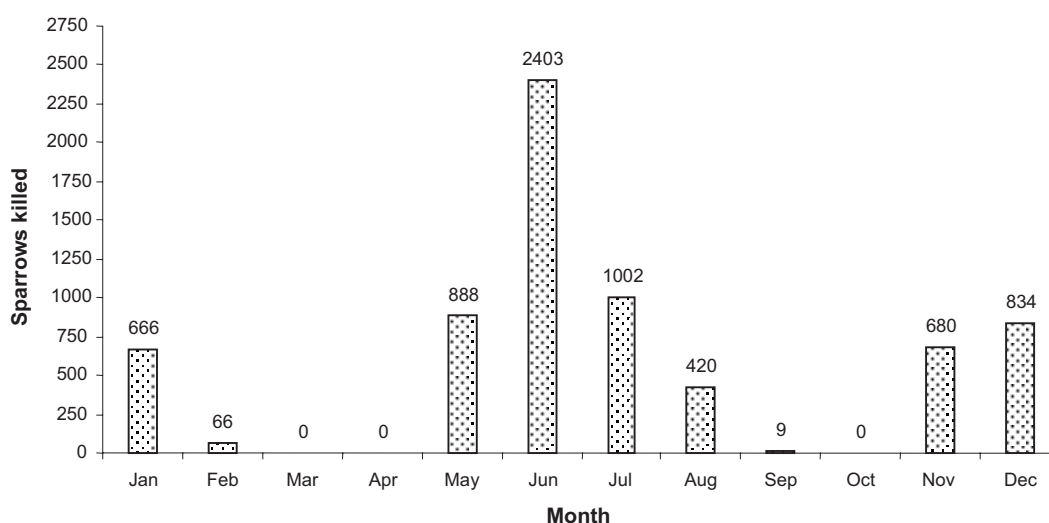
Graph 7 Lilleshall, 1836–1841: Sparrows Killed by Month.
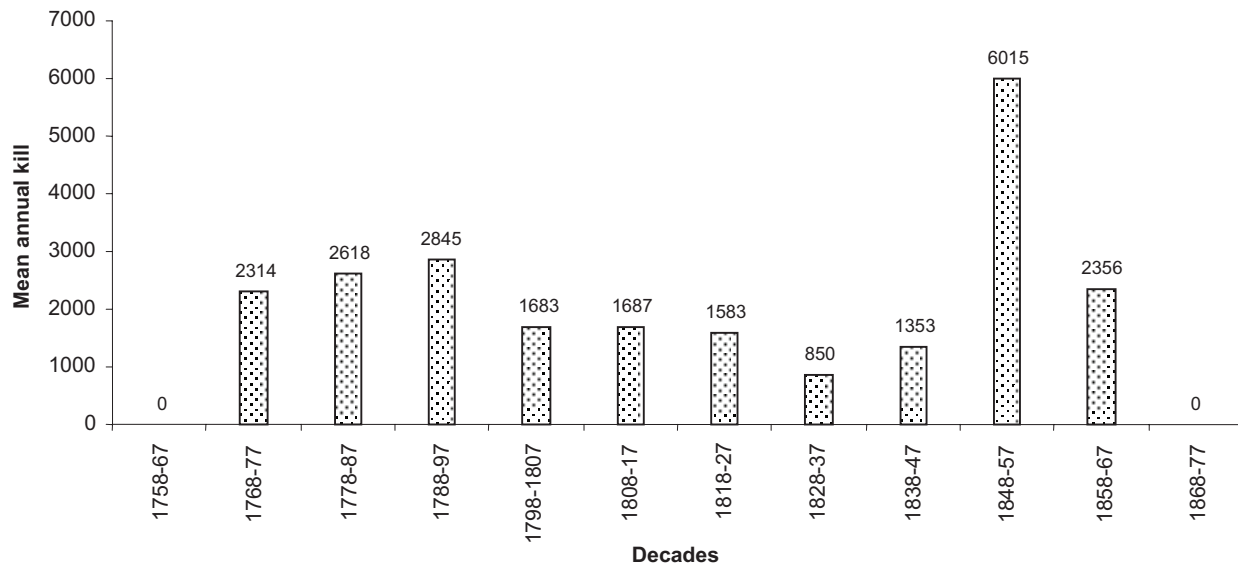
Graph 8   Lilleshall, 1768–1877: Mean Annual Kill of Sparrows by Decades.

the decade 1848–57 the annual number of sparrows killed peaked at a record of 9,564 and in nine out of the ten years over 4,000 was exceeded, a value which was achieved only twice in the previous 80 years.

The interpretation of these data is difficult. Were the variations due to fluctuations in the population of sparrows or in the effort devoted to catching them? The initial increase in the mean annual kill occurred before the Napoleonic Wars and then there was a fall during the wars, suggesting the possibility that conscription had reduced the labour force and that those left behind were too busy to devote much time to catching sparrows. At the end of the war farm labourers' wages were cut from 2*s*. 4*d*. a day in 1815 to 1*s*. 6*d*. in 1822 [85] and they remained low, so that in 1869 labourers in Clun were earning 9*s*. to 10*s*. per week while those in north Shropshire did slightly better at 11*s*. to 12*s*.[86] The plight of farm labourers and their families from the end of the war until the beginnings of the 20th century was deplorable; many were not in full time employment and few could afford to keep a pig, so they were condemned to a diet of bread and potatoes with a little cheese. In some cases only the man had cheese, as he was unable to do a day's work on bread and potatoes alone.[87] So catching sparrows might have provided the means for a man with time on his hands to supplement a meagre income, and this eventually might have led to the spectacular kills of 1848–57. This possible additional income abruptly ended, however, with the repeal of the Act in 1861.

As in the case of foxes and hedgehogs there were people who specialised in destroying sparrows. James Gamble earned £1 12*s*. 9*d*. for killing 2,358 sparrows during the three years 1818–20, but none thereafter. John Bradbourn, sometimes with others, over a much longer period, 1822–41, presented 1,680 heads, for which he received £1 3*s*. 4*d*., while there were many others who were each paid for a few hundred heads.

Were the culls worthwhile? The total number of sparrows killed was 596,374, which seems a large number, but it was derived from 144 parishes, and therefore the mean kill per parish was 596,374/144 = 4144, and as the kill took place over 113 years so the annual mean kill per parish was 4,144/113 = 36.7. Assuming the same level of kill occurred in the parishes with no accounts, then the average total annual kill would have been 36.7 × 204 = *c*.7,480. The area of Shropshire is 3,490.14 km² [88] and the density of sparrows in the 1970s was 10–20 breeding pairs per km² [89] Assuming the lower value and that each breeding pair had 2.1 broods each of 4.1 fledglings,[90] then each year 3,490.14 × 10 × 4.1 × 2.1= 339,246 sparrows would have been produced, and if the population were not increasing then the same number would have died each year. It is obvious that the average total annual kill of 7,480 would not have had a significant effect on a population of this size. To have done any good it would have been necessary to have mobilised all 204 parishes in an intensive county-wide coordinated cull whereas Graph 9 shows that of the 28 parishes paying for sparrows there were never more than 11 active in any one year.

With so many parishes not taking part, they would have provided ready recruits to replace the sparrows killed by their active neighbours. This, however, would not have been a view accepted by the culling parishes, and they must have felt that the cost was more than compensated for by an increase in the yield of grain. To examine the question satisfactorily it is essential to know the house sparrow population of Shropshire during the 18th and 19th centuries; unfortunately no such estimates are available. All that can be said is that in the 1870s they were, in the words of Beckwith 'most abundant'.[91] Making the same assumption, as earlier, that the density of sparrows was
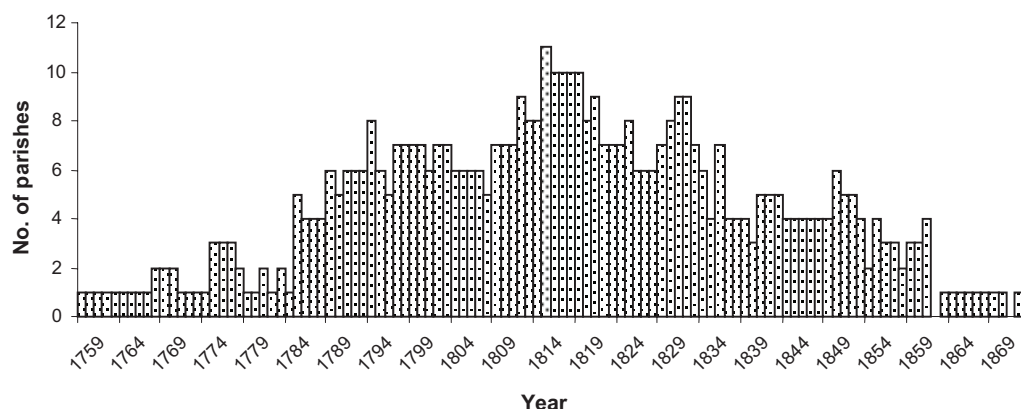
Graph 9 Number of Parishes killing Sparrows, 1759–1872.

10–20 pairs per km^2 and assuming these estimates applied in the late 18th and 19th centuries then the sparrow population of Lilleshall, a parish of 24.73 km^2,[92] would have been between 247 and 495 breeding pairs. Taking the lower figure and the breeding rates used earlier then c.2,120 new recruits would have been produced each year and, if the population had not been increasing, that number would have died each year. It is clear on these assumptions that Lilleshall's annual cull, of 2,479, would have had an effect on the population and could have been achieved year on year for 99 years only by recruits from neighbouring parishes or, perhaps more likely, because the density of the sparrows was greater than 10 per km^2 or both. If the higher estimate of 20 per km^2 were assumed, then, on average, 4,200 fledglings would have been produced each year and the cull would have had a much less marked effect. During 1848–57, however, the annual kills exceeded 4,000 in nine of the ten years, and over the decade as a whole the average was over 6,000, so even assuming the higher density, the cull during those years would have been significant, and a population density of about 30 pairs per km^2 would have been needed to balance the levels of destruction. In the case of Lilleshall the cull, based on the above assumptions, would always have had an effect on the sparrow population, varying from quite small to very significant. What is clear however is that despite the slaughter of several thousands of birds year on year, sparrows continued to appear in comparable numbers from somewhere, due, no doubt, to a combination of their high reproduction rate and from recruitment from non-culling parishes.

The payments for sparrows' heads increased as time progressed. In 1768 the Lilleshall churchwardens paid 2d. per dozen, though this was increased, in some instances, to 3d. by 1797. Payments then varied between 2d. and 3d., without any explanation, until 1801,when the price again increased to either 3d. or 4d., and finally, after 1819, to 4d. or 6d. A likely explanation for these seemingly inconsistent payments occurred in 1837, when William Johnson was paid 4d. per dozen for young sparrows and 6d. a dozen for older birds. The costs for killing sparrows were a significant item in the churchwardens' expenditure. In Lilleshall the cost of the cull in 1779 was over 18% of the disbursements, while from 1765 to 1807 they averaged over 6%. These are figures high enough, one would think, for questions to be asked about the efficacy of the control measures, though there is no evidence to suggest they were.

Were the Lilleshall culls of economic benefit? Southern found that a house sparrow eats c.6.5lbs. of food each year of which about 40% is corn, so 2,479 sparrows, the annual average Lilleshall kill, would have consumed about 6,445 lbs. of corn.[93] The price of corn varied widely from year to year in the 18th and 19th century, but taking a low value of 25 shillings a quarter (480 lbs.) then the annual cost of corn consumed by the Lilleshall sparrows would work out at almost £17, while the cost of destroying them, even at the highest rate of 6d. per dozen, would have been £5 3s. 3d. Based on these assumptions, the destruction of sparrows would give a good return on the investment. However, researchers in America found that about 75% of the grain eaten by sparrows was waste grain, that is grain lost during the harvesting process.[94] On this basis the annual consumption of harvestable grain by a sparrow would be about 0.65 lbs. (6.5 × 0.4 × 0.25). The average annual consumption in Lilleshall then would have been 1611 lbs. and at 25s. a quarter that would amount £4 3s. 11d. while the cost of culling would have been £5 3s. 3d. With the efficient gleaners of the 18th and 19th centuries, however, there would have been much less waste, but nevertheless, on balance, it seems that little would have been gained from culling sparrows, at 6d. a dozen, when harvests were good and prices were low, but when harvests were moderate or poor and the price of grain higher the cull would have been beneficial especially in the earlier years when payments for sparrows' heads were less than 6d. a dozen. During more recent times, Summers-Smith concluded that house sparrows living in rural areas could probably be regarded as harmful to man's interests, especially in areas which supported large population densities.[95] In view of the long held concerns in Britain about the depredations of house

sparrows it is surprising that British emigrants took them to America, Canada, New Zealand and Australia in the 19th century in sufficient numbers for them to become pests there eventually.

All these scenarios fail to take into consideration the benefits of sparrows eating insect pests, a study which has not been attempted in England, but the importance of which was demonstrated some years ago in China. There, having calculated that a million sparrows ate sufficient grain to feed 60,000 people, the population was mobilised and over 2.8 million sparrows were killed in one year. No account, however, had been taken of the number of insect pests consumed by sparrows when feeding their young. As a consequence, in the following year the rice crop far from giving a greater yield was significantly reduced. The idea was abandoned and the sparrow population and the rice crops quickly recovered.[96]

Why did Lilleshall take on the destruction of sparrows with such verve, with its kill much greater than that of any other parish? Plymley was critical of farming practices in Shropshire at the start of the 19th century, which he described, as 'for the major part very defective'; the yields of grain were low and many farmers lacked sufficient capital to make any improvements.[97] He did, however, single out Lilleshall and the eastern part of the county as areas where improvements in agriculture had been considerable, and these areas were linked with the development of a thriving mining community. Was it because the farmers of Lilleshall were responding to the demands for food by this growing community, that they were working hard to maximise yields and they saw the flocks of sparrows feeding on the ripe grain in the fields, and later in the ricks, after stacking, as a waste that they needed to do something about? Or was it because the Marquess of Sutherland, through a series of vigorous land agents, improved the holdings and raised the rents, and the farmers were driven to maximise yields.[98] But if this were the case in Lilleshall why did the other arable parishes, with the exception of Claverley, not feel so strongly? Map 4 (See Appendix 1 – Parishes Killing Sparrows.) shows the parishes which paid for sparrows, from which it can be seen that a few of the eastern grain-growing parishes do figure, but so also do a few of the largely beef and dairy parishes in the north and north-west. At the moment no explanation can be offered for why some parishes subscribed to the cull while others, for example, Kynnersley and Longford, the neighbouring parishes of Lilleshall, did not.

The number of the parishes killing sparrows and the kills achieved were, however, too few to have had anything but a local effect on the sparrow population, and with so many parishes not involved there would have been ample recruits to make up the losses. Beckwith, as mentioned earlier, commented that house sparrows in the 1870s were 'most abundant', so the destruction wrought by Lilleshall and the other parishes in the first half of the 19th century had been negated by then. He concluded that 'no bird had profited more by the silly destruction of hawks and owls by gamekeepers than the ubiquitous sparrow'.[99] This was then a case of conflicting interests; the farmers killing sparrows to preserve their crops and the gentry killing the sparrows' predators to preserve their game.

Needless to say, house sparrows managed to enter the church and in 1828 Uffington paid John Ralphs 6s. 9d. for 'stopping out the sparrows from the church'.

It may be concluded that the destruction of so many sparrows had little effect on the population of the county as a whole, though in Lilleshall and Claverley, and possibly in some of the other active parishes, there would have been local reductions in the population with some financial benefit as long as payments were continued, but once they stopped, the sparrow population would have quickly recovered by recruitment from other parishes and by its fast breeding rate. To have had a significant effect it would have been necessary to have all the parishes working together with equal enthusiasm and dedication. Jones suggested that farmers, who would have had an influence on the churchwardens, were, in effect, securing for themselves a subsidy out of the public purse in having vermin destroyed.[100] This is a view which would be hard to uphold in Shropshire as so few parishes made payments for sparrows – only 31 out of the 153 parishes for which accounts have survived.

Loss of Habitat

During the time when statutory control was attempted the landscape underwent many changes as woodlands were felled, land was drained and the wastes and commons were enclosed to make way for more intensive farming. Plymley, writing at the beginning of the 19th century, noted that despite there being more woods destroyed than preserved there were still some fine oak woods in the county and that despite enclosures large wastes and commons still remained, so there was still no lack of suitable habitats for wildlife. He also pointed out that many of the poorly drained areas of the county could be profitably turned into very productive land if drained.[101] He quoted Baggymore which had been drained to good effect some twenty years earlier. Before drainage it had been waterlogged in winter and attracted 'an abundance of wildfowl', which had been taken in 'astonishing numbers' at the decoy at Whittington. Following drainage, however, the wildfowl no longer came and the decoy was now

in decay. He also noted, more surprisingly, that as the wastes and commons were enclosed and brought into cultivation the number of rabbits had declined and in some parts of the county were 'seldom met with'.[102] Two examples of how modifying the environment can significantly affect the wildlife, and in the case of the rabbit an example of how, given time, it adapted to and exploited the new circumstances.

Discussion

The number of years for which the churchwardens' accounts have survived is limited to only 20% of the possible years covered by the 204 Shropshire parishes, for the years 1566 to 1872. What has survived is biased towards the later years of the study and is often fragmentary, which has made analysis difficult. However it can be said with confidence that the attempt to control predation by vermin by the Act of Parliament of 1566 was doomed to failure from the start because its implementation was not mandatory. The churchwardens were given authority to raise the money to pay for the vermin presented to them, but they were not obliged to enforce the Act. The legislators appear to have assumed that the financial rewards offered would provide sufficient incentive to achieve an effective cull. In Shropshire this was not the case. The lack of obligation to implement the Act is manifest in the large number of Shropshire parishes which made no payments for vermin, 59 of the 153 (39%) parishes for which accounts have survived. The only instance of enforcement found in Shropshire was when the Commissioners at Bridgnorth amerced Worfield the considerable sum £1 10s. 10d. for not implementing the Act, but this was the only occasion when this happened and was not repeated a few years later when Worfield again lapsed. Who these Commissioners were and by what authority, if any, they acted, has not, so far, been established.

The killing of vermin provided an extra source of income for parishioners, of which many took advantage, including widows, men on poor law relief and even some entitled 'Mr.' in the accounts. Some of recipients must have devoted much time to catching vermin for which they were well rewarded, while many others, probably, came across a luckless animal by chance. There is some evidence to suggest that as the costs of the culls escalated some parishes stopped payments, but only in the Chetton accounts of 1677 is this recorded.

The number of species culled was not as wide ranging as in some counties,[103] a phenomenon for which no explanation can, at present, be offered. It seems most unlikely that in the 16th to the 19th centuries Shropshire, with its arable land and pastures, and extensive, wetlands, hills, commons, wastes and woodlands, did not have a rich and diverse flora and fauna, so the animals must have been there to catch. Indeed the Worfield purge of 1576–7, following their amercement by the Commissioners, in which 17 species were destroyed, demonstrates that a wide range of animals did thrive there; nevertheless 26% of parishes made payments for just one species and a further 17% for just two. It was only foxes, hedgehogs and, much later, house sparrows which were consistently trapped and in any numbers.

The fox was the most consistently hunted animal and the total killed, over 4,000, was a fair number, but that was in a large area and over a long time, and it was insufficient to have had an effect on the fox population of the county. The hunt was, at the same time as the churchwardens were paying for foxes' heads, both killing and preserving foxes. How effective they were is difficult to estimate as so few records have survived. The Hawkstone Hunt met 64 times in 1820–23 and chased 111 foxes, killing 39, while the remainder escaped.[104] If all the other hunts met with similar success it is unlikely the effect on the fox population would have been very significant, which, possibly, was the desired effect.

The hedgehog was the next most persecuted animal and, while the killing of almost 28,000 of this beneficial insectivore is much to be deplored, the destruction wrought, spread over the whole county and over many years, would not have significantly affected the population.

A few badgers were destroyed, but in only four parishes, and it was only in Chirbury that the killings reached largish numbers, and even then only 99 were killed during a period of 88 years. The accounts of Chirbury, Kinlet, Llanyblodwel, Oswestry and Sutton Maddock record the only documentary evidence for the occurrence of the wildcat in Shropshire; Chirbury killed the most, 32 during the years 1649 to 1781. Surprisingly rats and mice were rarely destroyed, though after the Norwegian or brown rat arrived in Britain, around 1728–29, it quickly spread and caused much damage to stored foods. Ellesmere was the only parish which killed rats in any numbers, which they did in two short bursts, 368 in 1760–61 and 3,523 in 1775–78.

Crows, rooks, and jackdaws, which were once regarded as major pests of grain, figure rarely in that capacity in the churchwardens' accounts; they mainly appear because they entered churches and created a mess. Pigeons also created problems in churches, but these, presumably, were feral pigeons or stock doves, not woodpigeons, which show no inclination to roost and nest on buildings. Starlings receive only one mention, which is surprising when one thinks of the vast flocks which they can form.

Whether the restraint in culling a wide range of species was a result of common sense prevailing, and Salopians feeling that many of these animals were not pests, or whether some were so difficult to catch that the reward was not worth the effort, or whether as rate payers they felt the cost too great to be borne, is not known. What is clear is that, despite the destruction of many thousands of animals, because the culls were not co-ordinated and not obligatory, and therefore because so few parishes were involved, the effects on the animal populations, at the county level, were not significant. At the parish level, however, there would have been significant reductions, certainly in the case of sparrows in Lilleshall and Claverley. Unfortunately there are no quantitative data on the benefits to grain crops by sparrows feeding their young on insect pests. It has been suggested that the benefits matched the later losses and therefore they cancelled each other out. In China, however it was found that the benefits far exceeded the losses.[105] It is difficult to believe, however, that this was the case in Lilleshall and Claverley, where the sparrow cull was a significant part of the parish's yearly expenditure for many years, and where the farmers, who were contributing to the cost of the cull, must have believed that there was a benefit. But if this were the case, why did they not take some action in 1861, when the Act was repealed, to continue the cull? In fact the sparrows were allowed to recover and by the 1870s they were again most abundant.[106] Is it possible that once payments ceased the crops were found not to be significantly decreased and the benefits of the sparrows eating insect pests did indeed compensate for any later losses? In the absence of any data the answer to that question will never be known. In the 1960s Summers-Smith concluded that in Britain, in those areas with large densities of sparrows, 'they were probably harmful to man's interests'.[107] In view of the great decline of the house sparrow in the past couple of decades it would be interesting to know if yields had markedly changed for the good or bad.

During the 19th century hunts became more popular and their effects on the fox population have been briefly mentioned, while the influence of keepered estates must have affected animal populations, but their effects cannot be quantified as very few records have survived, and those which have are concerned with game, not vermin. The attitude of the hunts towards foxes has always been ambivalent, at the same time, both preserving them and hunting them, while the gamekeepers were intent on destroying any animals that preyed on game and so were often working against the interests of the farmer. Records of wildlife destroyed by gamekeepers have not been found in Shropshire, but a photograph of a gamekeeper's gibbet at Downton Hall in 1928 shows over 200 putrefying specimens, mainly magpies, crows, stoats, weasels and moles, together with other indistinguishable specimens.[108] Such gibbets were the pride of gamekeepers and were used to show off their competence to their employers. Beckwith noted that no bird had benefited so much by the gamekeepers' slaughter of birds of prey as the sparrow.[109] The influence of keepered estates in the destruction of wildlife during the 19th and 20th centuries cannot be underestimated, as it was largely due to their efforts that many of the predatory birds and mammals which once lived and thrived in Shropshire were eliminated from the county.

Conclusions

The attempt to control vermin by the Act of 1566 was doomed to failure because it was not mandatory. No one was responsible for implementing the Act; the legislators appear to have assumed that the financial rewards were sufficient incentive to ensure their aims. As a consequence the parishes acted in a totally unco-ordinated way, with 39% of the Shropshire parishes for which records have survived not making any payments for vermin, and another 27% paying for only one species. As a result there were ready recruits from the non-culling parishes to replace the ones killed by the culling parishes.

The total numbers killed, even of the targeted species, over 4,000 foxes, almost 28,000 hedgehogs and about 596,000 house sparrows, appear large, but they took place in 153 parishes over 295 years and, were insufficient to have had a significant effect county wide.

Acknowledgements

Addendum

Since writing this paper the following items were kindly brought to my attention by Patricia Theobald: Bishop's Castle Court Chest, First Borough Minute Book, Folio 139 October 1624. Line 33 *'for one Chaffnet for sparrures….ijs vjd'*

Folio 181 verso 9th October 1633
'*…that he* [the bailiff] *shall provide a chaffe or Crowe nett for destruction of Crowes & Byrdes in the wynter time which shall hereafter (Inter alia) passe from Bayliffe to Bayliffe…'*.

In the absence of churchwardens' accounts for Bishop's Castle these are the only references to pest control being practised there.

Appendix 1   Parish Maps with Accounts and Species Killed

Map 1   Grey areas parishes with accounts.

Map 2   Grey areas parishes killing foxes.

Map 3   Grey areas parishes killing hedgehogs.

Map 4   Grey areas parishes killing sparrows.

Appendix 2   Shropshire parishes with the species killed, 1566 to 1872

Parish	Total species killed	Foxes	Urchins	Moles	Wildcats	Rats & mice	Badgers	Polecats	Otters	Weasels	Stoats	Sparrows	Crows &	Rooks	Jackdaws	Pigeons	Hawks	Red kites	Bullfinches	Ravens	Starlings	Tits
Acton Burnell	1		#																			
Acton Scott	0																					
Alberbury	7	#	#	#			#						#		#			#				
Albrighton (Shifnal)	2		#									#										
Ashford Carbonell	0																					
Astley	0																					
Astley Abbots	0																					
Aston Botterell	0																					
Atcham	1					#																
Badger	3	#	#	#																		
Baschurch	1			#																		
Battlefield	0																					
Beckbury	1	#																				
Berrington	2	#	#																			
Bolas Magna	1	#																				
Boningale	1	#																				
Bridgnorth St Leonard	1		#																			
Bromfield	1	#																				
Broseley	1		#																			
Burford	2			#								#										
Burwarton	0																					
Cardeston	2	#	#																			
Cardington	1	#																				
Caynham	0																					
Chelmarsh	1	#																				
Cheswardine	2	#					#															
Chetton	5	#	#				#						#				#					
Chetwynd	2	#													#							
Child's Ercall	2		#									#										
Chirbury	5	#	#		#		#			#												
Church Pulverbatch	2	#	#																			
Church Stretton	1	#																				

Appendix 2   Shropshire parishes with the species killed, 1566 to 1872

Parish	Total species killed	Foxes	Urchins	Moles	Wildcats	Rats & mice	Badgers	Polecats	Otters	Weasels	Stoats	Sparrows	Crows &	Rooks	Jackdaws	Pigeons	Hawks	Red kites	Bullfinches	Ravens	Starlings	Tits
Claverley	3	#	#									#										
Clee St Margaret	0																					
Cleobury Mortimer	3	#	#									#										
Clive	0																					
Clunbury	1													#								
Clungunford	2	#	#																			
Cockshut	0																					
Coreley	0																					
Cound	2	#	#																			
Cressage	0																					
Culmington	1	#																				
Dawley Magna	0																					
Diddlebury	2	#	#																			
Donington	4	#	#									#	#									
Eaton Constantine	0																					
Eaton under Heywood	0																					
Edgmond	3	#	#									#										
Edstaston	0																					
Ellesmere	4	#	#			#						#										
Farlow	0																					
Fitz	0																					
Ford	0																					
Great Ness	1	#																				
Greete	0																					
Habberley	0																					
Hadley	0																					
Hadnall	0																					
Harley	1	#																				
Hengoed	0																					
High Ercall	3	#	#									#										
Highley	0																					
Hodnet	1			#																		

Appendix 2 Shropshire parishes with the species killed, 1566 to 1872

Parish	Total species killed	Foxes	Urchins	Moles	Wildcats	Rats & mice	Badgers	Polecats	Otters	Weasels	Stoats	Sparrows	Crows &	Rooks	Jackdaws	Pigeons	Hawks	Red kites	Bullfinches	Ravens	Starlings	Tits
Holdgate	0																					
Hopton Castle	0																					
Hughley	2	#	#																			
Kemberton	0																					
Kenley	0																					
Ketley	0																					
Kinlet	2	#			#																	
Kinnerley	0																					
Kynnersley	1		#																			
Leighton	0																					
Lilleshall	3	#	#									#										
Linley	0																					
Little Ness	0																					
Llanyblodwel	3	#			#			#														
Longford	1	#																				
Longnor	0																					
Loppington	1		#																			
Ludlow	5			#		#						#	#	#								
Lydbury North	3	#											#	#								
Lydham	0																					
Mainstone	1	#																				
Market Drayton	3	#	#												#							
Meole Brace	2	#	#																			
Montford	0																					
More	1	#																				
Moreton Corbet	0																					
Moreton Say	3	#	#	#																		
Much Wenlock	1											#										
Munslow	1	#																				
Myddle	0																					
Neen Savage	1	#																				
Neenton	0																					

Appendix 2 Shropshire parishes with the species killed, 1566 to 1872

Parish	Total species killed	Foxes	Urchins	Moles	Wildcats	Rats & mice	Badgers	Polecats	Otters	Weasels	Stoats	Sparrows	Crows &	Rooks	Jackdaws	Pigeons	Hawks	Red kites	Bullfinches	Ravens	Starlings	Tits
Oldbury	0																					
Onibury	1	#																				
Oswestry	7	#	#		#			#				#	#			#						
Pitchford	2	#	#																			
Pontesbury	0																					
Prees	3	#	#										#									
Preston Gubbals	0																					
Preston upon the Weald Moors	1											#										
Quatt	1	#																				
Richard's Castle	1			#																		
Rodington	1											#										
Rusbbury	0																					
Ruyton-11-Towns	0																					
Ryton	2	#										#										
Saint Martin's	1											#										
Shawbury	4	#	#									#		#								
Sheinton	0																					
Sheriffhales	1											#										
Shifnal	3	#	#									#										
Shipton	0																					
Shrewsbury Holy Cross	4	#	#										#	#								
Shrewsbury St Alkmund's	2	#	#										#	#								
Shrewsbury St Chad's	0																					
Shrewsbury St Giles's	0																					
Shrewsbury St Julian's	2	#	#																			
Shrewsbury St Mary's	4	#	#						#												#	
Smethcott	0																					
Stanton Lacy	1	#																				
Stanton upon Hine Heath	0																					
Stapleton	0																					

Appendix 2   Shropshire parishes with the species killed, 1566 to 1872

Parish	Total species killed	Foxes	Urchins	Moles	Wildcats	Rats & mice	Badgers	Polecats	Otters	Weasels	Stoats	Sparrows	Crows &	Rooks	Jackdaws	Pigeons	Hawks	Red kites	Bullfinches	Ravens	Starlings	Tits
Stirchley	1		#																			
Stockton	2	#										#										
Stoke St Milborough	0																					
Stoke upon Tern	2	#										#										
Stokesay	2	#	#																			
Stottesdon	1	#																				
Sutton Maddocks	3	#	#		#																	
Tilstock	0																					
Tong	1	#																				
Trelystan	1	#																				
Tugford	1		#																			
Uffington	1											#										
Upton Cresset	0																					
Wem	3	#	#									#										
West Felton	0																					
Westbury	2	#	#																			
Wheathill	0																					
Whitchurch	4	#	#									#				#						
Whittington	0																					
Wistanstow	2	#													#							
Withington	2		#									#										
Woolstaston	2	#	#																			
Woore	1					#																
Worfield	17	#	#	#		#	#	#	#		#	#	#	#	#		#	#	#	#		#
Worthen	1	#																				
Wrockwardine	3	#	#									#										
Wroxeter	2	#	#																			
Number of parishes making kills		**69**	**49**	**9**	**5**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**31**	**9**	**5**	**5**	**2**	**2**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**

Appendix 3 Shropshire, 1566 to 1849: Foxes killed

Parish	1575 to 1599	1600 to 1624	1625 to 1649	1650 to 1674	1675 to 1699	1700 to 1724	1725 to 1749	1750 to 1774	1775 to 1799	1800 to 1824	1825 to 1849	Total killed
Alberbury	–	–	–	–	146	27	–	103	2	0	0	**278**
Badger	–	–	–	–	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	**3**
Berrington	–	–	–	–	17	59	37	–	–	–	0	**113**
Bolas Magna	–	–	–	–	0	0	6	3	0	–	–	**9**
Boningale	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	0	0	0	**1**
Bromfield	–	0	1	1	3	0	–	–	–	–	–	**5**
Cardeston	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	0	0	0	0	**2**
Cardington	–	–	–	–	1	0	0	0	0	–	0	**1**
Chelmarsh	–	–	–	–	–	0	5	–	–	–	0	**5**
Cheswardine	0	0	0	0	0	6	22	10	1	0	0	**39**
Chetton	–	2	8	17	1	8	3	0	0	0	0	**39**
Chetwynd	–	–	–	2	17	25	–	–	–	–	–	**44**
Chirbury	–	6	10	44	20	50	12	11	1	2	0	**156**
Church Pulverbatch	–	–	–	0	1	0	–	–	–	–	–	**1**
Church Stretton	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	66	81	26	**173**
Claverley	–	–	–	5	5	2	6	0	0	0	0	**18**
Cleobury Mortimer	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	0	0	–	**1**
Clungunford	–	0	0	1	3	6	3	1	–	–	0	**14**
Cound	–	–	0	0	25	45	98	25	0	0	0	**193**
Culmington	–	–	–	–	8	8	1	0	0	0	0	**17**
Diddlebury	–	–	–	–	1	10	6	0	0	0	0	**17**
Donington	–	–	1	9	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	**11**
Edgmond	–	–	–	18	0	6	25	4	0	0	0	**53**
Ellesmere	–	–	–	–	–	–	222	76	6	0	0	**304**
Great Ness	–	–	–	–	–	3	31	23	0	0	0	**57**
Harley	–	–	–	–	–	3	0	–	0	0	0	**3**
High Ercall	–	–	–	–	7	35	42	18	4	0	0	**106**
Hughley	–	–	–	0	0	4	11	1	0	0	0	**16**
Kinlet	–	–	–	–	–	42	99	71	0	–	0	**212**
Lilleshall	0	0	0	14	14	–	–	8	0	0	0	**36**
Llanybodwel	–	–	–	–	–	26	49	23	6	3	1	**108**
Longford	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	0	–	0	0	**4**
Lydbury North	–	3	7	22	5	12	14	30	20	15	0	**128**
Mainstone	–	–	–	–	0	32	17	0	1	0	8	**58**
Market Drayton	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	0	0	0	**1**
Meole Brace	–	–	–	–	0	0	10	0	0	0	–	**10**
More	–	–	–	9	2	0	–	–	–	–	–	**11**
Moreton Say	–	–	–	0	0	1	5	4	0	0	0	**10**
Munslow	–	–	–	2	0	–	–	–	–	–	0	**2**
Neen Savage	–	–	–	–	–	0	15	0	0	0	0	**15**
Onibury	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	0	0	0	0	**3**
Oswestry	2	0	–	–	–	2	33	2	3	2	0	**44**
Pitchford	–	–	–	–	–	1	10	4	0	–	–	**15**
Prees	–	–	–	1	6	9	78	52	0	–	–	**146**
Quatt	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	17	0	0	–	**17**
Ryton	–	–	–	–	0	2	5	5	–	0	0	**12**
Shawbury	–	–	0	0	3	15	106	21	0	0	0	**145**
Shifnal	–	–	–	0	13	41	–	–	–	0	0	**54**
Shrewsbury Holy Cross	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	**2**

Appendix 3   Shropshire, 1566 to 1849: Foxes killed

Parish	1575 to 1599	1600 to 1624	1625 to 1649	1650 to 1674	1675 to 1699	1700 to 1724	1725 to 1749	1750 to 1774	1775 to 1799	1800 to 1824	1825 to 1849	Total killed
Shrewsbury St Alkmund	–	–	–	–	–	–	18	1	–	–	0	**19**
Shrewsbury St Julian	–	–	0	1	0	1	–	4	0	0	0	**6**
Shrewsbury St Mary	–	0	0	0	0	31	63	13	0	0	0	**107**
Stanton Lacy	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	10	1	–	–	**12**
Stirchley	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	21	0	**21**
Stockton	–	–	–	–	25	57	25	0	0	0	0	**107**
Stoke upon Tern	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	6	15	0	0	**25**
Stokesay	–	–	–	0	34	10	–	–	–	–	–	**44**
Stottesdon	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	0	0	**3**
Sutton Maddock	–	–	–	1	20	0	9	14	2	0	0	**46**
Tong	–	–	0	1	0	–	–	–	–	–	–	**1**
Trelystan	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	1	**1**
Wem	–	–	–	–	2	2	4	0	3	0	0	**11**
Westbury	–	–	–	–	–	18	34	–	–	0	0	**52**
Whitchurch	–	0	0	2	8	47	60	23	0	8	0	**148**
Wistanstow	–	–	–	0	1	–	6	4	–	–	–	**11**
Woolstaston	–	–	–	–	–	0	1	1	–	–	–	**2**
Worfield	7	22	19	46	103	146	82	66	33	16	0	**540**
Worthen	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	5	43	56	13	**117**
Wrockwardine	–	–	–	–	–	4	8	2	0	0	0	**14**
Wroxeter	–	–	–	10	10	59	39	2	0	0	0	**120**
Total killed	**9**	**33**	**46**	**206**	**502**	**858**	**1336**	**665**	**211**	**204**	**49**	**4130**

The first payment for foxes was made by Worfield in 1568, the last, by Llanyblodwel and Mainstone in 1836.
– No accounts.

Appendix 4   Shropshire, 1566 to 1874: Hedgehogs killed

Parish	1575 to 1599	1600 to 1624	1625 to 1649	1650 to 1674	1675 to 1699	1700 to 1724	1725 to 1749	1750 to 1774	1775 to 1799	1800 to 1824	1825 to 1849	1850 to 1874	Total killed
Acton Burnell	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	225	0	4	0	0	**229**
Alberbury	–	–	–	–	93	68	–	0	0	0	0	0	**161**
Albrighton (Shifnal)	–	0	65	–	0	–	–	0	–	0	0	–	**65**
Badger	–	–	–	–	0	14	0	0	0	0	0	–	**14**
Berrington	–	–	–	–	78	222	204	–	–	–	0	0	**504**
Bridgnorth St Leonard's	–	–	–	120	183	257	12	46	12	94	24	0	**748**
Broseley	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	0	**4**
Cardeston	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	29	0	0	0	0	**29**
Chetton	–	0	149	618	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	–	**794**
Child's Ercall	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	7	82	20	**109**
Chirbury	–	0	0	0	0	97	0	0	0	0	0	0	**97**
Church Pulverbatch	–	–	–	0	0	8	–	–	–	–	–	–	**8**
Claverley	–	–	–	979	407	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**1386**
Cleobury Mortimer	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	0	109	–	0	**109**
Clungunford	–	0	0	0	47	12	0	0	–	–	0	0	**59**
Cound	–	–	0	0	17	243	377	109	0	0	0	0	**746**
Diddlebury	–	–	–	–	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**3**
Donington	–	–	117	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**121**
Edgmond	–	–	–	225	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	**242**
Ellesmere	–	–	–	–	–	–	1274	6	0	0	0	–	**1280**
High Ercall	–	–	–	–	0	5	0	0	83	0	0	0	**88**
Hughley	–	–	–	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	**4**
Kynnersley	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	123	0	0	0	**123**
Lilleshall	0	0	0	1	7	–	–	0	0	39	12	0	**59**
Loppington	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	1	0	–	**1**
Market Drayton	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	0	294	25	–	**319**
Meole Brace	–	–	–	–	0	20	53	0	0	0	–	0	**73**
Moreton Say	–	–	–	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	**2**
Oswestry	0	64	–	–	–	0	54	168	77	65	0	0	**428**
Pitchford	–	–	–	–	–	0	69	3	0	–	–	–	**72**
Prees	–	–	–	14	0	0	0	3	19	–	–	–	**36**
Shawbury	–	–	0	13	644	486	754	0	12	0	0	–	**1909**
Shifnal	–	–	–	117	1426	834	–	–	–	355	151	–	**2883**
Shrewsbury Holy Cross	0	0	8	114	118	733	145	0	17	1	0	–	**1136**
Shrewsbury St Alkmund	–	–	–	–	–	–	120	26	–	–	0	–	**146**
Shrewsbury St Julian	–	–	20	166	54	277	–	41	28	12	0	0	**598**
Shrewsbury St Mary	–	0	0	0	0	178	422	240	73	19	0	0	**932**
Stirchley	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	21	0	0	**21**
Stokesay	–	–	–	0	14	0	–	–	–	–	–	–	**14**
Sutton Maddocks	–	–	–	44	388	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**432**
Tugford	–	–	–	–	0	5	0	–	–	–			**5**
Wem	–	–	–	–	328	107	1046	0	889	52	0	–	**2422**
Westbury	–	–	–	–	–	11	286	–	–	0	0	–	**297**
Whitchurch	–	0	0	0	236	2427	2417	486	312	1069	20	0	**6967**
Withington	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	0	14	50	**67**
Woolstaston	–	–	–	–	–	12	0	0	–	–	–	–	**12**
Worfield	6	0	0	0	0	548	600	0	0	15	12	0	**1181**
Wrockwardine	–	–	–	–	–	0	0	0	0	95	104	0	**199**
Wroxeter	–	–	–	17	56	128	155	249	0	0	0	–	**605**
Total killed	**6**	**64**	**359**	**2432**	**4126**	**6695**	**7988**	**1634**	**1648**	**2252**	**448**	**87**	**27739**

The first payment for hedgehogs was made by Worfield in 1577, the last, by Withington, in 1854.
– No accounts.

Appendix 5   Shropshire, 1758 to 1872: Sparrows killed

Parish	1750–74	1775–99	1800–24	1825–49	1850–74	1875–99	Total killed
Albrighton (Shifnal)	0	–	0	4722	–	–	**4722**
Beckbury	0	0	0	6088	2676	–	**8764**
Burford	–	0	1632	204	0	–	**1836**
Cheswardine	0	402	0	0	–	–	**402**
Child's Ercall	–	–	792	4347	6068	–	**11207**
Claverley	14365	38626	73787	27986	0	–	**154764**
Cleobury Mortimer	0	0	48	–	0	–	**48**
Donington	0	0	1212	0	0	–	**1212**
Edgmond	0	0	0	2928	396	–	**3324**
Ellesmere	6174	2153	0	16038	–	–	**24365**
High Ercall	0	8328	144	0	0	–	**8472**
Lilleshall	15318	66090	42649	33613	75372	–	**233042**
Market Drayton	0	9993	18073	1740	–	–	**29806**
Much Wenlock	–	–	–	348	–	–	**348**
Preston upon the Weald Moors	0	1944	7110	6468	1914	–	**17436**
Rodington	–	108	1015	72	0	–	**1195**
Ryton (Shifnal)	0	–	474	0	0	–	**474**
Shawbury	0	672	0	0	–	–	**672**
Sheriffhales	–	0	144	0	0	–	**144**
Shifnal	–	–	8647	4981	–	5456	**13628**
St Martin's	–	–	–	984	0	–	**984**
Stockton	0	0	10121	11808	0	–	**21929**
Stoke upon Tern	0	0	0	1764	0	–	**1764**
Wem	0	11633	0	0	–	–	**11633**
Whitchurch	0	10361	6185	552	0	–	**17098**
Withington	–	0	704	1126	956	–	**2786**
Worfield	0	4110	8951	6755	0	–	**19816**
Wrockwardine	0	0	1242	3261	0	–	**4503**
Sparrows killed	**35857**	**154420**	**182930**	**135785**	**87382**	**5456**	**596374**

The first payment for sparrows was made by Ellesmere in 1759; the last by Child's Ercall in 1872. The final kills were funded by the Shifnal and District Agricultural Improvement Society during the years 1892 to 1895 in order to continue the sparrow cull after the repeal of the Act in 1861.

– no accounts

Glossary

Old name	Present name
Bauson	Badger
Bulfynche	Bullfinch
Busarde	Buzzard
Cadow	Jackdaw
Camerant	Cormorant
Caryon	Not known but not a carrion crow
Cawelles	Not known
Chough, chawgh, choye	Jackdaw
Cockshut	Glade in a wood where nets were hung to catch woodcock
Fitchew, fitchhole, foul mart, fullymart	Polecat
Fursekyte	Stoat
Fayre bade	Wildcat
Gleyd	Kite
Gray	Badger
Hoop	Bullfinch
Iron, yron	Eagle
Kynge Fyssher	Kingfisher
Kyte	Red kite
Martyn hawke	Not known
Maupe or malpe	Bullfinch
Moldkyte	Weasel
Moldwarpe, moldwarte	Mole
Myse	Mice
Nopp, nope	Usually bullfinch but can be titmouse
Ospray	Osprey
Polcatte	Polecat
Pye	Magpie
Ratte	Rat
Ryngtale	Harrier
Schagg	Shag
Stares	Starlings
Stote	Stoat
Sweet mart	Pine martin
Tassel	Goshawk
Tiercel	Male peregrine
Urchin	Hedgehog
Want, wont	Mole
Wesell	Weasel
Woodwall	Woodpecker

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Illuminating the Silent Enclosure Process – Evidence from North West Shropshire

By S. M. VAREY

Abstract: The process of enclosure, its chronology and extent, has interested historians for many years. This article focuses on enclosure by agreement, a process which had been taking place in many Midland counties since the fourteenth century. Enclosure by this method often took place in a piecemeal fashion, leaving behind little documentary evidence. This paper seeks to illuminate the silent enclosure process which was taking place during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It focuses on the importance of glebe terriers in highlighting the gradual nature of the change which was taking place in the landscape, and demonstrates that enclosure of the open arable fields was often a long drawn out affair. Although experiences in north west Shropshire were not unique, their importance lies in enhancing our over-all picture of the enclosure process in the Midland landscape.

Introduction

The process of enclosure, its chronology and extent, has interested historians for many years. Nationally the debate has often focused upon the extent and chronology of enclosure and the methods by which this process was achieved. Much scholarly discussion has centred upon the 'midland belt', counties such as Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Huntingdonshire, Oxfordshire and Cambridgeshire, where a considerable proportion of open field land survived until enclosed by Act of Parliament in the period 1750 to 1850.[1]

This article, however, is concerned with the enclosure of open field arable land by informal agreement, which was taking place during the early modern period. Unlike the earlier late medieval enclosures by agreement, which are often seen in counties on the western side of England, and unlike the post 1750 Enclosure by Act, early modern enclosure was more scattered and geographically diverse. The practice occurred across a wide geographical area, stretching from the midlands into the eastern counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, south into Dorset, and south west into Devon and Cornwall. It also included the border counties of Herefordshire, Shropshire, Cheshire and Flintshire and the more northern counties of Lancashire and Cumberland.[2]

The process of enclosure in Shropshire was a gradual and long drawn out affair.[3] Having begun during the medieval period, probably as much as 75% of the county's open arable fields were enclosed by 1600.[4] The process took place in a piecemeal fashion, often leaving behind little documentary evidence. Strips or plots of land were often small and there were a number of tenants, so the process of exchanging and consolidating strips could take place over a number of generations. Agreements between individuals often went unrecorded. As a result, in their endeavours to track the process, researchers are reliant on chance fragmentary references from various sources, which may indicate a date by which enclosure had taken place. It is therefore worth examining the process at work in one particular area of the county where sufficient sources survive to enable us to reconstruct developments in fair detail. Thus, this article seeks to illuminate the quiet re-organisation of the farming landscape which was taking place in a cluster of parishes in the north west of the county (Figure 1), where little detailed research has previously been undertaken, and seeks to highlight the importance of the period after 1600 in the exchange, consolidation and subsequent enclosure of land.
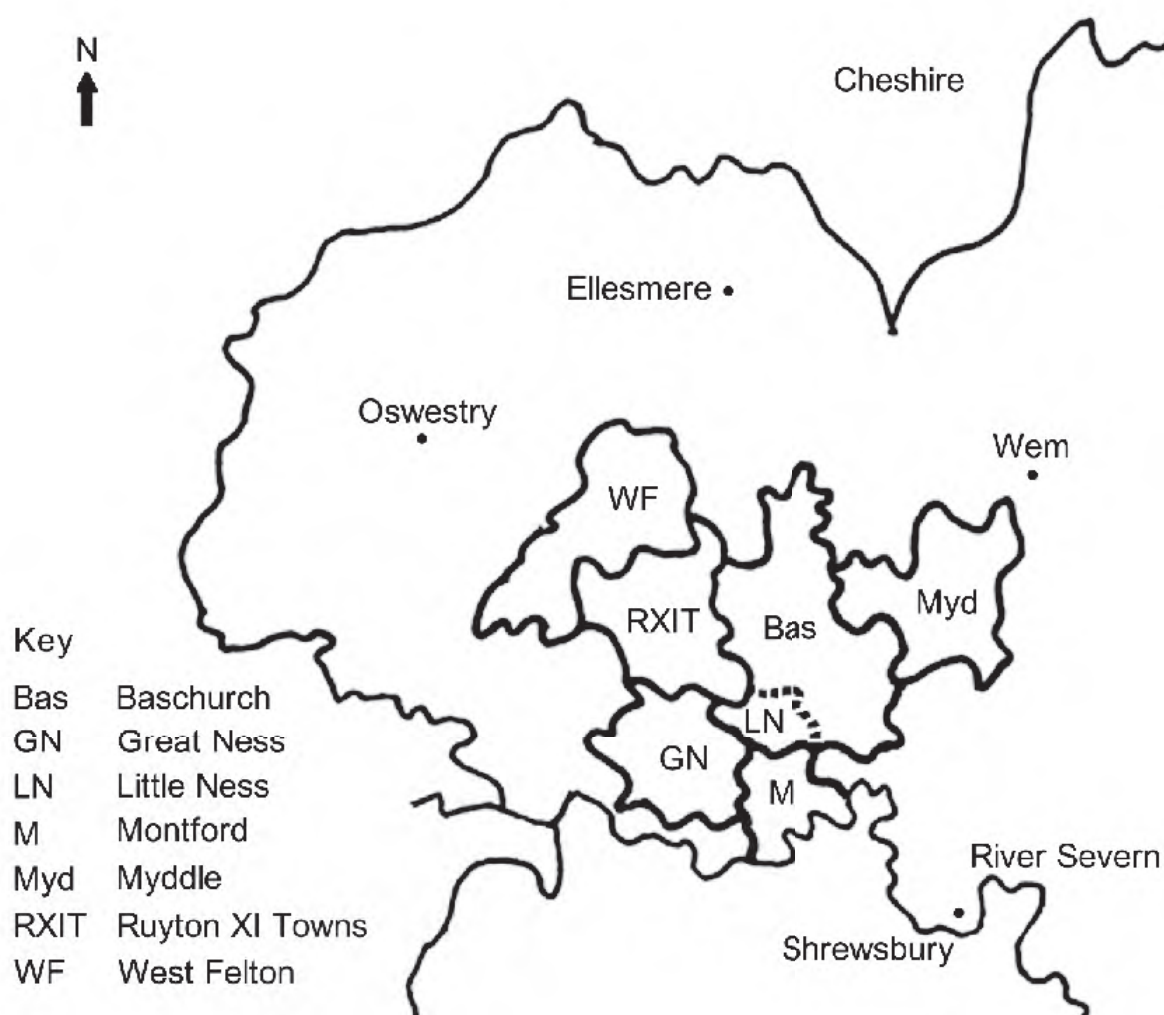
Figure 1   North West Shropshire Parishes under Discussion (Source: S. M. Varey)

Glebe Terriers

Although there are several ways of capturing the silent enclosure process, glebe terriers can be used as an initial indicator, and sometimes as a guide to the process at work. These are ecclesiastical records which detail the land and buildings belonging to a particular rectory or vicarage. The value of glebe terriers for historical landscape analysis was pioneered by Beresford in the 1950s. He showed how a series of terriers reflect a holding through time, and that changes to the glebe lands can often reflect changes taking place within the township or village as a whole.[5] To Beresford these documents were a useful 'tool for investigating enclosure' and served as an 'index' of its progress.[6]

In theory, glebe terriers provide a chronological sequence of snapshots of the landscape, allowing a relative chronology of the process of enclosure to be attempted and as such are of great value to the historian. The earliest glebe terriers tend to be the most useful documents, for they often provide a more detailed picture of the landscape. In practice, as with any document, there are a number of limitations to the source material which need to be borne in mind. It must be remembered that not every parish had glebe land, and if it did, the land was not always scattered amongst all the townships of a parish. Glebe land might be confined to one township, leading the researcher to question whether the church lands were really representative of the parish as a whole or indeed of the township in which they were located. Additionally, there were often long gaps between terriers, making the close dating of events impossible without additional evidence from other sources. There was also a tendency within some parishes to copy a previous terrier. The researcher must therefore question whether the situation was really unchanged, as the terrier might initially suggest, for often glebe land could remain scattered even though the rest of the field had become consolidated. Despite these limitations glebe terriers have been regarded as

'indispensable' and an 'extremely useful resource' when studying enclosure.[7] For this reason the writer decided to use and evaluate this source as an initial means of uncovering the silent enclosure process in the group of parishes under study.

For the diocese of Lichfield, which covers the parishes under study, glebe terriers survive from the early seventeenth century, forming an irregular series of documents, which continue into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. For those researchers wishing to pursue this avenue of research, *The Glebe Terriers of Shropshire*, volumes I and II, edited by Sylvia Watts, are a valuable first step before analysing the original evidence.[8]

The evidence from terriers can often be confirmed from other sources. Manorial records need to be scoured for any chance references to plots of land being exchanged, or enclosed by hedges, or tenants being fined for failing to comply with manorial regulations. Court books are one possible source of information in this instance. Early eighteenth-century estate surveys and their associated maps can often add to the picture, although they may simply reveal the tail end of the enclosure process.

Trevor and Margaret Hill have shown the value of using these sources to highlight the piecemeal enclosure process at work. Their research of the historic landscape of Sheinton revealed the importance of glebe terriers in tracing the history of the local enclosure process in conjunction with eighteenth-century estate surveys and existing enclosure records.[9]

Montford

Turning now to the parishes under study, Montford, a relatively small rural parish, lies close to the River Severn, some five miles north west of Shrewsbury. The earliest glebe terriers are particularly detailed, enabling one to draw a comprehensive picture of the open field lands. Within this parish the glebe lands are located only within Montford township. In 1612 the vicar held some enclosed pastures to the west of the village, namely 'park style', 'gylvor' and 'marsh'. In addition he held one selion or ridge of land within the 'marsh', suggesting that this area might not have been completely enclosed. The township had three open arable fields and the glebe lands were dispersed throughout, amounting to sixteen selions in 'bridgefield', thirteen selions in 'middlefield' and sixteen selions in 'crossfield'. Figure 2 shows the location of these fields in relation to the settlement of Montford.

All the church lands are described in relation to the lands of other tenants and therefore are a good indicator of the stage which the piecemeal enclosure process had reached. The terrier reveals little evidence of enclosure within the arable fields by 1612. There is no evidence of enclosure or consolidation of strips in 'bridgefield', either amongst the glebe lands or the lands of neighbours. In 'crossfield' there is just one reference to a leasow, belonging to William Wall, which adjoins a strip of glebe land. Similarly in 'middlefield' there is one reference to a leasow, also belonging to William Wall, adjoining the glebe land. However, within the latter field, some consolidation of the glebe strips has begun to take place, for there are two references to three selions and four selions 'lyinge together'. This is significant, as it indicates an initial first step towards enclosure: an exchange of land has taken place, allowing a small measure of consolidation.

Consolidation of land is one prerequisite for enclosure. The detailed evidence from the 1612 terrier thus suggests that although some pasture lands to the west of Montford had been enclosed previously, both the villagers and the Church predominantly still held their arable land in strips, dispersed throughout the open fields of the township. The terrier indicates that the piecemeal enclosure of the open field arable lands was still in its infancy.

By 1635, the year of the next surviving terrier, further consolidation and enclosure of the arable lands had taken place. Although the glebe lands remained the same in 'bridgefield' and 'middlefield', a quarter of the selions in 'crossfield' had become consolidated. The terrier also reveals that although the majority of the glebe land remained scattered within the fields, a number of individuals were consolidating and enclosing parcels of arable land on a piecemeal basis. There are references to three enclosures in 'bridgefield', each belonging to Adam Wall, along with a similar number of enclosures in 'crossfield' and 'middlefield'. It is interesting to note that, although a number of the villagers appear to be enclosing their arable land, references to the Wall family predominate. This would suggest that William (mentioned in the 1612 terrier), Adam and Harry Wall (mentioned in the terrier of 1635) realised the benefits of consolidating and enclosing their farmlands, and were actively trying to achieve this. Nevertheless, it is important to stress that the overwhelming impression given by the 1635 terrier is of an open arable landscape dominated by furlongs, subdivided into tenants' lands and headlands.

Unfortunately, by the later seventeenth century the Montford glebe terriers are less detailed. The strips, butts or furlongs of glebe land within 'the common fields' are located using a field or furlong name, rather than where they lay in relation to another individual's land. Nevertheless, they reveal that consolidation of the glebe lands continued to take place, a process which was most pronounced in 'bridgefield' between 1635 and 1685. One would assume that the consolidation of glebe lands was similarly reflected amongst the other villagers' lands.
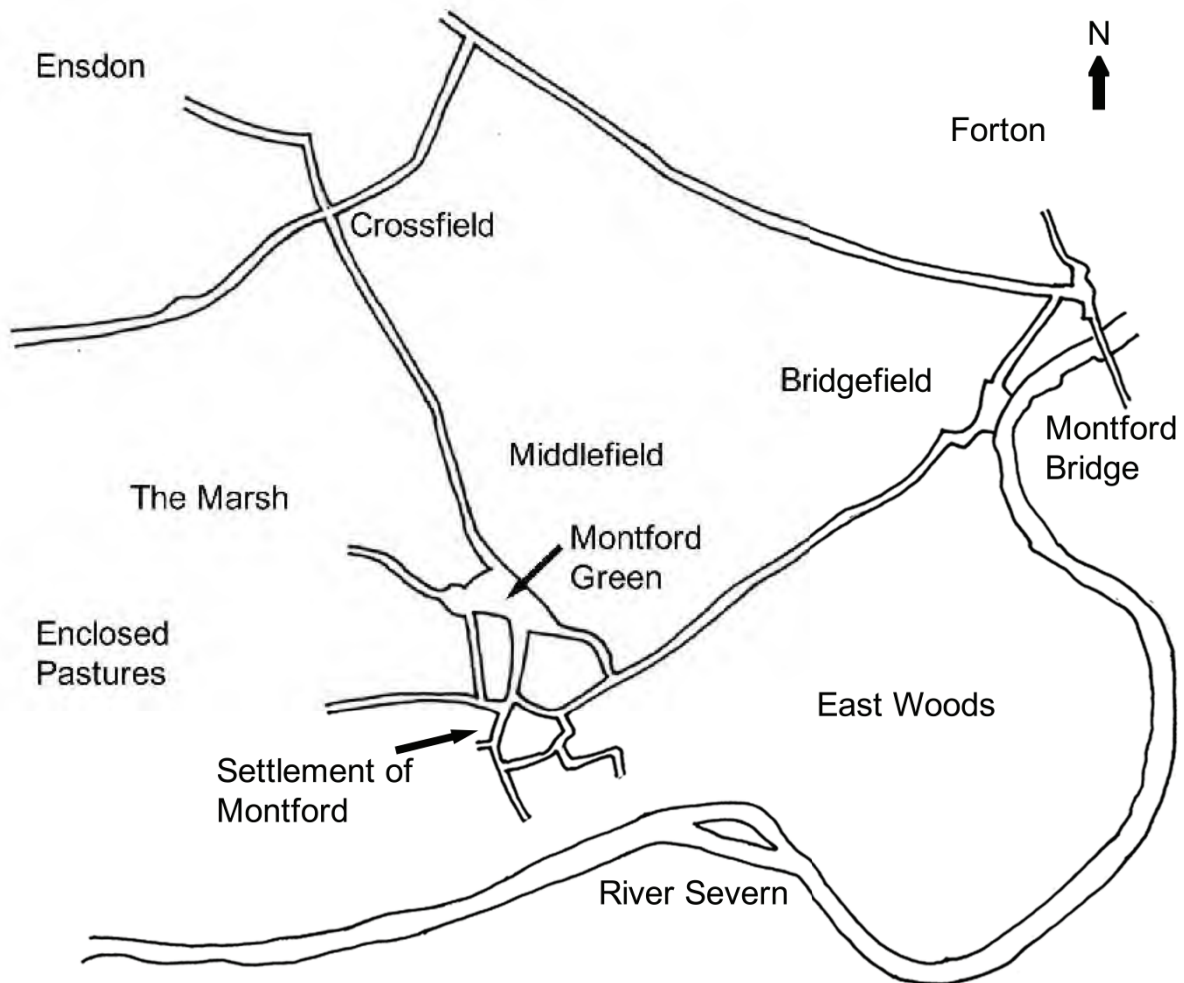
Figure 2   Location of Open Arable Fields in Montford. (Source: S. M. Varey based on SA: 552/8/302).

By 1693 a number of the glebe 'butts' are located and described in relation to hedges, which is suggestive of further enclosure having taken place in the interim period. In 'middle field' one headland lies 'under John Brown's new leasow hedge', another indication that the farming landscape of this area was undergoing change. Despite this, references to other individuals' headlands and lands continue. The terrier for 1698 is very similar, although not a direct copy of that of 1693, suggesting that the arable fields in Montford continued to be a mixture of hedged enclosures and small parcels until the end of the seventeenth century.

However, by 1701 the Montford glebe lands comprised: 'park stile leasow', 'gilver leasow', 'the mosspit' also called 'the marsh', a butt down to the green and the 'new piece,' 'lately enclosed out of ye common field' and amounting to twenty three acres. Enclosure of the glebe in Montford thus took place between 1698 and 1701.[10] An estate survey of the township records the fieldscape in 1728 (Figure 3). Although there would appear to have been some fine tuning of the glebe lands between 1701 and 1728, the plots are basically those described in early eighteenth-century terriers. By 1728 all the open field lands had been enclosed and, although still exhibiting a degree of fragmentation, had become reasonably consolidated amongst the land holders. The surviving evidence suggests considerable reorganisation of the former arable fields at the turn of the eighteenth century, to enable such a swift alteration to the lands. The survey additionally reveals that a number of the furlong names continued to survive as field names.

It is interesting to compare this time-frame with events in the neighbouring township of Ensdon. A court book for the manor of Shrawardine records that in 1699 several inhabitants of Ensdon, namely Randal Morris, John Gittins, Richard Minton, Mary Canlyn, John and William Bowker, William Hickin and Thomas Baker, 'did amongst themselves Agree to Inclose the Several Comon fields belonging to the said Township of Ensdon' providing they could obtain the consent of the lady of the manor. The villagers thereafter met at the local inn, where consent was given for 'inclosing' and the 'settling of wayes'. The court book records that John Lathum, the manor agent, was asked by the villagers to divide the lands and measure the access ways. Use of the agent in this
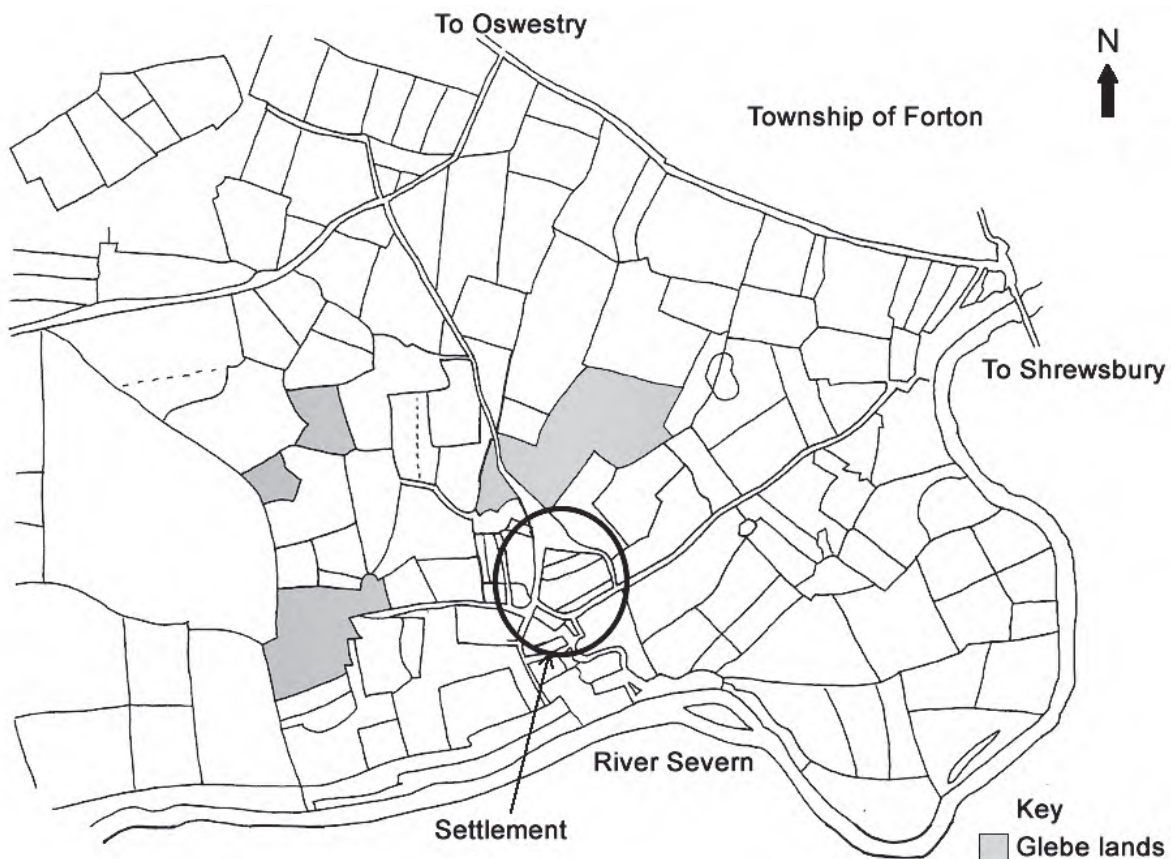
Figure 3   The Fieldscape of Montford, 1728. (Source: S. M. Varey based on SA 552/8/302).

way would, one imagines, decrease the likelihood of future disputes. The initiative for change was in this instance taken by the tenants, who together approached the landowner. One wonders whether this action was the catalyst for enclosing the glebe lands in neighbouring Montford. It would not be unreasonable to interpret the enclosure of the glebe arable lands into a single consolidated holding as part of a general movement within the parish to enclose the open fields.[11]

Early eighteenth-century estate maps of the parish further enhance our picture of piecemeal enclosure. As can be seen from Figure 4, which shows the field system in Ensdon in 1728, plots to the south west of the settlement are generally small and irregular. Plots to the north and east are larger and more rectilinear, giving the impression that this part of the township may have been enclosed later. The pattern of tenants' holdings is fairly dispersed, with individuals holding between two and five fields in small consolidated blocks throughout the township. A number of the fields retain the 'furlong' element in their name, or are referred to as 'new piece' or 'new enclosier', giving the impression that the alteration in the fieldscape has taken place in the recent past. In the extreme north of the township, an area referred to as 'new leasow' has been divided equally amongst the tenants, suggesting the involvement of a third party in surveying and allotting the land equally. This could be the work of the agent, John Lathum, whose assistance the villagers asked for in 1699.

The township of Forton similarly reveals a highly fragmented fieldscape of small irregular plots by 1728, indicative of piecemeal enclosure (Figure 5). The estate survey reveals that the tenants' lands are fragmented and dispersed within the township, lacking the consolidation evident in Montford.[12]

The Montford glebe terriers, manorial court records and early eighteenth-century estate maps undoubtedly help to illuminate the piecemeal enclosure process of this particular parish. They suggest that although there had been a small amount of enclosure by the early seventeenth century, this process had on the whole been confined to pasture lands. The process continued gradually, culminating in a larger episode at the turn of the eighteenth century, when tenant initiative in the township of Ensdon might have triggered the enclosure of lands in the neighbouring township of Montford.
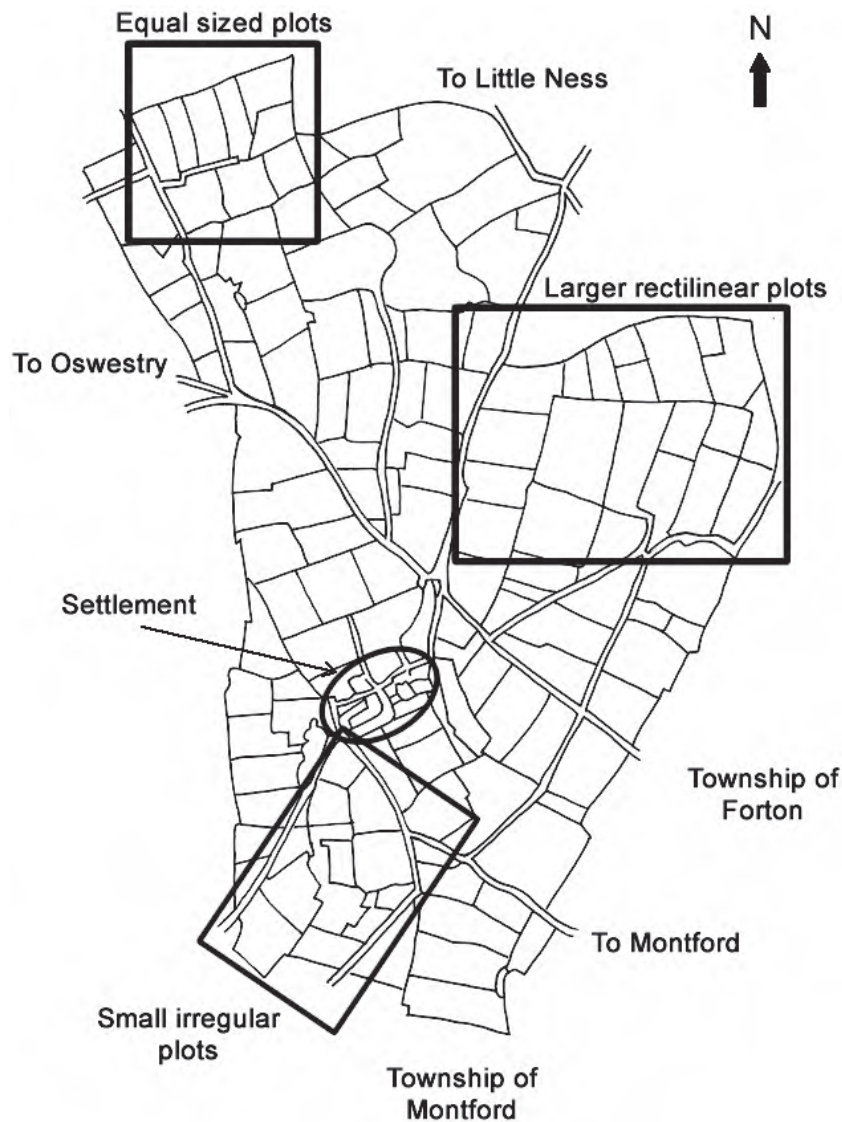
Figure 4 The Fieldscape of Ensdon, 1728. (Source: S. M. Varey based on SA 552/8/303).

Baschurch, including Little Ness

Turning to neighbouring Baschurch, a large multi-township parish some eight miles north west of Shrewsbury (Figure 2), the earliest glebe terrier (1612) similarly suggests a field system of open arable fields alongside meadow lands, in which an element of consolidation and enclosure had taken place. In this instance the glebe lands were held in the chapelry of Little Ness, which adjoined the parish. The vicar, John Newton, held: a leasow called croft of five acres; a 'doole of meadowe grounde' within the 'flowers meadowe' amounting to one acre; ten 'butts selions or rydges' and a parcel of meadow ground in the 'woode fyelde'; two furlongs, thirteen butts, lands, or selions in 'peyrie fyelde'; and six butts, lands or selions in the 'heath fyelde'. Figure 6 is an interpretation of the location of the open fields of Little Ness based upon field name evidence.

The terrier reveals that the vicar's glebe lands were fragmented amongst the open arable fields of Little Ness. It suggests that the other owners and tenants held a similar mixture of strips throughout the open fields. However, close reading of the terrier suggests that the piecemeal enclosure process might have been a little more advanced than in neighbouring Montford. There would appear to be some consolidation of individual strips especially in 'woode fyelde', for the glebe 'lands' are, in a number of cases, located between the strips of one individual rather than various villagers: thus, 'the one other silion or lande…adioyninge to lands in the occupacion of john wynne on both sides' and 'one other butt…between two butts the lands of John Browne'. Consolidation is also evident amongst the glebe lands in this field: 'the one butt or hadlande and three other butts, selions or lande and one pcell of meadowe ground adioyning and together'.
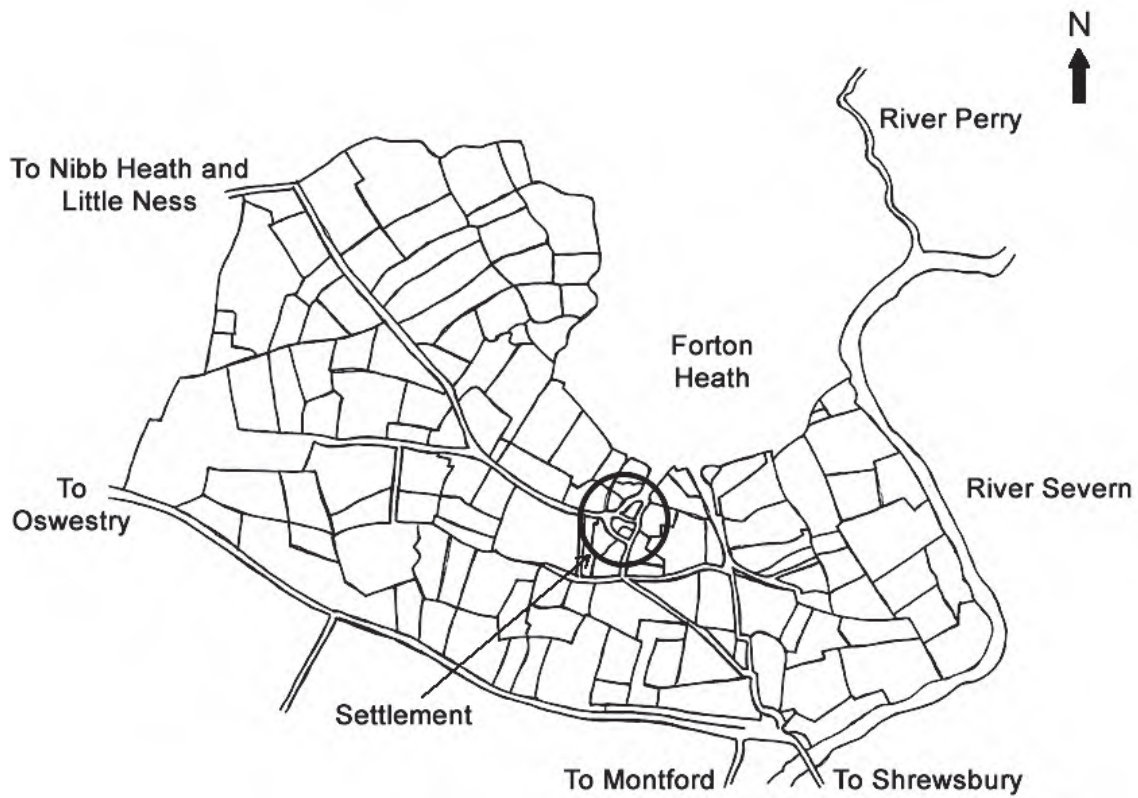
Figure 5 The Fieldscape of Forton, 1728. (Source: S. M. Varey based on SA 552/8/305).
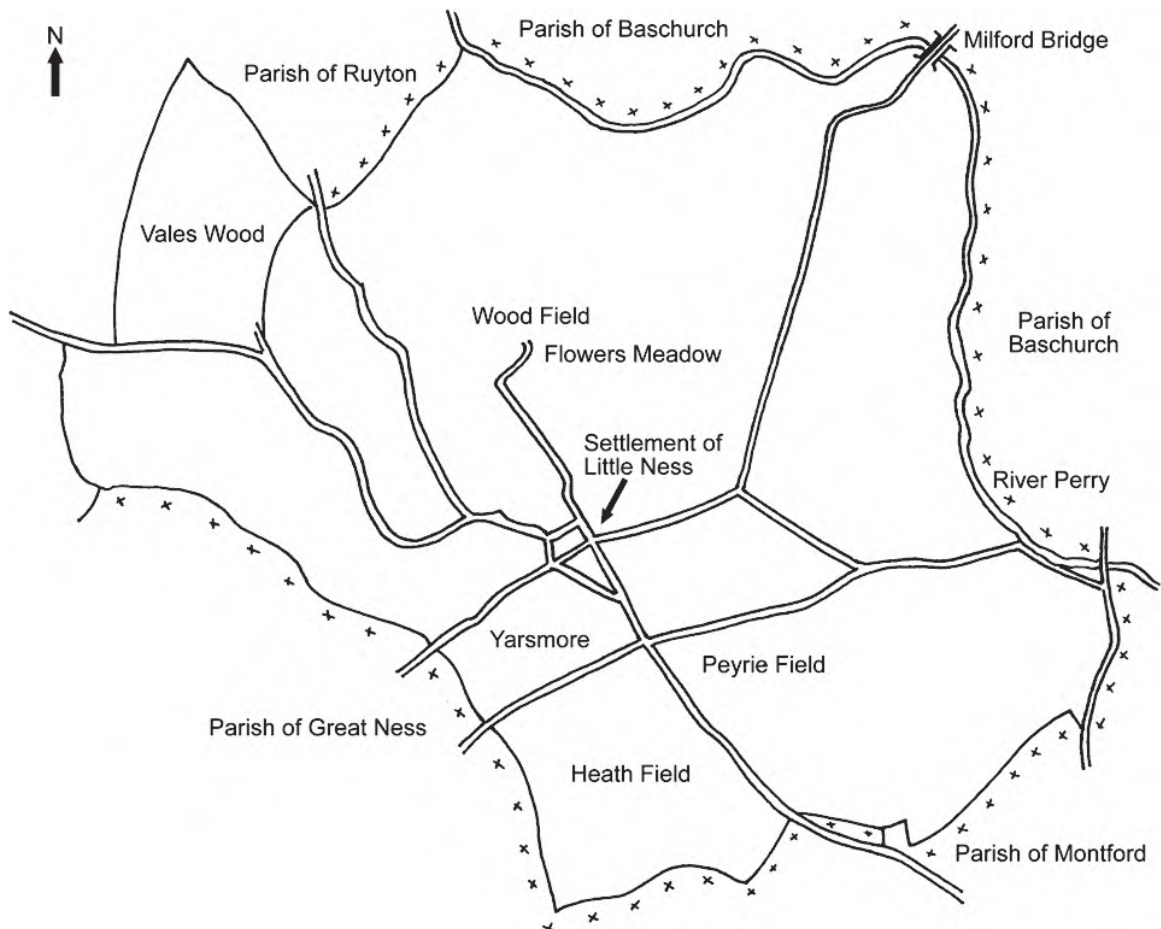
Figure 6 Location of the Open Arable Fields of Little Ness. (Source: S. M. Varey based on SA: 552/8/301).

In 'peyrie fyelde' four pieces of glebe land were described as lying adjacent to new inclosures: 'one butt lande or ridges lyinge upon a furlonge called grymleyes yate adioyninge on the easte side to John Paynes lande and on the west side to a new inclosure of Roger hig[geley]'. Use of the word 'new', and in a further clause 'newely inclosed', once again suggests that this event occurred in the relatively recent past. Information within the terrier would indeed suggest that 'peyrie field' contained more enclosures than the other arable fields of the township.

By the 1680s, as in Montford, considerable reorganisation of the glebe lands had taken place. According to the terrier of 1685 twenty nine butts, lands and ridges, two furlongs, one dole of meadow and one leasow had been reduced in number to just eight butts, five crofts, one leasow and a small parcel of meadow amounting to sixteen acres. The names 'peyrie fyelde', 'wood fyelde' and 'heath fyelde' had disappeared. These had been replaced by a number of former furlong names, notably 'tong hill', 'long furlong', 'cross meadow' and 'yarsmore'.[13] As Sylvester has indicated, this 'renaming' of open arable fields is one of the difficulties of using field names when trying to follow the history of open field lands in any given area.[14] The evidence would undoubtedly suggest that considerable reorganisation of the farming landscape had taken place in the intervening seventy year period.

An item in the manorial court book of Little Ness, relating to the division of one and a half yardlands of customary lands to be shared by Sarah Higley, Sarah Wright and Mary Wolfe, suggests that the alteration to the fieldscape, indicated by the glebe terriers of the 1680s, had already occurred by 1671. Although each individual was allocated a mixture of meadow land, leasows, furlongs and butts dispersed amongst the former arable fields, one is left with the impression that the latter are merely remnants of the previous system. In the former 'heath field' Sarah Higley is allocated two 'new leasows', the 'heath leasow' and 'two butts or selions at the end thereof', two additional leasows and the 'long furlong'. If the lands described in the court book are an accurate reflection of those of the chapelry as a whole, they suggest a farming landscape of leasows, meadows and crofts with a few remaining butts of land.[15]

The court books also record an exchange of glebe land which took place in the early 1690s. Richard Wolfe, a yeoman of Little Ness, agreed to exchange a parcel of arable land 'in a little feild called yardsmoore' for a parcel lying within 'long furlong' and another lying within an inclosure known as 'little cross meadow'. This exchange is reflected in the terrier of 1698, as there is an increase in the amount of glebe land in 'yarsmoore', a decrease in the number of butts held in 'cross meadow', and the two butts in 'long furlong' are no longer mentioned. The court book similarly reveals other small exchanges of land were taking place amongst villagers in the 1690s to consolidate holdings.[16]

The glebe lands in Little Ness continued to remain in their late seventeenth-century form throughout the eighteenth century. An estate map of 1728 reveals a landscape of small fragmented fields which have, as Rackham states, 'the irregularity resulting from centuries of "do-it-yourself" enclosure and piecemeal alteration'.[17] This can be seen particularly well in the fields surrounding 'flowers meadow', the 'leap ditch' and 'grimley yale', formerly mentioned in the terrier of 1612, and 'baymoss green' shown in figures 7a-b. The figures additionally show the small number of strips which continued to survive in 'yarsmoor' and 'tongue hill'. Estate maps reveal that these strips remained a part of the fieldscape of Little Ness until 1820. However, by 1826 the glebe strips in 'yarsmoor', 'tonghill' and 'cross meadow' were merely isolated fingers in consolidated fields.[18] Correspondence exists showing that the glebe lands were surveyed, and an exchange planned, between the earl of Powis and the Church, in 1844 to coincide with the Tithe settlement. However, the glebe lands of Little Ness did not finally become a consolidated holding until 1849.[19]

Elsewhere in the parish small scale enclosure of arable lands was taking place in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In Walford successive lords of the manor enclosed part of Walford's open field in the sixteenth century. A document described as a perambulation of the township reveals a mixed landscape containing open fields and some enclosures by the last quarter of the sixteenth century. The perambulation is a valuable source, for it not only refers to an element of piecemeal enclosure having taken place before 1550, but also suggests that this reorganisation of the land was not received favourably by the local inhabitants. Thomas Kynaston's 'newe lesowe' closed the ancient 'comone wayes' the people had formerly used 'to the battelfeld ffuyer & to the newport market & elswher…to the greyt anoeance of the quens myeste subgeste'. This suggests that even within the 'silent enclosure' process, enclosures which affected the local inhabitants' common rights of way could be unpopular and create ill feeling amongst the local inhabitants, to such an extent that they were still commented upon a generation later.[20]

In Yeaton township there are similar glimpses of a partially enclosed fieldscape. A late sixteenth-century indenture reveals the amounts of land which various individuals held in the arable fields. One of these individuals was Humpfrey Sandford, who held two acres in the 'mere field', thirteen acres in the 'little field' and eight acres in the 'mill field,' besides occupying the mill and two acres of meadow (Figure 8).[21] A tithe dispute of 1602 hints at partial enclosure, for a number of inhabitants are criticised for failing to plough their enclosed arable lands, which had previously been a part of the common fields, preferring to mow them for hay.[22] In the mid eighteenth century tenants in Yeaton were still describing the location of their fields in terms of the former open fields, possibly suggesting that enclosure of the 'mere field' was an on-going process which had occurred within living memory.
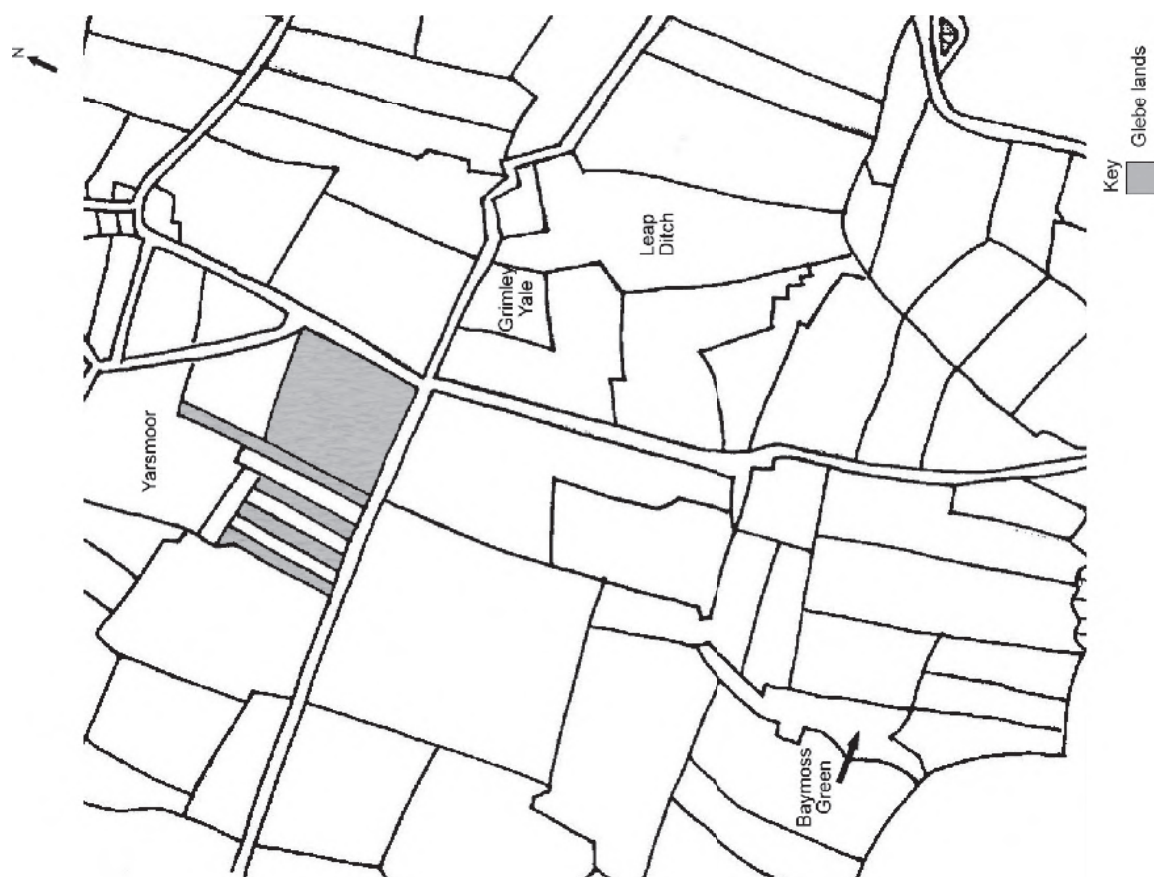
Figure 7b Glebe Lands and Irregular Fields Surrounding 'Leap Ditch' and 'Baymoss Green', Little Ness, 1728. (Source: S. M. Varey based on SA: 552/8/301).
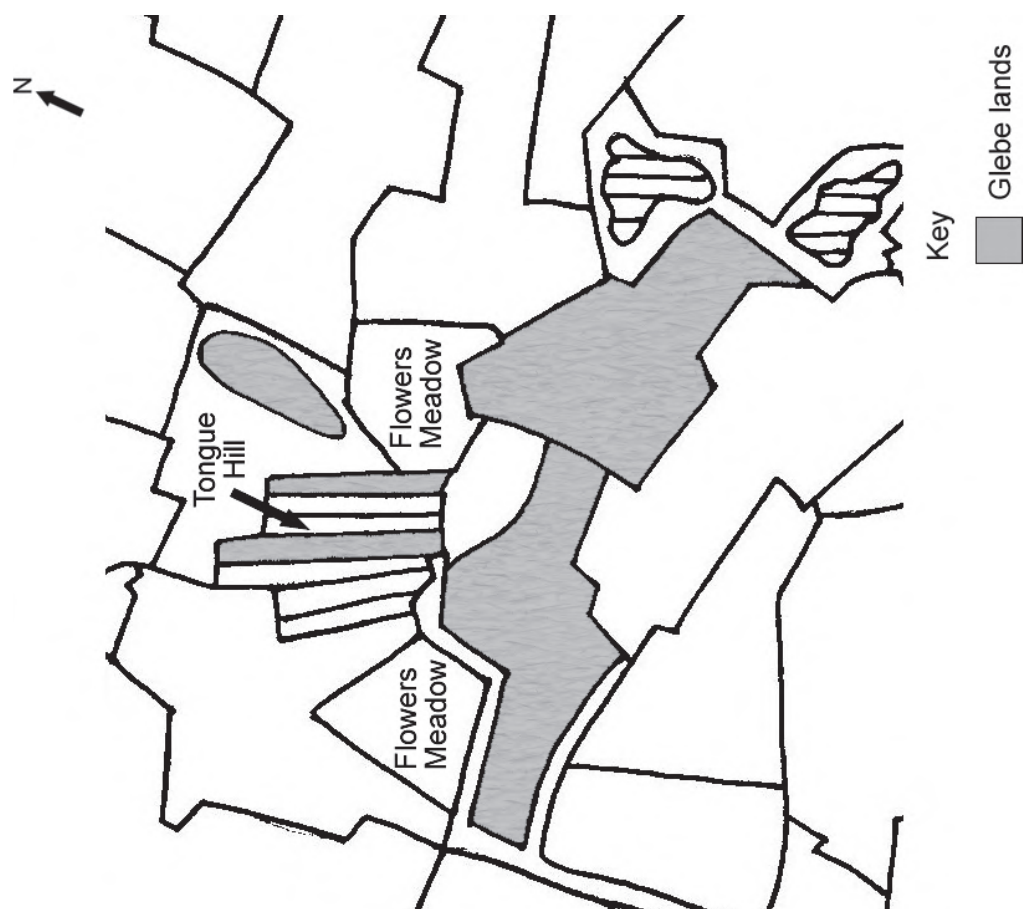
Figure 7a Glebe Lands and Irregular Fields Surrounding 'Flowers Meadow', Little Ness, 1728. (Source: S. M. Varey based on SA: 552/8/301).
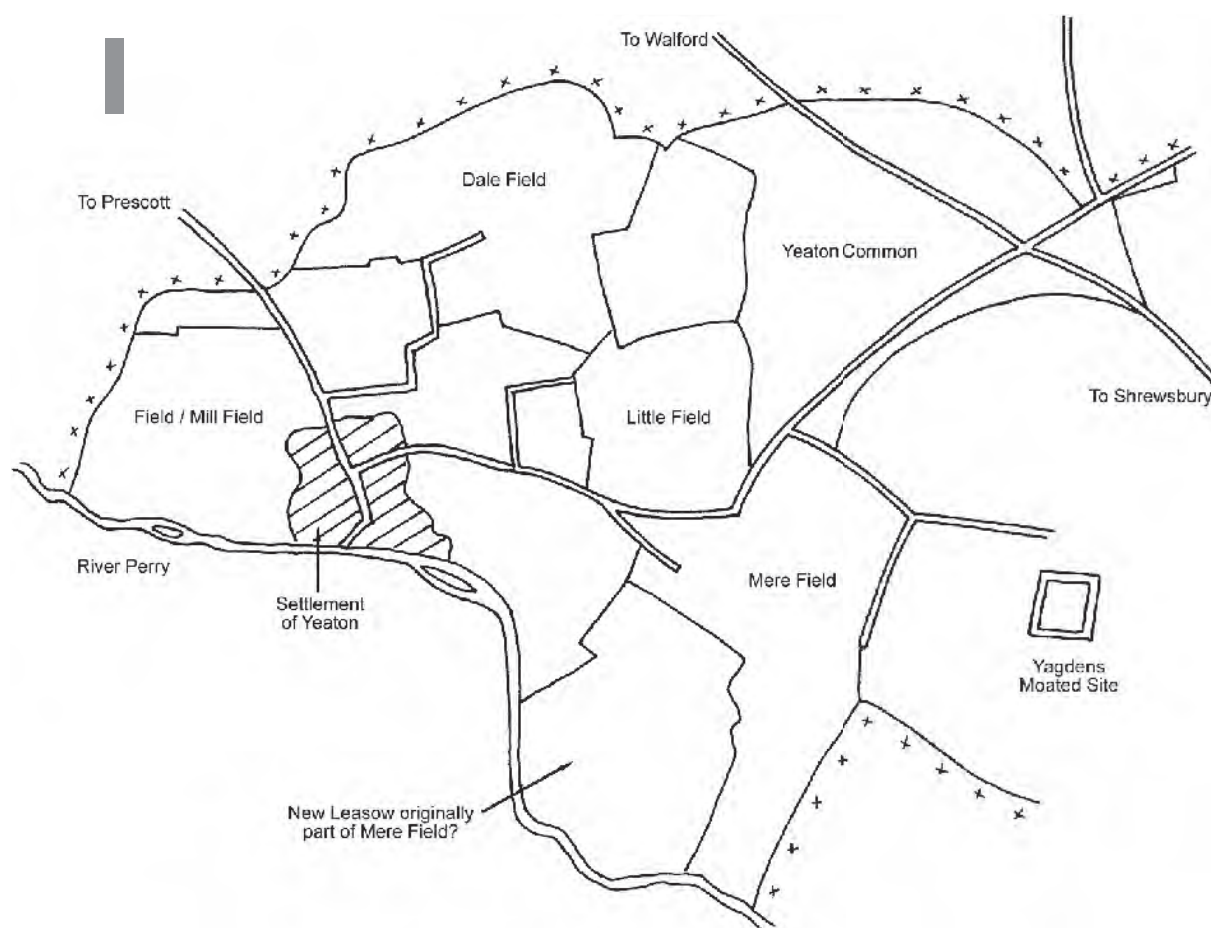
Figure 8   Location of the Open Fields in Yeaton. (Source: S. M. Varey).

Thus: 'the two butts formerly taken out of the town fields of Yeaton…and some time ago joined and enclosed to and with the said inclosure called the new leasow'.[23]

West Felton

The slow process of enclosing the open arable fields was even more drawn out in West Felton, a large multi-township parish to the north west of Montford and Baschurch (Figure 1). In this parish the glebe lands were spread throughout four of the townships. The earliest surviving terrier, of 1634, once again suggests a mixed landscape of open arable fields alongside leasows and closes. In West Felton township the Church held two closes known as 'marl leasow' and 'stony leasow', along with a number of furlongs and ridges in 'whitemoss field', 'mill field' and 'broad meadow field'. There is no evidence of piecemeal enclosure having yet taken place from the description of these lands in the open arable fields. This picture is enhanced by a lease of the previous year which describes the plots of land held by Oliver Thomas from Lord Craven. Thomas held seventeen closes, two acres of meadow and two doles of meadowland, in addition to 'arable lands in the three towne feildes'. Tracing these plots using a later eighteenth-century estate map reveals Thomas's holding to be unconsolidated and geographically dispersed. It also reveals that the enclosed fields of the township generally lay to the north west and west of the village, with open fields to the north, east and south of the settlement (Figure 9).[24]

The next terrier, dating to 1685, reveals very little change in the glebe lands, except for the enclosure of one furlong in 'broad meadow field'. It would appear that the enclosure of this field was a long drawn out process. A detailed terrier of 1718 reveals that the aforesaid enclosed furlong was bounded on one side by several neighbours, suggesting that a number of the villagers still held their land in strips. This is corroborated by an agreement made amongst eleven inhabitants in 1727, which states that the 'broad meadow field' should be left fallow the following summer to try to improve the soil for the next crop, suggesting that the field was still being farmed in common by the villagers.[25] The 1718 terrier also suggests that a similar situation prevailed in the 'mill field' at this time, for two ridges of glebe land were once again bounded by the lands of several neighbours.
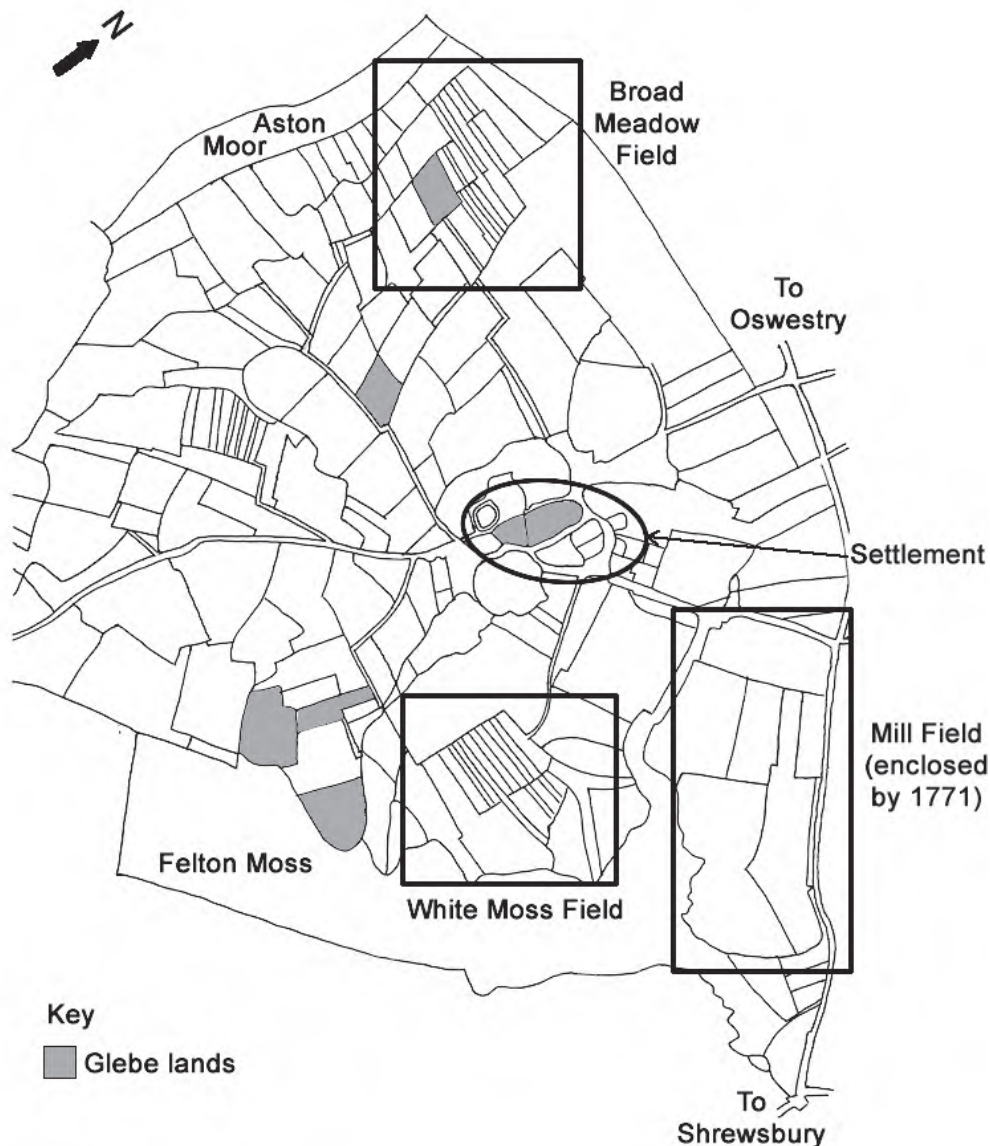
Figure 9   The Fieldscape of West Felton, 1771. (Source: S. M. Varey based on SA: 6001/2482).

The terriers suggest that during the first half of the eighteenth century the glebe lands remained virtually unaltered. However, the terrier of 1763 records that apart from the 'marl' and 'stony' leasows, the enclosed leasow in 'broad meadow field' known as the 'Greenway' and one other furlong, all the other field lands had been exchanged and 'it is not easy to find where they lie'. Four years later, in 1767, the terrier points out once again that in addition to 'marl' and 'stony' leasows, the 'Greenway' and one other furlong 'now enclosed', 'other glebe lands there are but have been exchanged but by whom we cannot say'. One might suggest that the Church had been somewhat lax regarding its lands. The similarity in wording of many of the eighteenth-century terriers certainly leads one to question whether they might have been copied from an earlier terrier. This was definitely the case in the parish after 1767, for subsequent terriers from 1775 until 1841 describe the glebe lands as they were prior to the 'exchange' taking place.

This confused state of affairs can be clarified by the 1771 Craven estate survey, which states that the glebe lands are made up of five small fields: the 'green way' and the 'new inclosure' in the former 'broad meadow field', 'near marl leasow', 'further near marl leasow' and 'broomy field' bordering Felton Moss, in addition to the Churchyard, yards and gardens, amounting to eighteen acres. Figure 9, based on the 1771 estate map, shows that the former 'mill field' had been totally enclosed by this date, but that a number of strips remained in both 'white moss field' and 'broad meadow field'. The remnants of these fields were finally enclosed in 1810, and the enclosed glebe lands are shown on the tithe survey of 1838 and the 1841 terrier.[26]

A similar picture to that outlined above was evident in the townships of Twyford, Sandford and Sutton. Although there was no glebe land in Sutton, evidence from the Craven estate survey once again suggests that the piecemeal enclosure process was a long drawn out affair. The processes of exchange, consolidation and enclosure were well underway in both 'howsuch' and 'greenway fields' by 1771, but less advanced in 'corner field', where a considerable number of strips survived. In Sandford the glebe lands contained one close within the 'mill field' in 1634 and a number of lands within the other arable fields. The evidence of subsequent terriers in 1685 and 1693 indicates that these lands remained unaltered throughout the seventeenth century and were still unenclosed in 1767. Unfortunately, Lord Craven did not own any land in Sandford to enhance our later eighteenth-century picture of the township, but the tithe map of 1838 and terriers of 1841 and 1857 reveal that the glebe lands comprised three acres in 'churchway' (part of the former 'mill field') and three strips 'left over' from the former town fields.[27] The evidence from these townships suggests that the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries formed an important period in the gradual piecemeal enclosure of this locality.

This, however, was not the situation throughout the parish, for in the township of Tedsmore the glebe lands had been enclosed by 1685. A conveyance of 1608 reveals that the early seventeenth-century fieldscape of Tedsmore resembled the rest of the parish. Roger Jones held a house, a garden, an orchard, a small close along with ten selions of land in the 'three common fields' and a small parcel which had lately been enclosed from the waste. The selions are all described in relation to neighbours' lands and strips rather than next to an individual's croft or leasow, suggesting that they were unenclosed at the beginning of the seventeenth century.[28]

This picture is confirmed by the 1634 terrier, which reveals that the Church lands lay dispersed in 'hill field', 'harlatmoss field' and 'hoghmoss field'. Only within the latter field is there any mention of consolidation and enclosure having taken place. In addition to the lands and butts already owned in 'hoghmoss field', the Church had exchanged some additional lands with 'neighbours' to create a leasow within the aforesaid field. By the date of the next terrier (1685), the glebe lands in Tedsmore are not listed individually, as in the other townships, but quite simply as 'eleven acres…or thereabout,' suggesting that enclosure had by then taken place.[29]

Neighbouring Parishes

The parishes of Great Ness, Myddle and Ruyton XI Towns (figure 1) similarly reveal the importance of the years after 1600 in the gradual enclosure of the open arable fields of this area. In Great Ness the glebe lands were exchanged, consolidated and enclosed by 1685.[30] In Myddle, Richard Gough relates that one of the two arable fields in Myddle township was still unenclosed at the time of the English Civil War of the 1640s, and in Balderton township Gough was himself responsible for writing up details regarding the exchange of land before its enclosure in the 1680s.[31] However, open field farming possibly survived longest in Ruyton XI Towns. Glebe terriers suggest that in this parish lands, butts and furlongs continued into the eighteenth century, with some consolidation and enclosure of 'brownhill field' occurring in the second or third decade. By 1771 the Craven estate map reveals a mixed fieldscape of strips, furlongs and small enclosures. However, quillets were still visible in 'brownhill field' on the tithe map of *c*.1839, when nine tenants worked strips in this field, and the quillets were still in existence in 1857.[32]

Conclusion

Shropshire historians would all agree that the enclosure process within the county took place over several hundred years, and that in many parishes the early modern period should be seen as a 'tidying-up operation covering the remnants that survived' within the open arable fields.[33] However, this does not mean that the period was without value in our understanding of the processes involved, the external forces working upon landowners and tenants at this time, and the individuals involved. This article has demonstrated that detailed parish analysis can add to our knowledge of the piecemeal enclosure process in its entirety. Experiences in this part of the county were not unique. Nevertheless, their importance lies in enhancing our overall picture of the enclosure process, not only within Shropshire, but also within the wider context of neighbouring border and midland counties as a whole.

One should question why the period between the late sixteenth and the late eighteenth centuries was such an important one in the piecemeal enclosure process in this area. The relatively late survival of the arable fields in this cluster of parishes and the gradual nature of enclosing the fields was a reflection of the secondary status of crops within the farming economy. A considerable proportion of the land had already been enclosed for livestock in earlier centuries. Between the late sixteenth century and the late eighteenth centuries there occurred greater specialisation in the farming economy, and enclosure was one prerequisite for specialisation. During the sixteenth century north west Shropshire began to specialise in dairy farming. Initially, in the later sixteenth century and the

first half of the seventeenth century this was on a small scale, with produce being sold at local markets and fairs. However, by the first half of the eighteenth century dairy farming was taking place on a much larger scale on large consolidated farms. This is particularly well illustrated by the experiences of Baschurch in north Shropshire, where piecemeal enclosure was taking place at the same time as probate inventories reveal the initial growth of dairying.[34]

Looking further afield, similar experiences were to be seen in neighbouring Cheshire and Staffordshire. In these counties the piecemeal enclosure process also proceeded gradually during the early modern period in response to specialisation within the farming economy.[35] In north Shropshire, Cheshire and parts of Staffordshire, such as the Lower Trent Valley, dairying became an important part of the rural economy. However, in some parts of Shropshire, the Staffordshire moorlands and north Warwickshire, enclosure led to a greater specialisation in cattle rearing.

Enclosure by agreement was often initiated by landowners. This occurred in Walford in the sixteenth century when successive lords of the manor began enclosing areas of open field arable land. However, as the seventeenth century progressed it was often tenant farmers who realised the potential benefits of exchanging and consolidating their land into larger parcels. This was the situation in Ensdon, where the villagers sought permission from the lady of the manor to enclose the arable fields. It was also apparent in Little Ness, where yeoman Richard Wolfe exchanged small plots of land with both the Church and the lady of the manor to consolidate his holdings.

In most instances enclosure appears to have taken place amicably. This was very probably a reflection of the gradual nature of the process, combined with the fact that it was often led by the farmers themselves and there was sufficient additional grazing land for individuals to use. However, a measure of discontent could easily occur, as in Walford, when enclosure affected access along a particular route way. In this instance one suspects that there had been little consultation and that the villagers felt aggrieved by the actions of the landowner. Although not on the scale of enclosure disputes in other midland counties[36], this example does reveal that local inhabitants could easily feel aggrieved by change within their locality over which they felt they had no control. In Ensdon, the villagers asked for the help of the manor agent in enclosing the fields and settling the rights of way – one suspects they were keen to avoid any future local disputes.

This research is but one small piece in the enclosure jigsaw puzzle. Each piece adds additional detail to our general picture of the enclosure process in the county. Further research is needed to fill in some of the gaps in the puzzle, for it is only with detailed parish analysis like this that the researcher can really illuminate the silent enclosure process as a whole and enhance our overall picture of the enclosure of the Shropshire landscape.

Notes

1   R. A. Butlin, 'The Enclosure of Open Fields and Extinction of Common Rights in England *c*.1600–1750: a review', in H. S. A. Fox and R. A. Butlin (eds.), *Change in the Countryside*, 1979, 65–82; S. Hollowell, *Enclosure Records for Historians*, 2000; G. E. Mingay, *Enclosure and the Small Farmer in the Age of the Industrial Revolution*, 1968 and *Parliamentary Enclosure in England: An Introduction to its Causes, Incidence and Impact 1750–1850*, 1997; G. Slater, *The English Peasantry and the Enclosure of Common Fields*, 1908, reprinted 1968; M. E. Turner, *English Parliamentary Enclosure: Its Historical Geography and Economic History*, 1980 and *Enclosures in Britain 1750–1830*, 1984; I. Whyte, *Transforming Fell and Valley: Landscape and Parliamentary Enclosure in North West England*, 2000; J. R. Wordie, 'The Chronology of English Enclosure, 1500–1914', *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, **XXXVI**, 1983, 483–505; J. A. Yelling, *Common Field and Enclosure in England, 1450–1850*, 1977.
2   Butlin, *Op. Cit.*, 67.
3   *VCH Salop*, **IV**, 119–120; D. Hooke, *England's Landscape: The West Midlands*, 2006, 94.
4   T. Rowley, *The Shropshire Landscape*, 1972, 21; Wordie, *Op. Cit.*, 490; *VCH Salop* **IV**, 119.
5   M. W. Beresford, 'Glebe Terriers and Open Field Leicestershire', in W. G. Hoskins (ed.), *Studies in Leicestershire Agrarian History*, 1949, 77–126.
6   *Ibid.*, 77 and 83.
7   Hoskins, *Op. Cit.*, 12; J. Chapman and S. Seeliger, *Non Parliamentary Enclosure*, 1993, 6.
8   S. Watts (ed.), *The Glebe Terriers of Shropshire*, **I**, *Abdon to Llanfair Waterdine*, 2001; *The Glebe Terriers of Shropshire*, **II**, *Llanyblodwel to Wroxeter*, 2002.
9   T. G. Hill and M. A. Hill, 'The Landscape of Sheinton' [Online]. Available: http://www3.shropshire-cc.gov.uk/roots/packages/lan/lan_y01.htm. Accessed 15/01/2013; T. G. Hill, *The Historic Landscape of Sheinton*, Cressage Area Research Project, 2003.
10 Lichfield Record Office (hereafter LRO): B/V/6, Montford.
11 Shropshire Archives (hereafter SA): 552/3/3.
12 SA: 552/8/302–305.
13 LRO: B/V/6, Baschurch.
14 D. Sylvester, 'The Open Fields of Cheshire', *Trans. Hist. Soc. Lancs. & Chesh.*, **CVIII**, 1956, 13.
15 SA: 552/3/2.
16 SA: 552/3/3; LRO B/V/6, Baschurch.
17 O. Rackham, *The Illustrated History of the Countryside*, 1994, 10.
18 SA: 552/8/310–311; SA: 6000/17437.

19 SA: 552/11/284; SA: 1987/41/78.
20 SA: 6000/16539.
21 The National Archives: E178/1911.
22 P. R. Edwards, 'The Farming Economy of North East Shropshire in the Seventeenth Century', University of Oxford, PhD thesis, 1976, 88.
23 For a fuller discussion of the open fields of Baschurch and their enclosure, see S. M. Varey, 'Society and the Land – the changing landscape of Baschurch, North Shropshire, *c*.1550–2000', University of Liverpool, PhD thesis, 2008, 111–131; SA: 1832/155.
24 LRO: B/V/6, West Felton; SA: 484/174; SA: 6001/2482.
25 SA: 484/200.
26 SA: 6001/2482; SA: P298/T/2/1.
27 SA: P298/T/1–4.
28 SA: 3890/2/1/39.
29 LRO: B/V/6, West Felton.
30 LRO: B/V/6, Great Ness.
31 R. Gough, *The History of Myddle* (ed.) D. Hey, 1981, 73; D. Hey, *An English Rural Community: Myddle Under the Tudors and Stuarts*, 1974, 29–31.
32 LRO: B/V/6: Ruyton XI Towns; SA: 6001/2482; SA: PF234/3/1–7.
33 G. J. White, 'The Enclosure of West Cheshire: Keeping Ahead of "Champion England",' in S. M. Varey and G. J. White (eds.), *Landscape History Discoveries in the North West*, 2012, 113.
34 P. Edwards, 'The Development of Dairy Farming on the North Shropshire Plain in the Seventeenth Century', *Mid. Hist.*, **IV**, 1978, 175–190; Varey, *Op. Cit.*, 157–174.
35 P. M. Vipond, 'The Landscape and Settlement of South West Cheshire: A Case Study of Seventeen Townships in the Dee Valley', University of Liverpool, PhD thesis, 2000, 317–426; A. D. M. & C. B. Phillips (eds.), *A New Historical Atlas of Cheshire*, 2002, 52–54; White, *Op. Cit.*, 101–134, in particular 106–108, 115–116 and 127; *VCH Staffs*, **VI**, 54.
36 *VCH Staffs*, **VI**, 51, 53; J. Thirsk, (ed.), *The Agrarian History of England and Wales, 1500–1640*, **IV**, 1967, 232–233, details enclosure riots in Northamptonshire, Leicestershire and Warwickshire.

'The Strongest Works in England'?:
The Defences of Shrewsbury During the Civil Wars, 1642–1651

By JONATHAN WORTON

Abstract: During the British Civil Wars of the mid-seventeenth century Shrewsbury was of local and regional importance to the forces of both king and parliament. Consequently it was fortified, especially under Royalist control from 1642 to early 1645 during the First Civil War. With the period of Royalist control as its main focus, this paper considers the role Shrewsbury played in the conflict, the evidence of the defences, and the medieval defensive legacy that influenced the nature of the town fortifications during the Civil Wars. As well as reconstructing the likely nature of those fortifications, also addressed are the organisational and financial measures employed to construct and defend what one Parliamentarian commander described as 'the strongest works in England'.

Shrewsbury and the Civil Wars

In 1642 Shrewsbury was by far the largest urban centre in Shropshire, with some 7,000 inhabitants.[1] During that summer, as the shires of England and Wales were drawn inexorably into the partisanship which precipitated open civil war between Charles I and his Parliament, the county town was inevitably drawn into the conflict. The fracas there on 1 August between three of the county's four Parliamentarian MPs and the king's commissioners of array for Shropshire was the first documented clash in the county between rival activists and their followers.[2] Similarly divided by factionalism was the town council, where the Royalist mayor opposed a Parliamentarian party. Publicly, however, the aldermen adopted a belligerently neutralist stance in defence of life and property. Declaring that they had united to preserve the peace of the town, and had 'considered…the great fear that the inhabitants of this corporation are in', on 30 August the assembly prohibited the display of rival emblems, ordered the ejection of strangers, and instructed the better-off, under threat of fine, to obtain arms for the town's defence. The aldermen also consented that 'if the king's majesty come to this town that he shall have free access…and the town do make the best entertainment these troublesome times afford'.[3]

This proved prescient; by mid-September 1642 the royal army was marching from the East Midlands towards Shropshire. King Charles had been advised that the county was largely of Royalist sentiment, and Francis Ottley of Pitchford, one of his leading supporters amongst Shropshire's gentry, was recruiting 200 foot soldiers to secure the county town.[4] On 20 September the king entered Shrewsbury, and soon after Ottley was rewarded with a knighthood as its *de facto* military governor. The town entertained both court and elements of the growing royal army until their departure on 12 October, King Charles leading them to the indecisive first battle of the Civil Wars, fought at Edgehill in Warwickshire on the 23rd. Thereafter Shrewsbury, under Ottley's governorship, was the foremost garrison town in a county which lay entirely under Royalist administration until the autumn of 1643. Together with the city-strongholds of Chester, Worcester and Hereford, Shrewsbury remained a strategically important centre for the Royalist cause in the English counties of the Welsh Marches and in the Principality, serving as a regional headquarters, a magazine for munitions and victuals, and as a depot for recruitment.

For much of 1643 Shrewsbury was the usual base of Lord Capel, the king's lieutenant-general for the regional command that comprised Shropshire, Worcestershire, Cheshire and the six counties of north Wales. In January 1644, when he was appointed to replace the already dismissed Capel, Prince Rupert advised Governor Ottley that he had nominated Shrewsbury as 'the headquarter of those countries [counties], and where I intend to make my

own residence…in that command'.[5] In May 1644 Sir Francis was dismissed by Prince Rupert and thereafter the town was successively governed by a trio of the prince's appointees, professional officers drawn from the English army in Ireland.

In early February 1645, Rupert's younger brother Prince Maurice depleted Shrewsbury's garrison to reinforce an expeditionary force that he led to the relief of Chester. Consequently, under its last Royalist governor, the veteran Sir Michael Ernley, Shrewsbury was taken by surprise and captured by Parliamentarian forces on Saturday 22nd. Intelligence from within the town having identified a vulnerable point in the riverside fortifications, early that morning the lead assault party of a Parliamentarian taskforce some 1,200 strong succeeded in breaking through the defences below the castle. Scrambling up the river cliff slope, using ladders designed for the purpose they scaled a low section of town wall near the Council House and entered the town. The Royalist sentries having early taken alarm, skirmishes were fought in the town centre; but once the Parliamentarian main body had gained entry at the northerly town gates – probably by the use of explosive charges, or petards – the Royalist garrison was quickly overwhelmed. By 9.00 am the town was under Parliamentarian control, and by mid-day the castle and the town's outer fortifications had been surrendered.[6] Sir Edward Hyde, then a councillor to King Charles at his headquarters in Oxford, later wrote that 'the loss of Shrewsbury was a great blow to the king…and broke the secure line of communication with Chester, and exposed all of north Wales, Hereford and Worcester to the daily inroads of the enemy'.[7]

Shrewsbury had been the coveted prize of the Parliamentarian committee for Shropshire since September 1643 when they planted a garrison at Wem, a minor market town some 16 km. north of the county town, as parliament's first, and since chief, stronghold in the county. For the remainder of the First Civil War – which ended in Shropshire on 1 June 1646 with the surrender of Ludlow Castle, the last Royalist garrison in the county – Shrewsbury was governed by the county committee as one of parliament's three key military and administrative headquarters in the region, the others being the towns of Stafford and Nantwich. Upon Ludlow's capitulation, parliament granted the governorship of Shrewsbury to Humphrey Mackworth, the county committee's leading soldier-politician, in recognition of his dogged service in parliament's cause.[8] Mackworth, a puritan-leaning alderman and the town's recorder (or lawyer) in 1642, had fled Shrewsbury that September and was accused of high treason soon after.[9]

Despite the previous importance of Shrewsbury to their cause the Royalists made no determined effort to recover the town, although the Parliamentarians expected a speedy riposte. On 26 February 1645 Sir William Brereton, commander of parliament's Cheshire forces, arrived in Shrewsbury with three companies of infantry, further reinforcing those Shropshire forces and detachments from Staffordshire and Cheshire which had participated in the town's capture.[10] A Royalist attempt against the town appeared certain when Prince Rupert left Oxford in early March; Parliamentarian intelligence concluded 'his design is to join Prince Maurice for the regaining of Shrewsbury'.[11] Having united their forces in North Shropshire the princes advanced into Cheshire with relative freedom of manoeuvre, the Parliamentarians having withdrawn into their garrisons. Royalist Chester was relieved but no attempt was made against Shrewsbury, by then strongly manned.[12] From there, on 26 March, the Shropshire committee reported the withdrawal southwards from the county of the princes' forces. With them went any immediate Royalist threat to the town.[(13)] A letter written on 26 February 1645 by parliament's Lord General, the Earl of Essex, to Sir Samuel Luke, governor of Parliamentarian Newport Pagnell, suggests changing priorities in Royalist strategy. Essex cited intercepted enemy communiqués which described Royalist possession of the recently captured port of Weymouth in Dorset as being 'of greater importance than Shrewsbury'.[14] Whilst Hyde later presented Shrewsbury's fall as a strategic loss, the Royalist high command in early 1645 probably considered resources were more effectively deployed in securing seaports – through which war materiel imported from the Continent and anticipated troop reinforcements from Ireland could be received – than in attempting to regain landlocked Shrewsbury, a town whose usefulness was recognised as secondary to the port of Chester.

In early May 1645 a London newsbook reported a coup attempted in Shrewsbury by Royalists held prisoner at the castle, but, if true, this reported 'mutiny' was soon quelled [15] During the Commonwealth and Protectorate Shrewsbury remained one of two garrisons in Shropshire (the other being Ludlow), governed by Mackworth until his death in 1654, and thereafter by his son, Humphrey junior, until 1659.[16] In the summer of 1648, during the Second Civil War, Shrewsbury's garrison was briefly engaged in counter-insurgency operations to suppress a local Royalist uprising. In August 1651, during the Third Civil War, Mackworth was commended and rewarded by parliament for summarily rejecting King Charles II's demand to surrender the garrison of Shrewsbury, made as the king's Scots-Royalist army skirted east Shropshire on its way to Worcester, where it met crushing defeat on 3 September.[17]

Shrewsbury fulfilled a militarily active role throughout nine years of Civil War. As this paper will consider, during the course of the conflict the town was variously fortified: firstly by its corporation to protect life and property at a time of political and civil unrest; then as a regional headquarters for the king's forces; and lastly, as a garrison which allowed parliament first to project, and then to maintain, its military presence in Shropshire. The

perception of the effectiveness of the town's defences would vary. In the wake of recent reverses for the king's cause in Shropshire and Cheshire, on 29 January 1644 the governor of Royalist Worcester forewarned Prince Rupert that Shrewsbury was but 'ill-fortified'.[18] However, after a spirited, if unplanned attempt by Parliamentarian forces to storm Shrewsbury's western defences on 4 July 1644, their commander, the Earl of Denbigh, reported that he withdrew his men later that day after 'viewing the strength of their works' (i.e. the Royalist fortifications).[19] Some ten weeks later, buoyed by their victory over the regional Royalist army at the battle of Montgomery, fought near the Shropshire border on 18 September, the Parliamentarian commanders under the leadership of Sir John Meldrum briefly contemplated making an 'attempt' against Shrewsbury. This idea, however, came to nothing and in his despatch to London on 29 September Meldrum wrote of the improbability of successfully assaulting 'the strongest works in England', exaggerating Shrewsbury's strength to mitigate this failure to exploit the enemy's disarray.[20] A more objective assessment of Shrewsbury's defensive capability was provided by Sir William Brereton, one of Meldrum's fellow commanders at Montgomery, who described the town at its capture in February 1645 as being 'one of the strongest places in these parts of the kingdom'.[21]

Evidence of the Civil War Defences

During the Civil Wars, therefore, Shrewsbury was a fortified town of strategic importance to both sides, but what form did these fortifications take? Whilst the nature of the Civil War defences of several English towns is suggested by contemporary plans and illustrations, no such depiction of Shrewsbury is known.[22] Remains that can be certainly attributed to the Civil War are parts of Shrewsbury Castle, and also an extension to the town walls known as the Roushill Wall.[23] Whilst urban archaeology has contributed significantly to our understanding of the fortification of towns such as Worcester, Gloucester and Cambridge, with the exception of the Roushill Wall, Shrewsbury's defences have remained elusive.[24]

Although evidence dating the final clearance has yet to be found, it is most likely defensive earthworks around Shrewsbury were levelled by the early eighteenth century. In 1657 the castle, as a garrison of the Commonwealth, remained fortified by outer earthworks,[25] and these were still prominent in 1672 when a tourist described the castle as still 'environed on one side by great ditches'.[26] John Rocque's detailed map of Shrewsbury in 1746, the first since the early seventeenth century, suggests no trace of Civil War earthworks. Tithe maps show that property boundaries in early Victorian Frankwell were unaffected by the Civil War fort which once stood there, although the fortification's likely site was then still largely open ground and gardens. Intriguingly, part of this area was known then, as it is today, as 'The Mount', a 17th-century term for an earthwork fort.

It is perhaps because of their transient nature and the consequent lack of physical evidence that Shrewsbury's Civil War defences have received scant mention in studies of the town, or of the Civil Wars. Baker's authoritative *Archaeological Assessment*, an otherwise highly detailed synthesis of the castle and town defences up until 1700, makes passing mention to an 'interlude in the 17th-century Civil War, when the existing defences were strengthened and a new riverside wall built'.[27] Yet contemporary documentary sources allow a reconstruction of the town's Civil War defences to be attempted.

Writing around the year 1700 the social history of his home parish north-west of Shrewsbury, Richard Gough described Shrewsbury's Civil War fortifications. Gough was a child in the early 1640s, but his history drew on recent folk-memory and was doubtless rooted in fact. Referring to local events during the Wars he related how:

'Lord Capel…at his first coming found the castle so ruinous that it was neither fit for habitation nor defence. But he soon repaired it and made it exceeding strong; he pulled down many houses without the wall near the castle, and near that gate of the town called the castle gates he by a deep trench, brought the water of Severn up to this gate and made a drawbridge over it. There is high bank at the end of that part of the suburbs which is called Frankwell…on which the Lord Capel built a strong fort to prevent an enemy planting cannons there…He placed many great cannons on the castle walls, and in this fort, and made a strong garrison'.[28]

Gough's description provides the fullest contemporaneous account and refers to defensive measures adopted by the Royalists which were common to many fortified towns during the Civil Wars: the refurbishment of medieval defences; the demolition of buildings to allow the garrison clear fields of fire and to deny cover to attackers; the adaptation of topographical features for defence; and the construction of artillery fortifications. Although more generalised than Gough's narrative, the Shropshire committeemen's report to Sir William Brereton, made the day after the capture of Shrewsbury, describes extensive fortifications requiring considerable manpower to defend: 'The works are very large and although it seems the enemy has been active to strengthen themselves, yet there are many places that are but weak still and cannot be maintained but with a very considerable strength.[29] Governor Mackworth's report of August 1648 provides additional circumstantial detail. Mackworth sought permission to recruit an additional 250 garrison soldiers, '…for the castle, both inward castle and out-works. The circumference

of the walls are very great, and much out of repair; and we formerly trusted to our men more than our walls, for they are very low and weak. The outworks of the castle are yet down, the castle unvictualled'.[30]

Shrewsbury's Topography

Shrewsbury was founded on a naturally defensible site, but the expansion of the medieval and early modern town necessitated a defensive perimeter during the 1640s that was both difficult to complete and also to defend adequately.

The Elizabethan historian William Camden described Shrewsbury as 'seated upon a hill of a reddish earth, and Severn…gathering himself in manner round in form of a circle, so compasseth it, that were it not for a small bank of firm land, it might go for an island'.[31] Shrewsbury, as Camden poetically described, lies within a horseshoe-shaped meander of the River Severn. To the northeast lies the opening of the horseshoe (Camden's 'bank of firm land'), a narrow corridor less then 300 m. wide between the river bends allowing landward access to the hilly peninsula to the south upon which the town stands. The northerly of two hills, rising to some 70 m., extends into and commands this landward approach; here the post-conquest Norman earthwork castle was constructed, and later rebuilt in stone during the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. Beyond the castle's originally extensive outer bailey the medieval town developed on a second hill, running northwesterly to southeasterly as a broad ridge averaging 62 m. in height.[32]

The River Severn and the town's situation on high ground remained important to Shrewsbury's defence in the seventeenth century. In order effectively to breach fortifications, contemporary artillery was sited at close range; in 1628 the gunner and military engineer Robert Norton advocated a distance of less then 200 paces.[33] Therefore as long as besieging artillery was kept to the far bank the river might serve as a stop-line, denying the ordnance much of its potentially devastating effect. The Severn also protected against surprise assault, although its usefulness as an obstacle decreased when it ran low in summer or froze in winter; in December 1645, with the river iced over, Shrewsbury's Parliamentarians feared a 'design' against the town by the local Royalist commander Sir William Vaughan.[34]

The Town's Medieval Defences

Camden added that Shrewsbury was not only strengthened by nature, but was 'fortified also by art'. An English border town under the threat of Welsh incursion, by the mid-thirteenth century Shrewsbury was enclosed by town walls, later enhanced by a series of irregularly interspersed mural towers.[35] Taking a sinuous course, from the castle the walls ran south along the east-facing river cliff, then dropped and extended to include the gate leading to the easterly crossing of the Severn at the Stone Bridge (today the English Bridge). The walls then followed a broad curve, in a generally westerly, then northerly, direction, overlooking open land that sloped down to the river. Connecting at the north-west with the westerly of the town's two bridges – St. Georges, or the Welsh Bridge – the walls then returned inland in a southeasterly direction through Mardol. Turning northeasterly, the walls skirted the ridge above the northerly flood-plain, before making an eventual right-angled return to the castle, incorporating the main landward gate – the Upper Castle or Burgess Gate.

Probably by the mid-fourteenth century three stone-built outworks had reinforced this primary defensive circuit.[36] Guarding a natural ford, a flanking wall ran for some 100 m. downstream of the Welsh Bridge, terminating at a tower. To defend similarly a ford upstream, and incorporating a second northerly landward gate (the Lower Castle Gate), a wall ran in a northwesterly direction down from the castle to the river. Near the riverside this outwork continued downstream for a short distance, thereby leaving a gap to the Welsh Bridge where the floodplain meadows lay open. Here, in the Roushill area, new fortifications would be constructed during the Civil War. Some 150 m. south of the castle was a third outwork, where, from a postern gate in the town wall, flanking walls led down to a water gate beside the river. It was near here that the Parliamentarians first gained access into the town on 22 February 1645.

It has been estimated that by 1350 the defensive perimeter of Shrewsbury – castle, town walls and outworks – extended to 3.2 km.[37] Three defended entranceways allowed access to the peninsula and the town. The northerly landward approach was controlled by the two double-turreted, single-portal gateways at Castle Gates. The western river crossing, the Welsh Bridge, was described by the Tudor geographer John Leland as the 'greatest, fairest and highest on the stream… and hath at the one end of it a great gate to enter by into the town, and at the other end toward Wales a mighty stone tower'.[38] The easterly Stone Bridge had a gatehouse on the town side and, as Leland also described, a drawbridge tower facing the opposite bank. Both bridges incorporated draw sections, which, as main thoroughfares as well as key points of defence, were maintained throughout the Civil Wars, as the mayors'
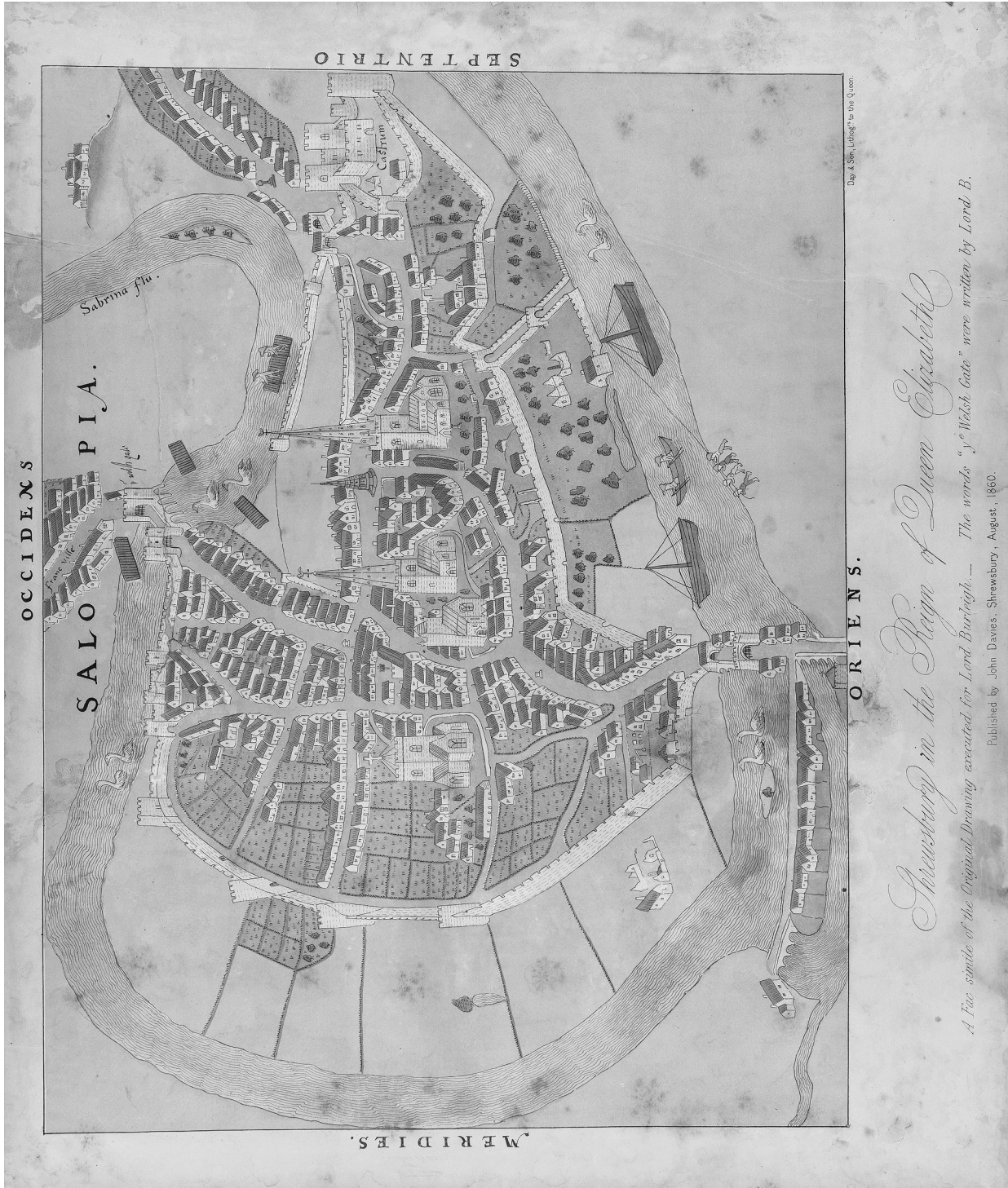
accounts describe. In May 1643 work at the drawbridge at Stone Bridge – including materials and 36 days' wages for carpentry – cost in excess of £12. In 1646 the drawbridges were repaired in January and September.[39]

The Medieval Defences and the Early Modern Town

As shown on the Burghley Map of *c*.1575 (Plate 1), by then the town walls had several lesser gates providing access to the riverside, and to pasture and smallholdings within the river loop. Also depicted are a number of small entranceways, the private passages granted by the corporation to the owners of properties adjacent to the walls. Although convenient for the intercourse of daily life these entrances clearly compromised the security of the defensive circuit, and in August 1642 the corporation ordered those persons who 'had doors or breaches through the walls granted them' to make 'sufficient repair'.[40]

Although by then lacking an overtly defensive purpose, the medieval walls doubtless reassured the citizens of Tudor Shrewsbury in troubled times, and may have been regarded as symbolizing civic pride and independence. The Burghley Map shows the walls, turrets and gates as then being in good repair, with the defensive circuit retaining both its wall walk and crenellated parapet – although these details may represent artistic convention rather than accurate depiction. The map also shows that away from the southern sweep of the circuit, in many places properties had encroached upon the walls. This appears to have been more the case a generation later, when, in 1612, the geographer John Speed's map described the inmost western section of town wall, adjacent to the commercial centre of Pride Hill, as 'built upon with houses'. The walls of the early Stuart town – which Speed's map otherwise depicted as prominent and well maintained – were described in the accompanying gazetteer. Having acknowledged Shrewsbury's prosperity as being 'inferior to few of our cities', Speed wrote of 'walls strong, and of a large compass, extending to seventeen hundred paces about, besides another bulwark ranging from the castle, down unto, and in part along the side of Severn'.[41] Local documentary evidence supports this impression, that the walls of early Stuart Shrewsbury, if not immediately defensible, were not generally ruinous. Restricting access to the main gates and thereby obtaining tolls was an important source of town revenue; the 'toll of the gates' in 1639/40, for example, generated £84 3*s*., ten per cent of the corporation's annual receipts.[42]

Funding and managing the repair of the walls and gates therefore remained a particular concern of the corporation. In September 1606 the assembly agreed that two townsmen would be elected burgesses, and that the £5 fees (or 'fines') of both would be used to make up a shortfall in funding repairs to the bridges and walls. This appears to have remained the preferred means of finance. During 1635 the corporation proposed raising funds by general levy or borrowing from the town's poor money fund, but in March 1636 it was agreed to admit ten new burgesses, 'according to the former agreement', and the money 'employed for repairing the walls of the town'.[43] If never perhaps the desired full amount, these monies were put to use. In 1635/6, for example, £23 for building work paid, in part, for repairs to the walls; £5 was spent on the roof leads of the gatehouses, and the mason John Gallier received £5 for repairing a section of the wall's foundation.[44] Although Shrewsbury's medieval defensive perimeter was clearly of declining importance and relevance to the early modern town, on the eve of civil war its maintenance still remained a time-honoured civic responsibility. For that reason the walls retained their defensive potential and would form the wartime *enceinte*, with another medieval fortification, the castle, as the citadel.

A royal castle under the jurisdiction of the high sheriff, by the early 1400s Shrewsbury Castle had fallen into disrepair. In the 1530s Leland noted it 'hath been a strong thing, it is now much in ruin'.[45] Some forty years later the Burghley Map depicted the castle's hall range as being roofless, and in 1612 Speed described a 'large castle', but 'whose gaping chinks do doubtless threaten her fall'.[46] The large outer bailey of the Norman earthwork had been colonised by the medieval town, so that by the sixteenth century the castle comprised the modest inner bailey enclosure with the mound of the motte on its east side.[47] In 1586 the Crown had leased the castle to the corporation for a peppercorn rent (which in 1641/2 was 13*s*. 4*d*.),[48] since when the corporation had sub-let both buildings and grounds; in 1629 the castle was leased for seven years at £3 6*s*. to one George Harris.[49]

On 26 August 1627 the master mason and architect John Smythson visited Shrewsbury Castle and sketched its plan. Generally similar to the castle as it stands today, Smythson's drawing remains its most accurate depiction prior to the Civil War.[50] An irregularly shaped heptagonal courtyard, measured as 270 ft. long × 150 ft. wide (82 × 46 m.), is shown enclosed by a curtain wall of straight sections, described as repaired to the south but only 'part standing' at the north. The hall range with its two circular, northerly facing corner towers is described as 'renewed', as is a round tower on the motte. An inward double-chambered gatehouse in the south wall is depicted, and a rectangular tower and probable adjacent postern gate to the east. No other buildings are shown. This impression of the castle is corroborated by its depiction in a possibly contemporaneous panorama of the town from the east, showing the towers as complete and those of the main rage with chimneys.[51] In the 1630s therefore the castle was not generally ruinous, but it was considered unfit both to house the county magazine of munitions (kept at an as yet unidentified building elsewhere in Shrewsbury) and to accommodate the royal entourage in 1642.

Safeguarding Shrewsbury in 1642

Against a background of growing enmity between Charles I and his parliament, in October 1641 the king's Catholic subjects in Ireland rebelled, triggering in England and Wales deep-rooted fears of a similar papist uprising; the prospect of an invasion by Irish Catholic forces generated widespread alarm. The Irish rebellion compounded apprehensions of social and religious unrest engendered by the political crisis, which deepened in the New Year when the king, after his abortive coup against the leaders of the parliamentary opposition on 4 January, withdrew his court from London. As a consequence civic bodies across the realm looked to secure their communities against the twin threats of papistry and social disorder.[52] At Shrewsbury on 17 January a quorum of Shropshire's justices of the peace met the mayor and high sheriff to consider measures for the security of their county. Amongst other matters, they noted that the magazine then held 30 barrels of gunpowder and a proportionate quantity of bullets.[53] At a separate meeting, the corporation resolved that the town's cannons should be test-fired, and if found serviceable, mounted on new carriages. £20 was also allocated for 'new cast iron ordinances'.[54] In March 1642 King Charles set up court at York, and thereafter both parties became increasingly partisan. Against this background of national tension, the corporation looked to Shrewsbury's security with increased preparedness. Although some work on the town walls took place in November 1641, bills of expenditure in the mayor's accounts for masons' work and deliveries of materials during February, March and April 1642 show the walls were then being refurbished in earnest. Thomas Wright's bill of 22 March, of £7 13*s*. 'for hewing, laying and other necessaries belonging for flagin[g] the town walls' suggests that wall walks were being re-laid and parapets repaired.[55] The castle then seems to have served as a builders' yard, for in April a carter's note recorded the delivery of '32 draughts [deliveries] of stone from the castle to the walls'.[56] On 20 May the corporation assembly, apprehending a 'time of imminent danger', increased the night watch. Henceforth a dozen armed townsmen would guard each of the three main gates and each ward would be patrolled.[57] By 20 August, two days before the king raised his standard at Nottingham and thereby symbolically declared war on the forces of parliament, clearance and construction work was in progress at Shrewsbury Castle.[58]

Garrison Firepower and Manpower during the Civil Wars

By early September 1642 Shrewsbury had acquired new ordnance, perhaps those pieces ordered cast in January. Three days before the king's arrival, on 17 September Thomas Long submitted his bill 'for workmanship of 3 cwt. of iron for the artillery for the town', whilst other craftsmen worked on carriages for six guns, including the blacksmith John Gardner who worked for 'the town's use…setting the ordnance artillery in readiness'.[59] It appears likely that at least some of these guns departed with the royal artillery train in October, for on 31 December the king instructed the Royalist commissioners in Caernarvonshire to transfer their 'diverse pieces of artillery', on a sale or return basis, 'to our city of Worcester and town of Shrewsbury…and there [to be] mounted for the defence of those places'.[60]

During 1643, ancillary equipment purchased for the garrison artillery included linstocks (for firing the guns), budge barrels for gunpowder, and sheepskins (soaked in water, these were used to cool the gun barrels during action). Cartridges were manufactured, and work was done 'mounting the guns' and 'setting iron work' on four gun carriages at least.[61] In 1644 the corporation purchased an additional eight cannon, six of which cost £33 18*s*. Gunpowder was supplied, in part, by the manufactory established in Shrewsbury during the winter of 1642/3, and which in 1643/4 incurred operational charges of £177.[62] Although their combat effectiveness as garrison artillery remains unrecorded, these guns – which were also used to support local Royalist forces in the field – had, at the very least, a significant deterrent value, and much expense and effort was invested in their acquisition, mounting, ancillary equipment and emplacement. Into the Commonwealth period artillery remained part of the establishment of Shrewsbury's garrison, manned in 1651 by a gunner, his two mates and four matrosses, or assistants.[63]

From October 1642 Sir Francis Ottley's company of foot had formed the nucleus of Shrewsbury's Royalist garrison under his governorship. The corporation was, however, unwilling, and fiscally unable to payroll indefinitely a professional officer corps in garrison, let alone a large number of full-time soldiers (although at Ottley's request, during 1642/3 one Captain Raynesford was paid £30 'for disciplining [training] the garrison soldiers').[64] Consequently, the pay of Ottley – whose rank commanded a weekly salary of £20 – and his officers remained an ongoing dispute. In February 1644 a resolution was agreed with the mayor to settle the arrears of the governor and his officers and to regularise their pay. By early May, however, this accommodation had broken down, and Ottley and his officers demanded accumulated arrears of over £1,050. The aldermen in turn rejected the governor's interpretation of the accord, disowning it as 'a pretended agreement'.[65]

With officers' pay having proved so problematic, it is unsurprising that the major's accounts record only one payment to Ottley's garrison soldiers, and that, for £170 made in 1642/3, representing perhaps one month's full

pay for 200 foot. The conclusion that – with the exception of the transient regular soldiers who were frequently quartered in the town – the permanent Royalist garrison of Shrewsbury was a largely unpaid militia regiment recruited from the townsmen is supported by a declaration made by the corporation in 1644, that 'the inhabitants of the town were all soldiers, or maintained soldiers under them (if they did not do their duty in their own persons)'. Alluding to the pay dispute, the corporation pointedly added, 'they conceive soldiers should not contribute to maintain their superior officers'.[66] These were the militiamen contemptuously characterised in January 1644 by Prince Rupert's deputy John, Lord Byron as a 'garrison of burghers [burgesses]' in need of reform.[67] Something of the organisation of this militia is suggested by a series of papers from 1643/4, which present the town wards as sub-divided into 26 'squadrons', each under a named corporal.[68] Listed here are better-off citizens, amongst them gentlemen, artisans and tradesmen, and the weapons they were either to provide or fund. Thus 694 persons were to maintain 608 weapons, including 525 muskets, suggesting a potential fighting strength 'on paper' of 600 militiamen.

After its capture for parliament Shrewsbury was first garrisoned by regular soldiers, but by early April 1645 the town militia, purged of Royalist sympathisers, had been reconstituted and organised along regular lines into companies under the command of Humphrey Mackworth. 127-strong including officers, Captain William King's was one of several foot companies of 'townsmen in this garrison of Shrewsbury' which helped defend the town until their disbandment in November 1645.[69] Thereafter the reduced garrison was of regular soldiers; in February 1647 100 foot manned the castle.[70] In September 1651, as well as seven artillerymen, the 'guard' for the garrison of Shrewsbury was 260 regular foot, together with a store-keeper, a provost marshal, a surgeon and a gunsmith.[71]

The Royalist Defences, 1642–5

Defensive 'Propositions'

After the departure of the king's army in October 1642, Shropshire's pro-Royalist leadership considered a series of measures for the county's defence and security.[72] Amongst the 'propositions' for Shrewsbury were the following directives: 'that the walls of the castle be made up, the sally gates to be made up…the water gates at both the Fryers [gates adjacent to Shrewsbury's two ruinous medieval friaries] to be chained and guarded…the doors of the gates be made to [receive] the gate pieces of ordnance and that their locks to be amended'.[73] This latter measure, allowing cannon to fire though embrasures set into the gates, shows the paramountcy of secure entrances for the town's defence. Thus in December, bar iron for fittings 'for the town wall gates' was purchased together with timber for gate posts and frames.[74] Maintenance of the gates would necessitate similar expenditure throughout the war. In October 1644 the smith Richard Bird made locks for the three 'great gates', which the following month received new draw bars. Also that November the gate at the Welsh Bridge was renewed.[75]

The assembly responded to these propositions by agreeing at its meeting on 6 November 1642 'to raise an assessment of £250 upon the burgesses and inhabitants within this town and liberty of Shrewsbury…for the repair of the castle walls, the postern gates, the town walls which are necessary to be repaired for defence of the town in these dangerous and perilous times'.[76]

Defensive Obstacles

The propositions highlight the expedient measures used to effect defensive priorities early in the Civil War, including the deployment of chains as barricades. Spanning entranceways and thoroughfares, chains set at chest height between timber posts would hinder and confine the advance of attackers, especially in narrow streets. The chains were set up at night or at time of imminent threat, allowing daily life in the town to continue unimpeded. In his account of the capture of Shrewsbury in 1645, the Parliamentarian Colonel Thomas Mytton recounted how he waited for 15 minutes with the cavalry in the northern suburb of Castle Foregate, 'before the foot [infantry] could break an iron chain to let us pass to the gate'.[77] This barrier had been the work during 1643/4 of the local smith Clermont Owen, paid for '3 days work about the chains of the Castle Foregate'.[78] In May 1643 the corporation paid the Staffordshire ironmaster Richard Foley £17 13*s*. 'for making chains for the streets', and further posts and chains were set up in February 1644. In December 1644 Clermont Owen received 6s., for ten 'great hooks to hang the chains upon at the end of the streets and gates and for setting up of them'.[79]

Turnpikes were also built as portable barricades. A contemporary treatise on military engineering, *The Enchiridion* [handbook] *of Fortification*, described a turnpike as comprising a timber spar into which were fixed short pikes (1.8 m. long and spear-pointed at each end), alternating diagonally along its length. The resultant multi-spiked barrier was considered a 'very good defence against horse [cavalry] …to stand at the entrance into a work,
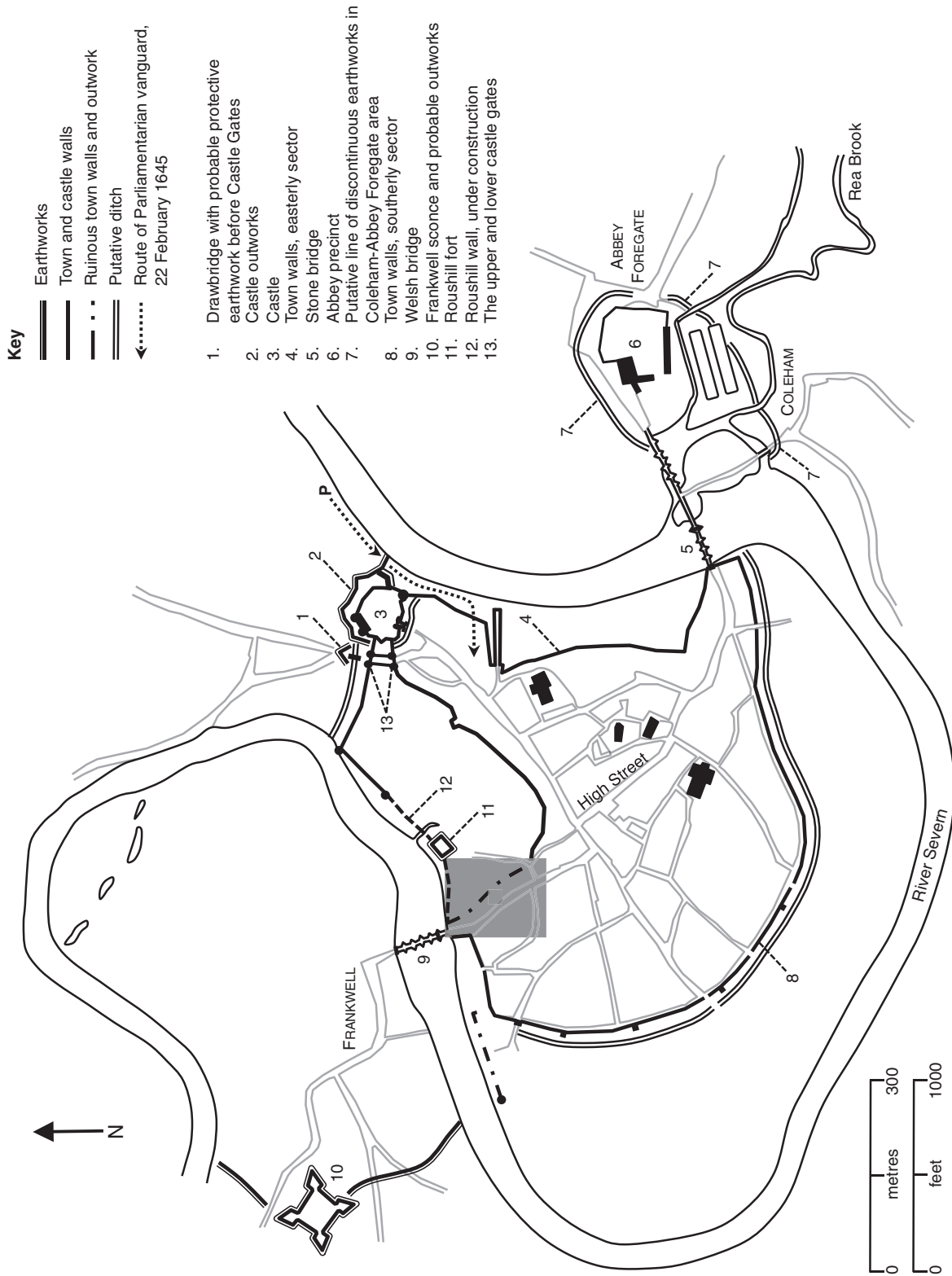
Key

Earthworks

Town and castle walls

Ruinous town walls and outwork

Putative ditch

Route of Parliamentarian vanguard, 22 February 1645

1. Drawbridge with probable protective earthwork before Castle Gates
2. Castle outworks
3. Castle
4. Town walls, easterly sector
5. Stone bridge
6. Abbey precinct
7. Putative line of discontinuous earthworks in Coleham-Abbey Foregate area
8. Town walls, southerly sector
9. Welsh bridge
10. Frankwell sconce and probable outworks
11. Roushill fort
12. Roushill wall, under construction
13. The upper and lower castle gates

Figure 1 Plan reconstruction of Shrewsbury's Civil War fortifications as they may have appeared at their fullest extent, in the autumn of 1644 under Royalist occupation. Based on the mapping in Baker's *Shrewsbury: an Archaeological Assessment of an English Border Town*, and Champion's *Everyday Life in Tudor Shrewsbury*.

or upon a gap of a work'.[80] Turnpikes of similar construction were installed at Shrewsbury in April-July 1643, when payments were made for timber and iron pikes, and other 'money laid out…about the turnpikes'.[81] Some were located to the east of the town, on the far bank of the Severn, where a side channel isolated a parcel of land known as Coleham Island. Here the Stone Bridge made its eastern landfall, and an eight-arch extension carried the roadway over the channel into the suburb of Abbey Foregate. To the south a bridge led to the lesser suburb of Coleham. The island acted, in effect, as a barbican for the Stone Bridge, and turnpikes were positioned to block the roads to south and east.

Lord Capel and the Fortification of Shrewsbury

On, or around, 20 March 1643 Lord Capel arrived in Shrewsbury as the king's regional commander. One of his first appointments was to commission as his chief engineer a Shropshire gentleman, Captain Francis Sandford. Probably an ex-professional soldier skilled in fortification and gunnery, Sandford was authorised to survey the 'castles, forts & works' under Capel's command; and 'them to amend & repair, & such other new works to contrive & direct as you…shall think fitting & requisite'.[82] Sandford's long-term project was overseeing the fortification of Shrewsbury. Here, his role is attested by the corporation's payment of a gratuity of £10 in 1643/4, 'for designing and making of fortifications', and in bills for construction work. A receipt dated 11 October 1644, for £10 received from the mayor for fortifications, carries Sandford's signature.[83]

Richard Gough, in his *Memoirs*, attributed Shrewsbury's fortification to Lord Capel. On 26 May 1643 the lieutenant general issued a directive to that effect, the town's defence being 'a very great and present necessity and import to his majesty's service'. Addressing the triumvirate to whom he had entrusted the town's security – Governor Ottley, Sir John Mennes (Capel's General of the Ordnance) and Sir Thomas Screven (a colonel of Shropshire's militia) – Capel instructed them to 'cause such works to be made and cast-up, and such alterations, erections or demolishments to be made in any the works already made, or in any walls, houses or other buildings… for the defence, safety and safe guarding thereof'.[84]

The pre-existing 'works' mentioned by Capel (works meaning fortifications in general, but more especially earthworks) are probably those described in a document undated, but preceding his order of 26 May, specifying three defensive measures.[85] The first was the digging of a trench, '6 foot broad and 6 foot deep', presumably with the spoil piled into a rampart, dug to enclose, at least in part, the eastern suburbs of Coleham and Abbey Foregate. Running in a horseshoe-shaped loop of 0.8 km., beginning and ending at the riverside, the course of the entrenchment would have taken in water meadows, a lane, the then partly ruinous precinct of the medieval abbey and a quarry. The corporation of Ludlow ordered the construction of a similar 'bulwark' on 11 May 1643, to protect suburbs lying outside their town walls, instructing the owners or tenants of properties to dig the section that crossed their land.[86] Although its construction remains uncertain, if dug as described the 'trench' at Shrewsbury would have had some military value; connecting buildings and natural obstacles it would have formed an outer defensive perimeter, albeit one lengthy and awkward to defend. The second defensive measure was to block 'two postern gates in the wall beyond Mr. Knight's house and [others] in the wall toward the quarry' (i.e. the southern sector of the town walls). The preferred material used for this blocking of passages and lesser gates was clay, a solid but semi-permanent infill. The mayor's accounts for June 1643 record payments made for the treading and carriage of clay, for the 'damming up' and 'making up' of these 'sally ports'.[87]

The Sconce at Frankwell

The final measure described the construction of a further trench: 'from the windmill bank at the further end of Frankwell over the backside to the pinfold [a communal livestock enclosure] and so down to the Severn side'. This was the 'mud wall' already under construction on the high ground above Shrewsbury's western suburb by 13 May 1643, and the 'bulwark' where 53 'draughts' (or loads) – presumably of earth, but also three of planks – had been delivered by the carter William Griffiths by the 30th.[88]

By August 1643 this ditch and earthen rampart was probably being superseded by the strong fort 'on a high bank at the end of the…suburbs called Frankwell', described by Richard Gough. The fort's exact position is unknown, but it was most likely built on the ridge spur immediately above Frankwell, where 'an old decayed windmill' stood in 1616, and the eighteenth century Millington's Hospital was built.[89] Here, guarding both the suburb and the bridgehead, the fort would have controlled the western approaches to Shrewsbury. In 1876 workmen digging in the grounds of Millington's Hospital discovered a cannon ball and a probable pike-head. They also exposed an adjacent burial containing three skeletons, which might have been an improvised grave for Parliamentarian soldiers

killed in the assault of 4 July 1644.[90] A further discovery in the same area in 1890, of 'the foundations of a wall of red sandstone', may have been evidence of the fort's revetment, or of a foundation core.[91]

Whilst its form is unknown, the fortification above Frankwell was a detached artillery fort, or 'sconce': of earthen construction, a square embanked enclosure with projecting arrowhead-shaped bastions set at each corner to accommodate artillery, surrounded by a deep, broad ditch. Colonel William Reinking, who commanded the Parliamentarian taskforce which captured Shrewsbury, noted that 'Frankwell Sconce' was surrendered on separate terms to the town and castle, thereby suggesting the fort's size and importance.[92] In 1639 the military engineer Richard Norwood described a typical 'four-sided' sconce as having a parapet 6 ft. high and 5 ft. thick on a rampart 24 ft. wide (1.8 × 1.5 × 7.3 m.), above a ditch 6 ft. deep and 30 ft. wide (1.8 × 9 m.).[93] Whilst the sconce above Frankwell may not have been on such a scale, the fortifications there were extensive, probably with outlying ditches, ramparts and palisades extending down towards the river to protect the suburb and to prevent the main work from being outflanked. Thomas Tipton's petition to the corporation in 1644, that his tenants in Frankwell were unable to pay their rents because 'their arable grounds are cast open & laid waste & their other grounds digged up and spoiled for the making of fortifications' suggests the extent of these defensive works.[94]

These were 'the outworks…so well defended' which Sir Fulke Hunkes, then Shrewsbury's governor, reported as having contributed to the repulse of the Earl of Denbigh's Parliamentarians that July.[95] With professional pride, perhaps, Chief Engineer Francis Sandford noted how the Roundheads had then been 'driven from Frankwell works, with shame and losses'.[96] Construction had continued, albeit probably intermittently, at Frankwell into 1644. In early March a 'sentinel house', or guardroom, was completed, part brick-built and with a tiled roof.[97] In early July, a labour gang was paid for working between them 79 days at 'Frankwell works', repairing or extending the defences involved in the fighting ten days' previously.[98]

The Defences at Roushill

In addition to the fortifications at Frankwell, similar earthworks were being constructed elsewhere in Shrewsbury during 1643. Across the river, in the meadows adjacent to Roushill, an earthen fort was being built by mid-May, when workmen were paid for their 11–13 days' labour there.[99] A lesser construction than the Frankwell Sconce, this was probably a square redoubt with enclosing ditch and breastwork. A military treatise of 1639 described such a 'quadrangular redoubt…well palllizadoed', which was 'to be raised, where you conceive the enemy hath most advantage to gain a passage to annoy your campe'.[100] The redoubt was built to bolster the riverside defences left incomplete between the medieval outwork upstream and the Welsh Bridge, a gap which by October was being closed by the construction of a stone wall. A timber watchtower was also erected, the superstructure of this 'sentry house on the wall in Roushill Meadow' standing over the part-built wall.[101] A number of similar pre-fabricated timber 'sentinel houses', or guard chambers, were also set up elsewhere around the town. Where located by archaeological excavation, the Roushill Wall was found to be well-built – 1.6 m. wide between outer faces of dressed masonry.[102] The near-contemporaneous churchwardens' accounts of Shrawardine, a village 11 km. northwest of Shrewsbury, described this wall's completion by the Parliamentarians. Following the surrender of the Royalist garrison of Shrawardine Castle in June 1645, the account book recorded how 'the stone work was pulled down & carried to Shrewsbury for the repairing of the castle there & the making up of Rousal [*sic*] wall standing on the Severn side'.[103]

Whilst the Roushill section was the only extension made to the town walls during the Civil Wars, bills for completed work show that the original circuit continued to be repaired and renewed into 1644. On 29 July 1643, for example, 300 feet (91 m.) of stone for the walls was paid for, and on 9 August the mason Michael Wright presented his bill of £3 7s., for the 'scrabbling [dressing]' of 900 feet (274 m.) of 'stone for the wall'.[104]

The Northerly Defences and Castle Outworks

At the northeast corner of the walls the castle guarded the landward approach to the town. Beyond the castle, on sloping ground above the suburb of Castle Foregate with the river to the east, earthwork fortifications were constructed on previously open land. In 1631 the corporation had granted a lease to William Boraston, for 'the castle hill next unto the River Severn', and in 1643 Richard Swayne's 'piece of ground…near the castle' – which the previous year he had sown for wheat – was compulsorily purchased on Governor Ottley's order.[105] In September 1655 Swayne petitioned the Council of State in London, that for 11 years previously his land had been 'employed for fortifications under Shrewsbury Castle'.[106] By May 1643 'the fort beyond the castle', built of earth riveted with timber and turf, was under construction; a sally port to it through the castle wall was finished in

August. Into December turf revetments were being laid, and in February 1644 carters were still delivering large quantities of 'turf to the work at the castle'.[107]

In his later relation, Colonel Reinking described how in the early morning of 22 February 1645 his assault party was spotted by Royalist sentries 'upon the outworks of the castle'; fortifications best interpreted as being artillery emplacements commanding a field of fire over the northern approaches to Shrewsbury. The construction of wooden platforms, one requiring 400 ft. (122 m.) of timber, and of ramps 'for passage of ordnance' at the castle, suggests that these were to provide hard standing for guns. The *Enchiridion of Fortification* recommended that a platform 30 feet (9.1 m.) deep, built of planks and brushwood, was necessary to accommodate the recoil of a heavy cannon.[108] The large quantity of timber brought into Shrewsbury in 1643 – including 2,030 linear feet (619 m.) delivered in August-September, planks 'for the ordnance', and sleepers for the 'batterie' – was used to construct gun platforms and revetments at the castle, Frankwell and elsewhere. 1,500 linear feet of three-inch planks (457 × 0.08 m.) 'for the fort' was delivered in June, and over 500 feet (152 m.) of broad planks for 'port holes', or embrasures, to the castle works in August.[109]

Frequent references in the mayor's accounts to the delivery of cartloads of timber stakes and 'pine wood' support Parliamentarian accounts that the castle's outworks were 'strongly palisado'd'[110], and indeed the assault party in February 1645 included carpenters to cut down these obstacles. Robert Ward described how palisades of sharp-pointed timber stakes were to be set two feet (0.61 m.) down from the top of an earthwork, 'so that the sharp ends may rise upwards, they are to lye three foot (0.91 m.) into the earth, and as much out'.[111] As tightly spaced rows of stakes rather than closed fences, the use of palisades, set transversally or vertically, was widespread in English Civil War fortifications and they were doubtless widely deployed around Shrewsbury.[112]

Documentary sources suggest that the medieval town ditch, known to have run across the peninsula to the north of the castle, was re-cut during the Civil War; the Parliamentarian *True and Full Relation* of the taking of Shrewsbury described 'a great ditch to the [western] river side'.[113] This was Richard Gough's 'deep trench', and although it was unlikely to have been filled by the river as Gough described, the drawbridge over it he mentioned is corroborated by the *True and Full Relation*. The mayor's accounts suggest the construction of a detached bridge here, below the Lower Castle Gate, in December 1643.[114] Perhaps defended by an earthwork, this may have been the outpost (the 'court of guard near the main wall') raided by a Parliamentarian detachment from Wem, which a London newsbook reported as having taken place on the night of 9 February 1645.[115]

There is neither documentary nor archaeological evidence to confirm the Civil War re-cutting of the medieval town ditch that lay before the southern sweep of the walls, although archaeology has shown that it remained open, in part, into the eighteenth century.[116] The walls in this sector were vulnerable to assault by an attacking force assembled on the riverside pastures sloping towards the town, and so it is likely the ditch here was re-cut during the 1640s as an advanced obstacle.

The Castle's Rebuilding

Fortified by outlying earthworks, the castle was rebuilt and refurbished during 1643/4 to serve as a citadel and magazine. The numerous bills in the mayor's accounts, for masons' work and materials, are evidence of the rebuilding of the curtain walls to parapet height; for example, over 400 linear feet (122 m.) of flagstones for the wall walk was laid in February 1644. It seems likely that the loop-holed crenellations surviving today on the west curtain are also Civil War work.[117] Similarly, an angled projection in the western wall, not shown on the Smythson plan of 1627, probably represents a modification to allow flanking small arms fire. The square tower and sally door depicted on the Smythson plan on the river side were rebuilt as a postern gatehouse with a portcullis, the 'arch stones' of which were laid in June 1643.[118] The castle well was refurbished by July, when it received a pitch-coated rope. In the courtyard, new timber-framed accommodation and ancillary buildings erected in August-September comprised a porter's lodge, a guardroom, or 'sentinel house', and a latrine block, or 'house of office'.[119]

In January 1644 Prince Rupert exhorted Sir Francis Ottley to further effort, 'for the covering the castle of Shrewsbury, and the dividing and disposing thereof into rooms capable and fitting to receive the stores', and demanded the construction of further accommodation for soldiers.[120] Whilst work at the castle had doubtless lapsed after Lord Capel's return to Oxford in December 1643, Ottley's reply to the prince in early February 1644, that the repair of the castle was 'now in the doing and shall not be neglected but forwarded with all expedition', held credence;[121] the still extant T-shaped loop-holed barbican before the main gate – a central passage with flanking guard chambers – was completed by the masons in that month. (Plate 2) This 'sentry house' would have been roofed, and was fitted with a portcullis costing in excess of £16. It was equipped with a drawbridge, showing that a defensive ditch was also dug here, on the town side of the castle.[122]

Plate 2   Shrewsbury Castle, the remains of the stone-built barbican/gate house completed in February 1644. Built by the Royalists to defend the Castle's otherwise vulnerable main gate, the loopholes in the passage would allow muskets, and possibly light cannon, to enfilade the adjacent curtain wall. (Author's photograph)

Building Materials

Stone for the castle and town walls, and other building materials, was transported to Shrewsbury from several local sources. Stone was delivered from the quarry near Abbey Foregate of the Royalist Sir Richard Prince, and from Edward Jones's quarry at Emstree, some 3.2 km. to the southeast. Numerous deliveries of better quality sandstone came from the Grinshill quarries, 11.3 km. to the north; a bill for 21 loads carted from there to the castle was paid in September 1643.[123] Builders' lime was widely made in Shropshire, and large quantities were transported to Shrewsbury during 1643, including a consignment of 42 barrels in May and 103 barrels in September.[124] Sand was used in large amounts, and water (to mix mortar and soften clay) was carted in tubs from the Severn to the worksites. The main source of wood was the Lythwood, some 6.4 km. southwest of Shrewsbury. Sawyers employed there, and in sawpits at Coleham, provided the large quantities of timber needed. Turves, used to revet earthworks, were brought in by river barge from the surrounding countryside; one was hired for five days in September 1643 'to carry turves to the fort'.[125] The gathering of turf damaged pastures and distressed landowners. On 11 August 1643 one gentleman petitioned Governor Ottley on behalf of a friend who farmed at Little Berwick, 3 km. northwest of Shrewsbury, that the 'Turfmen' – employed there 'to cut turf for your mud wall' – had also threatened to fell the farmer's woodland.[126] The construction work also placed demands on local tradesmen to supply tools and equipment, like the wheelwright Thomas Griffiths, who delivered 24 wheelbarrows in March 1643, and the smith Thomas Benyon, who by September was being paid to sharpen axes and mattocks by the dozen.[127]

Fields of Fire: the Clearance of Properties?

From at least early 1643, through until the winter of 1644/5, much of Shrewsbury and its suburbs would have resembled a building site as the various fortifications took shape, with walls repaired, earthworks dug and piled,

and timber cut. Yet progress was probably intermittent, subject to the vagaries of funding and the changing military situation.

The inhabitants of the town and locality experienced much inconvenience and real hardship: the unfortunate tenants of Thomas Tipton were doubtless not alone in finding their land 'laid waste'. But notwithstanding Capel's order of May 1643, which, according to Gough, resulted in the demolition of many houses below the castle, there appears little evidence that clearance of property, widespread at other fortified towns during the Civil Wars and attested in Shropshire at the Royalist garrison towns of Bridgnorth and Ludlow, was widespread at Shrewsbury. The mayors' accounts provide no evidence for this beyond a reference in March 1643 to the hire of tumbrels and horse teams to carry away debris cleared from the walls.[128] The substantial repairs made in 1646/7 to its tower, and to the 'breaches in the walls', do suggest that the Church of The Holy Cross at Abbey Foregate had been deliberately damaged to prevent its effective use as a lookout and strongpoint.[129] As the new fortifications above Frankwell and outside the castle were built on mostly open land, the necessity to clear buildings may have been limited. At Shrewsbury evidence has yet to be discovered that the military executed the ruthless policy advocated by the contemporary French military theoretician Du Praissac. Addressing his reader on the defence of a besieged fortress, Du Praissac advocated: 'ruin all without which might endamage you; laying flat houses, woods, barns, mills, hollow ways, gardens…whatsoever might batter you and command your defences'.[130] Instead, on the early morning of Royalist Shrewsbury's fall, the Parliamentarian main force assembled under cover of darkness amongst the still-standing buildings of the northerly suburb of Castle Foregate.

Financing the Fortifications

Shrewsbury's citizens were spared the depredations of a siege, during which similar destruction would certainly have occurred. But they bore the full financial cost of the town's defence, particularly during the First Civil War when the mayor and corporation, under the direction of Royalist leaders, laid a series of levies specifically to finance fortifications. During 1642/3 four 'cessments' raised approximately £1,930. In 1643/4, whilst the first three of four levies raised less than £7, almost £850, including loans, was eventually collected. The total known sum raised for Shrewsbury's fortifications under Royalist administration was thus around £2,800.[131] The charge to Shrewsbury's citizens for fortifications alone was thus at least more than three times that of the notorious Ship Money levies of the 1630s for a similar two-year period; then the town had collected the tax grudgingly and had often petitioned for its reduction. Taking into account other wartime taxes and impositions – £550 was raised in Shrewsbury for Lord Capel in 1643, for example – the corporation was not exaggerating the financial burden when, in October 1644, it petitioned the governor, Sir Michael Ernley, that 'considering the cost of fortifications, buying 8 pieces of ordnance, making of gunpowder, providing of coals and candles for the several guards, the payment of subscription money and privy seals [forced loans for the king] that the whole revenue of the town would not pay the coals and candles of the sentries'.[132]

The impression gained from the numerous bills for wages in the mayors' accounts is that during 1642 and 1643 the construction of fortifications was managed in a similar fashion to public works in peacetime, with the workmen paid at pre-war market rates. This was less the case after March 1644, when Prince Rupert ordered the townsfolk, with the exception of married women, common servants and youngsters under 16 years, to work in person one day a week at the fortifications, or pay six pence in lieu, 'till the works be fully finished'.[133] Many better-off families would have opted to pay this weekly subscription, as did Sir Richard Leveson, a Royalist commissioner. The account book of Leveson's Shrewsbury household records the weekly payment of sixpence, given to 'the collectors for the labourers at the works', from April 1644 until the end of January 1645.[134] £49 16s. 9d. raised in 'sixpenny money towards paying of the workmen for fortifications' is recorded in the mayor's accounts for 1644.[135] In addition to salaried craftsmen and labourers, and those townsfolk giving of one day's labour weekly, other townsmen worked on the defences in lieu of paying their 'Contribution', the monthly military tax; in May 1644 George Cadler worked four days at 'Frankwell works' to reduce his Contribution payment by 3s.[136]

The Later Civil Wars

The story of Shrewsbury's defences during the later Civil Wars was one of decline, hasty reparation and uncertain funding. As part of an attempted national policy of demilitarization, on 25 February 1647 the House of Commons ordered 'that the town of Shrewsbury be disgarrisoned, and the [earth] works about it slighted'.[137] The castle remained a garrison, but that work had begun to clear the town fortifications, or that they were no longer maintained, is suggested by Governor Mackworth's request to the Commons on 5 August 1648 for additional powers to raise monies for the town's defence, made after the dispersal of a Royalist party whose intent had

been to 'attempt' the castle and plunder the suburbs. Two days later it was recommended to parliament that £200 should be allocated to repair Shrewsbury's fortifications, but it is uncertain how much, if any, money was actually disbursed.[138]

In August 1651 Shrewsbury, previously a Royalist stronghold, was a likely objective of King Charles II's advancing army and on the 18th the governor ordered the mayor to conscript townsmen to repair the decayed earthworks. Although later that month the Council of State was to consider providing 'for the making up of the works at Shrewsbury', it seems unlikely that substantial funding for refortification was forthcoming once the immediate threat to that garrison had disappeared after the battle of Worcester.[139]

Conclusions: the Strongest Works in England?

During the Civil Wars Shrewsbury's defences achieved their fullest extent from mid-1644 under Royalist administration, although they remained incomplete. To the west, above Frankwell, stood the sconce and its associated outworks. Further earthworks lay around the castle, and possibly also in the eastern suburbs at Coleham and Abbey Foregate. At Roushill, perhaps superseding the redoubt, the new length of town wall was well under construction. The existing walls, gates and towers must be considered to have been by then generally defensible, and the castle fit to serve as a citadel, storehouse and magazine. Turnpikes and chains bolstered these fixed defences, barricading entrances and thoroughfares. Certain other buildings may also have been prepared for defence; for example, the stone-built Shrewsbury School, standing opposite the castle on the line of the town wall, was identified as a key objective of the Parliamentarian assault force in February 1645.[140]

These defences served to repel at least one determined Parliamentarian assault, that of 4 July 1644, and other attacks appear to have been attempted before the town's eventual capture; Sir William Brereton wrote that several former attempts had been made, the last on Christmas Day 1644.[141] Whilst the strength of the fortifications and the size of the garrison remained a concern of the committeemen, Shrewsbury's defences under Parliamentarian control served in turn as a sufficient deterrent to the Royalists. During the renewed hostilities of 1648, and again in 1651, Shrewsbury's defence was centred on the castle, as the outlying earthworks from the first war, where they had not been levelled, lay neglected and in need of repair.

Although the chief strength of Shrewsbury's defences was as a deterrent, nonetheless on the single occasion during the Wars when the town fell the attackers had to rely on intelligence from within to identify a weak point in order to breach the fortifications. The Roundhead commanders had long accepted that without the support of a fifth column attempts upon Shrewsbury had little chance of success. In September 1644 Sir John Meldrum acknowledged that an assault had been contemplated only when it was believed there was 'a great party of citizens within the town, who seemed inclinable to adhere to the Parliament'.[142] Both Colonels Reinking and Mytton acknowledged that the Parliamentarians acted on intelligence provided by two spies or defectors from Shrewsbury when planning their surprise assault in February 1645. The Royalists thereafter suspected wider collusion and treachery; certainly the town militia, the numerical strength of the garrison, appears to have proved ineffective.

Shrewsbury's fortifications were comparatively modest compared with those of Newark, the Royalists' regional stronghold in the east Midlands, and they certainly never rivalled the defences of the opposing capitals, Royalist Oxford and Parliamentarian London, in either their scale or their complexity. Nonetheless, whilst the 'strongest works in England' must be sought elsewhere, the town's defences – a concoction of improvisation and careful planning, repaired medieval walls, and earthworks built according to prevailing military doctrine – characterise much of what is known of urban fortification during the Civil Wars. Shrewsbury's example shows that medieval walls and towers which had been maintained in reasonable repair before the wars when renewed and strengthened remained well regarded as capable defensive works. Shrewsbury as a case study of Civil War fortification also demonstrates that those uncertain factors, morale and allegiance, were as important to a garrison's defence as its walls.

Notes

1   Population estimate (for 1640) in B. Champion, *Everyday Life in Tudor Shrewsbury*, 1994, 23.
2   *Journal of the House of Lords*, **V**, *1642–43*, 269–70.
3   Assembly Book Extracts, Shropshire Archives (hereafter SA): 6001/290, 133.
4   King Charles I to Francis Ottley: W. Phillips (ed.), 'The Ottley Papers Relating to the Civil War', *Trans. Shrops. Archaeol. Soc.*, 2nd Series, **VI**, 1894, 39–40.
5   Prince Rupert to Ottley, 25 Jan. 1644: J. R. Phillips (ed.), *Memoirs of The Civil War in Wales and the Marches, 1642–1649*, 1874, **II**, 34.

6   Whilst the four published Parliamentarian accounts of the capture of Shrewsbury differ in detail, they tend to support the summary here. See W. Reinking, *A More Exact And Particular Relation of the taking of Shrewsbury* (London, 1645); *Colonell Mittons Reply To Lieutenant-Colonell Reinking's Relation of The taking of Shrewsburie* (London, May 1645); *A True and Full Relation of the Manner of the taking of the Towne and Castle of Shrewsbury* (London, 1645); *A Copie of Sir William Breretons Letter to the Parliament And the Copie of a Letter from the Committee of* Shropshire…(London, 1645). Other than general accusations of treachery made in the correspondence of local commanders, no Royalist account of these events is known to survive.

7   W. D. Mackay (ed.), *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England begun in the Year 1641 by Edward Earl of Clarendon*, 1888, **III**, part VIII, 240.

8   *Journal of the House of Commons*, **IV**, *1644–1646*, 561.

9   SA: 6001/290, 135.

10   R. N. Dore (ed.), *The Letter Books of Sir William Brereton* (hereafter *BLB*), **I**, 1990, 44–5, 54–2.

11   H. G. Tibbutt (ed.), *The Letter Books of Sir Samuel Luke* (hereafter *LLB*), *1644–45*, 1963, 690.

12   Dore, *BLB*, **I**, 142–3.

13   Tibbutt, *LLB*, 490; Dore, *BLB*, **I**, 142–3.

14   Tibbutt, *LLB*, 165.

15   *The Parliament's Post*, 6–13 May 1645.

16   H. Johnstone, 'Two Governors of Shrewsbury during the Great Civil War and the Interregnum', *English Historical Review*, **XXVI**, 1911, 267–77.

17   *Journal of the House of Commons*, **VII**, *1651–60*, 6–7.

18   Sir Gilbert Gerard to Prince Rupert: E. Warburton, *Memoirs of Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, 1849, **I**, 500.

19   Denbigh to the Committee of Both Kingdoms, 11 July 1644: W.D. Hamilton (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the Reign of Charles I* (hereafter *CSPD*), *1644*, 1888, 338.

20   Meldrum to the Committee of Both Kingdoms: Hamilton, *CSPD, 1644*, 543.

21   Brereton to Luke, 22 Feb. 1645: Tibbutt, *LLB*, 455.

22   For a very useful illustrated summary of the contemporaneous depictions of Civil War city and town defences, see Lt.-Col. W. G. Ross, 'Military Engineering during the Great Civil War', reproduced in facsimile as *Ken Trotman Military History Monographs*, No. 3, 1984, 122–40 (originally published in *Professional Papers of the Royal Engineers*, **XIII**, 1887).

23   T. M. Brown and M. D. Watson, 'The Civil War Roushill Wall, Shrewsbury', *Trans. Shrops. Archaeol. Soc.*, **LXVI**, 1989, 85–9.

24   The fullest overview to date of the archaeology of urban fortification in the Civil Wars may be found in the second chapter and bibliography of P. Harrington, *English Civil War Archaeology*, 2004.

25   M. A. Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD, 1656–57*, 1883, 357, 593.

26   Anon., *The Antiquarian Repertory…* , 1779, **II**, 101.

27   N. Baker, *Shrewsbury, An Archaeological Assessment of an English Border Town*, 2010, 223.

28   R. Gough, *The History of Myddle*, D. Hey (ed.), 1981, 266–7.

29   Dore, BLB, **II**, 369.

30   *Journal of the House of Lords*, **X**, *1648–1649*, 425.

31   W. Camden, *Britain or A Chorographical Description of the most flourishing Kingdomes*, 1637, 595.

32   Baker, *Shrewsbury*, 131.

33   R. Norton, *The Gunners Dialogue*, 1628, 26.

34   Dore, *BLB*, **II**, 369.

35   Baker's description is summarised here: *Shrewsbury*, 23, 129–33.

36   *Ibid.*, 133–4.

37   *Ibid.*, 131.

38   L. T. Smith (ed.), *The Itinerary of John Leland in or about the Years 1535–1543, Parts IV and V*, 1908, 81.

39   SA: 3365/587/151, 3365/592/52, 62, Mayor's Accounts.

40   H. Owen and J. B. Blakeway, *A History of Shrewsbury*, 1825, **I**, 416.

41   J. Speed, *The Theatre of the Empire of Great* Britain, 1612, 71.

42   SA: 3365/584/4, Mayor's Accounts.

43   SA: 6001/290, 95, 103, 110, 114, Assembly Book Extracts.

44   SA: 3365/580/46–7, 64, Mayor's Accounts.

45   Baker, *Shrewsbury*, 164; Smith, *Leland, Parts IV and V*, 82.

46   Speed, *Empire of Great Britain*, 71.

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Evangelising Georgian Shrewsbury: Controversy and Conciliation

By BARBARA COULTON

Abstract: The eighteenth century was a time of religious development and division, in a traditional market town like Shrewsbury as well as in new industrial towns. The strength of the Church of England may have been more marked in such a community but Nonconformity was also important to many of the town's population, numbering over 8,000 in 1750. For these people debates and controversies were to be heard or read, in sermons and pamphlets, given and written by clerics, while some lay individuals and congregations played a part. Surviving documents enable us to hear from people involved. Comment and interpretation will be kept to a minimum, but it should be noted at the start that evangelising was the mission of Prayer Book ministers as well as evangelicals. The period studied covers the last four decades of the eighteenth century.

In September 1769 the parishioners of old St Chad's, the largest church in the town, attended a service with a difference: a visiting preacher from London was to occupy the pulpit, courtesy presumably of the vicar, Dr William Adams. The visitor was William Romaine, of St Anne's, Blackfriars, the sole beneficed evangelical in London. What no-one seemed to have anticipated was a strongly Calvinistic sermon. Such preaching was the mark of evangelicals within the Church of England as well as those outside it. John Berridge, for example, advised a younger colleague: 'begin by ripping up the Audience … Lay open the universal sinfulness of nature, the darkness of the mind … The earthliness and sensuality of the affections:- Speak of the evil of sin in its Nature, its rebellion against God as our Benefactor, and contempt of his authority and Love:- Declare the evil of Sin and its effects, bringing all our sickness, pains, and sorrows, all the Evils we feel, and all the evils we fear … Acquaint them with the searching Eye of God, watching us continually … when your Hearers have been well harrowed … (which will be seen by their hanging down the head) then bring out your CHRIST'. We do not have the text of Romaine's sermon but his printed works carry the same Calvinist message: 'Observe how He [the Holy Spirit] humbles the sinner. He convinces him of his sinful state, of the corruption of his whole nature, and of the depravity of every faculty of soul and body. The sinner is made to feel it, and to live under the sense of it.'[1]

The effect on the parishioners of St Chad's is indicated in the response of Adams. Whether he angrily confronted Romaine in the vestry is an anecdote which we cannot confirm, but there was a 'discourse occasioned by the sermon preached in my church', according to Adams' published response.[2] Romaine's sermon was 'so contrary to the sentiments of religion which I wish to imprint and am always inculcating on the minds of my hearers'; Romaine, he had been informed, was 'a principal leader among those who are called methodists'. Adams was ready to do justice to their good intentions, to the piety and virtues of those who patronised them, and even to the exemplary zeal in the parochial duties of many of their pastors. (Methodism was not yet a separate sect or church.) What Adams was concerned about was the way that Calvinistic doctrine 'indirectly arraigned' the goodness and moral attributes of God. From the earliest days of the Church, he noted, there had been false teachers and seducing spirits. Adams stressed the truths 'that God is the righteous governor of the world; that he loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity; that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him … that man is endowed with a faculty of understanding to discern betwixt good and evil, … with a will or power to chuse or refuse the evil or good'. This was opposed to the Calvinist teaching that no amends can be made or pardon obtained by repentance, that God has no mercy except in consequence of the mediation of Christ. God, said Adams, was not a hard taskmaster.

This was not the end of the controversy. There would be other participants, but first we need to fill in some background. William Adams was the son of John, a Shrewsbury alderman. In 1720 he entered Pembroke College,

Oxford, graduating MA in 1727. It was only after this point that the curriculum included theology; before that the tutors gave religious instruction to students. The quality of pastoral care varied from college to college, but the university provided the basis for Anglican religion: the Book of Common Prayer, subscription to the Thirty-Nine Articles, sermons and services. In 1728, when Adams was a fellow and tutor, another Midlander entered the College as a commoner: Samuel Johnson of Lichfield. Brilliant, unhappy and impoverished, Johnson could not afford to complete his degree, but a lifelong friendship with Adams had begun.[3] In 1730 Adams accepted the living of St Chad's in Shrewsbury; by 1750 he also held prebends at Lichfield and Llandaff and in 1755 he became rector of Cound, a few miles from Shrewsbury.[4] This might seem like a classic case of Anglican patronage and pluralism, but such a system did not necessarily mean negligence; Adams was a diligent pastor to both his flocks. There being no parsonage in Shrewsbury he had to rent accommodation; at Cound he had a house to live in. In 1766 Adams published a sermon preached before tradesmen and artificers in Shrewsbury on Easter Monday: the citizens had formed a society based on charitable principles; this was praised by Adams. 'It is indeed a pleasure to see, while so many Parties and Meetings are daily forming for pleasure and idleness, for the support of the Factions and uncharitable distinctions, and often for nothing better than Revelling and Riot; that there are not wanting some which have a nobler End for their Object.'[5]

A few years after this sermon came the controversy over Romaine's visit. Adams referred to 'those who are called methodists'; to understand this term we need to return to Oxford just before Adams left that university. A group of young men, nicknamed the Holy Club, promoted individual piety, partly as an antidote to deism and lukewarm Christianity. Charles and John Wesley were leaders : 'Aiming at a life of salvation and perfectibility, they took their models from the early church', taking the sacrament every Sunday and participating in charitable works, such as visiting prisons and workhouses where they read prayers and the Bible and taught children. The groups were strongest at Christ Church and Lincoln College but spread to other colleges. Sympathy from outsiders turned to hostility before the Wesleys left for America in 1735. John Wesley's 'conversion experience' did not occur until he was back in London in 1738.[6] These nascent evangelicals, all Anglicans, were derided as 'Bible-Moths', 'Enthusiasts' and 'methodists', for their methodical programme of study and prayer. Romaine had been at Oxford with the Wesleys 'but had spurned their company'. One very important figure was George Whitefield, a powerful preacher and, unlike the Wesleys, a Calvinist. Another member of the Oxford group, Benjamin Ingham, was the means by whom the Countess of Huntingdon was converted; she became a patron of evangelical preachers, including Romaine.[7]

Methodism flourished in many places, but not in Shrewsbury: when John Wesley came to the town in 1761 he was not offered a pulpit. 'Monday 16 March: I found the door of the place where I was to preach surrounded by a numerous mob, but they seemed met only to stare: yet part of them came in: almost all that did (a large number) behaved quietly and seriously.' In March 1762 a large company came to hear him; a few years later there were 'several men of fortune' in the congregation. In March 1769 he stayed with Lancelot Lee of Coton Hall: 'I came to Shrewsbury between five and six and preached to a large and quiet congregation. As we returned the rabble was noisy enough, but they used only their tongues.' (The motive might have been political as well as religious.) In August he preached again in Shrewsbury and was invited to visit Mr [Thomas] Powys of Little Berwick.[8] Romaine knew Thomas Powys but had a more forceful supporter in another layman, Richard Hill of Hawkstone, near Shrewsbury. Hill had recently published a defence of six young men expelled from St Edmund Hall, Oxford, for their alleged hostility to the teachings of the Church of England by preaching or frequenting illicit conventicles. They were being punished for their Methodist affiliations and their Calvinist views.[9] A war of pamphlets followed, led by Richard Hill's *Pietas Oxoniensis* (1768). In 1770 he was ready to defend William Romaine who *may* have come to Shrewsbury at Hill's invitation.[10]

Richard Hill, born in 1733, was heir to a wealthy estate and baronetcy; he graduated MA from Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1754. Although a layman he enjoyed preaching and religious controversy. He opposed John Wesley for his 'Arminian' (anti-Calvinist) beliefs; Wesley commented on Hill's *Review* of Wesley's doctrine that 'it has nothing to do either with good nature or good manners'.[11] We should acknowledge Hill's evangelical zeal and his encouragement of preachers, whether evangelical Anglican clerics such as Romaine and Henry Venn of Huddersfield, or lay preachers like Captain Scott. Jonathan Scott was born near Shrewsbury and became an officer in the Queen's Own Dragoons. After nearly seventeen years in that dissolute ambience he turned to religion; he was converted by hearing Romaine preach at one of Lady Huntingdon's chapels, at Ote Hall in Sussex. Through Romaine he met Thomas Powys and Henry Venn. After leaving the army he married Elizabeth Clay in 1768, settling near Market Drayton, in the neighbourhood of Hawkstone. He had the support of another neighbour of the Hills, Lady Glenorchy of Great Sugnall in Staffordshire; although a Scottish aristocrat she promoted evangelicalism in Staffordshire as well as in Edinburgh. She became a close friend of Hill's sister Jane, another ardent evangelical.[12] Another name should be added to the list of active evangelicals in north Shropshire: John Fletcher, vicar of Madeley.[13]

Hill's *Letter to the Rev. Dr Adams of Shrewsbury* included a letter from Romaine, dated 20 March 1770, complaining that he had been 'personally traduced' by Adams as a 'setter forth of strange doctrines'. The first

edition of Hill's book was published in London in 1770; this was followed quickly by other enlarged editions. He addressed Adams in his customary vehement style (p.54): 'Had you, Sir, been content to have crowed upon your own dunghill, you might still have been triumphing in your imaginary victory over the doctrines of the Reformation'. As an appendix Hill added a short account of earlier heresies; he equated Adams with Arius, Pelagius and Socinus, with their denial of certain doctrines and the status of Christ in the Trinity. Since the publication of Dr Samuel Clarke's *The scripture-doctrine of the Trinity* in 1712 there were fears of anti-Trinitarianism; Clarke maintained that only the Father was referred to as God. Hill also accused Adams of rejecting the 'true' doctrine of predestination; in fact the seventeenth of the Thirty-Nine Articles is ambivalent. 'As the godly consideration of Predestination and our Election in Christ is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ … So, for curious and carnal persons, lacking the Spirit of Christ, to have continually before their eyes the sentence of God's Predestination is a most dangerous downfall, whereby the Devil doth thrust them either into desperation, or into wretchlessness [sic] of most unclean living …' The interpretation of this doctrine divided Calvinists from Arminians. The latter held that God's decree was not arbitrary,'but in consequence of God's foreknowledge that those so predestined would make a good use of the grace given'.[14]

Among pamphlets continuing the debate was one by 'Salopiensis', a parishioner of St Chad's, answering Hill. 'Sir, You will, I hope, excuse this address from one who is a stranger to you, but hath long known and esteemed the Rev. Dr Adams … and cannot see so worthy and respectable a person as the Vicar of this parish, treated with such severity, insolence and contempt, without animadverting upon it.' He referred first to the confusion of Hill's pamphlet then defended Adams' declaration that the compilers of the 39 Articles were fallible men: 'It is evident from the sermons and history of the Reformers, that they designed to have gone further, and not made what they had done the purest standard of Reformation'. As for the rejection of the [anti-Arian] Athanasian Creed at St Chad's, many parishioners 'esteem it a mysterious, unintelligible, uncharitable composition'. They preferred the simpler Apostles' Creed. As for the divinity of Christ, Adams insisted upon this in his sermons and lectures on the catechism. Dr Adams had also published a collection of psalms, from versions allowed by authority, to be used in his parish, adding the Gloria Patri or Doxologies, which plainly expressed the divinity of Christ and the Holy Spirit. (The writer was now answering Hill's imputations that Adams favoured an anti-Trinitarian doctrine.) Hill should have enquired more carefully 'what is preached, read and sung in St Chad's Church'. Hill's sneers at rational religion were unbecoming – was his own religion irrational? 'I wish, Sir, you would for once try your hand at reasoning.' In contrast to Hill's lack of charity, Adams had defended Methodists from attack by mobs, and had stood firm amidst the 'rage of party madness'.[15]

'Salopiensis' began and ended his piece with ironic disclaimers. First: 'You cannot expect a learned and accurate reply from a plain Man, who is not a Master of Arts in either of our famous Universities: but he hath read something; and thought much'. And last: 'I am neither Arian, Socinian, Pelagian, nor Arminian, as far as I know what those hard words and terms of reproach mean'. The significance of these comments is understandable because the author was a product of Philip Doddridge's Dissenting Academy at Northampton.[16] He was in fact Job Orton, leading Dissenting minister in Shrewsbury from 1741 until 1765. He was born in Shrewsbury in 1717 to parents who belonged to the small Independent congregation which met at the King's Head. Job Orton returned to the town to lead the larger Presbyterian congregation on High Street, successor to such preachers as John Bryan who had been minister at St Chad's during the Commonwealth; Orton revered Bryan although he had not known him. When he returned to Shrewsbury the congregations of Presbyterians and Independents merged. The High Street register recorded this: '1741. November 5. The independent congregation of King's Head, Shrewsbury, admitted to fellowship, being unanimously agreed that the old distinguishing names of Presbyterian and Independent should be entirely dropped and forgotten, and the sacred name Christian alone be used'.[17] Orton was dedicated to pastoral work, living frugally; he also chose the celibate life. 'It was a constant part of his business in the pulpit to explain the scriptures … As a preacher, few on the whole excelled him … But he never affected the arts of oratory'.[18]

Since 1748 Orton's co-minister at High Street was Joseph Fownes; he remained in place after Orton was forced by ill-health to give up preaching in September 1765. This resignation brought to a head a division in the High Street congregation. Some, including better-off members, accepted as new minister a young man from Warrington Academy, Benjamin Stapp. This Academy had been founded by John Seddon (1724–70) 'to further the progress of true religion and religious liberty'. From 1761 to 1767 one of the tutor-managers was the brilliant Joseph Priestley, in charge of the teaching of language and languages. History and mathematics were also taught. Students were expected to attend divine service but the Prayer Book was not used and there was no subscription to the Thirty-Nine Articles. The theology of the small college was said to be 'Arian': Arius, early in the fourth century, taught 'since the supreme God is one, that Christ must in some respect come after and be other than the Father'.[19] The advent of an 'Arian' caused 'a large orthodox secession' from High Street. Orton supported this: 'upon every principle of conscience and duty, as a Christian, a Dissenter, a Minister, and a friend to liberty, I was obliged to

countenance and concur with them'. The seceders (one of whom was the Shrewsbury publisher Joshua Eddowes) met in temporary quarters but planned a new meeting-house. The unfortunate Stapp died, aged 24, in March 1767; he was buried at St Alkmund's. Despite this, the two congregations could not be reconciled – Fownes may already have revealed his Unitarian tendency (he would later introduce a Unitarian liturgy at High Street).

The foundation stone of the 'New Chapel' on Swan Hill was laid on 13 April 1767; the chapel opened for worship in September with nine ministers and about 600 people attending. One of the nine was the new minister, Robert Gentleman. The inscription on the building declared that it was erected 'for the public worship of God, And in defence of the right of majorities in Protestant Dissenting Congregations to choose their own ministers'.[20] Robert Gentleman was born in 1745 near Whitchurch, Shropshire; his family were members of the Presbyterian chapel at Doddington. Influenced by Orton, he entered Daventry Academy in 1763. This was the successor to Northampton Academy, Doddridge having entrusted the college to Caleb Ashworth of Daventry; Doddridge died in 1751. It was to Daventry that Joseph Priestley first went, in 1752: 'all topics were subject to continual discussion, and students were indulged in the greatest freedoms without doctrinal constraints or impositions". Gentleman was married at St Alkmund's in 1767 and ordained at the New Chapel in 1768. He opened a school in Hills Lane in 1775, but left Shrewsbury for Carmarthen in 1779.[21]

Orton's resignation did not mark the end of his work. He wrote a biography of Doddridge, and left manuscript studies of the Old Testament (to be edited by Gentleman). We have seen how, in 1770, he wrote an eloquent defence of Dr Adams. He also wrote letters, not only to dissenting ministers, but to a young Anglican, Thomas Stedman of Bridgnorth, who entered Pembroke College, Oxford, as a gentleman, aged 21, in 1768. Orton had moved to Kidderminster when he wrote of Stedman in October 1771: 'I am glad that he is to accept the curacy of Little Cheverel, Wilts'. He wrote numerous letters to Stedman, advising on preaching (long texts and short sermons), catechising (older children and youths in public, young children in the chancel or parsonage), friendly talks with the young men (as Orton had done at Shrewsbury). He recommended *The Country Parson* by the seventeenth century poet-priest George Herbert, who had also had a Wiltshire living; and *The Saints Everlasting Rest* by Richard Baxter. In one letter he wrote: 'I congratulate you on the approach of Spring, when every scene will be enlivened around you, and a country village will become a kind of paradise'. After Stedman moved to the Gloucestershire living of Wormington, Orton commented: 'I am glad you have introduced Psalm-singing into your church'. Orton had done the same at Shrewsbury, training certain young men and dispersing them among the congregation. He had always lived in families where singing was used, including his father's house in Shrewsbury. In due course Stedman would become vicar of St Chad's in Shrewsbury.[22]

In September 1771 a new bishop of Lichfield and Coventry was consecrated: Brownlow North, born in 1741, was only just of canonical age for this promotion, but he was recommended by his half-brother Frederick Lord North, 'an effective parliamentary manager' for George III.[23] The customary questionnaires for the primary visitation were sent out from the bishop's palace at Eccleshall to the parishes in the four archdeaconries. The joint diocesan chancellors at Lichfield were Richard and Thomas Smalbrooke, sons of Richard, bishop of Lichfield from 1731 until his death in 1749. A third son, Samuel, was a canon residentiary at Lichfield from 1744 and rector of Wem from 1751 until his death in 1808.[24] A nineteenth-century study of English bishops in the eighteenth century calls North 'a bishop somewhat of the ornamental order' and 'an honourable English gentleman, dignified and courteous, amiable and generous'; he travelled a good deal.[25] Lichfield probably saw little of him – he was promoted to Worcester in 1774 – but the 1772 visitation was conducted thoroughly, and the returns survive. Four questionnaires were returned from Shrewsbury, St Mary's being as usual exempt (as a royal peculiar).[26]

William Gorsuch, vicar of Holy Cross and St Giles, was precise and somewhat terse. For an estimate of population he referred the bishop to his articles in the Royal Society's *Philosophical Transactions*. He reported that he was constantly resident in his parish and that prayers, sermons, catechising and both the sacraments were duly performed. Samuel Sneade of St Alkmund's also resided constantly; he had no curate. The parish might contain about 300 houses in Shrewsbury besides those in country areas. (Each parish reached out to cover townships and hamlets.) Sneade conducted the service three times on the Lord's Day, giving one sermon; the sacrament was given monthly (the norm for that period). The living was valued at about £100. John Wingfield's parish of St Julian's was worth about £60 a year; it was compact in area with only a few straggling houses in Shelton and Pulley (to the west of the town). He had no curate but conducted the service twice every Lord's Day, with one sermon, and prayers on Wednesdays and Fridays. The children were duly catechised; the sacrament was given monthly. A voluntary Charity School, founded by Thomas Bowdler in about 1724, accommodated about thirty boys and girls; they were taught to read and write, and the girls to sew. These children were generally apprenticed.

William Adams answered more fully (although he forgot to sign the form). St Chad's parish comprehended a great part of the town and eight townships; there were about 900 houses. There were several families 'of note' including those of General Severne and Colonel Congreve. There was no parsonage (which is somewhat surprising). He rented accommodation in Shrewsbury, but he had a parsonage house at Cound, six miles away. He constantly resided in Shrewsbury during the winter and preached there every other Sunday in summer. He had a

young curate in Shrewsbury whose maintenance of about £24 a year (from the collection for the afternoon sermon) Adams supplemented with an additional £30 a year. There were two sermons every Sunday and prayers every afternoon and in the morning on Wednesdays, Fridays and holidays. Children were catechised twice a week during Lent and on every other Sunday. There was a hospital built by the late Mr Millington for twelve old people; they had a chaplain. There was also a school taking twenty boys and twenty girls; the schoolmaster and schoolmistress had private apartments. There was another almshouse in the churchyard for twelve old people. A Charity School was supported by contributions from all parts of the town; upwards of 100 children were taught to read and some to write; the girls were taught to sew and knit and spent half their time spinning for a manufactory of baize carried on by two tradesmen; the children returned to their parents at the age of twelve. Offertory money was given to the poor by the minister and churchwardens.

Apart from parish matters there were questions about those outside the Church of England. Dr Adams reported that there were about 21 Papists who were said to meet regularly on Sundays and other days; he was not acquainted with the name or residence of the priest. There was a Quaker meeting-house, another of Anabaptists (Baptists), and two of Presbyterians. The number of the last group was considerable; their ministers were Mr Fownes and Mr Gentleman. Adams explained that a few years before there had been a split in the congregation, which led to the building of a new meeting-house. There were no persons of rank but some wealthy Presbyterian tradesmen. The Baptist preacher was Mr Pine. For Holy Cross no Papists or Quakers were reported. Samuel Sneade of St Alkmund's knew of only one family of reputed Papists and only a few Presbyterian families; there were even fewer Methodists, who had no meeting-house. In St Julian's parish there were about twenty Presbyterians, eight Baptists, and three or four Methodists who had as teacher Mr Appleton, by trade a currier, from another parish. Only four or five Papists were known and no Quakers or Moravians. The last group are named because they were mentioned on the questionnaire. We may wonder why. Question 3 asks whether there are in the parish "any Quakers, Presbyterians, Independents, Anabaptists, Methodists, or Moravians."

Groups of the Moravian Brethren left Germany for America and England in the 1730s. Early Methodists were impressed by their piety, religion of the heart, hymn-singing and the stillness in which they awaited the Holy Spirit. The Wesleys and especially Benjamin Ingham were influenced by them, but soon they found the movement incompatible with their own way. John Wesley wrote in 1741 to his brother Charles: 'As yet I dare no wise join with the Moravians'. Their whole scheme was mystical, not scriptural.[27] From the original meeting place at Fetter Lane in London Moravian missions were sent abroad, from Labrador to Antigua, and other groups were established in England. In the 1780s Rowland Hill, preacher and younger brother of Richard praised the Moravians' 'Glorious Displays of Gospel Grace'.[28] There was an important Moravian community at Fulneck in south Yorkshire and others in neighbouring Derbyshire. The archdeaconry of Derby was in the diocese of Lichfield so we have returns from there, from the (sometimes confused) Anglican standpoint. At Melbourn there were 'Anabaptists or Moravians, as they are called'; their teachers were Perkins and Smith. At Ockbrooke there were no Quakers, Presbyterians, Independents, Anabaptists or Methodists, but there were Moravians who had come from 'distant places' – does this mean Yorkshire or Germany? They had a licensed meeting-house and their teacher's name was Worthington. In the archdeaconry of Stafford, we find the return from Madeley (not to be confused with Shropshire Madeley): at Baldwin's Gate there was 'a widow Griffith who is either a Methodist or Moravian at whose house I am told frequent meetings are held especially on Sunday nights, and the said Griffiths with others of equal capacity harangue the foolish Auditors. Her farm adjoins the Eccleshall parish'. So she was almost on the doorstep of the Bishop's palace.

In the archdeaconry of Salop the Methodists figured prominently, with some familiar names. At Dawley Magna there were many Methodists who met in a private house with Parson Fletcher as their head teacher. (Fletcher's own parish of Madeley was in the diocese of Hereford.) At [Market] Drayton there were many Methodists who had one licensed meeting-house; Captain Scott was their leader; their number had recently increased. At Myddle there was a Methodist meeting-house; members were all 'lower sort of people'; their teachers were the vicar and curate of Shawbury, James Stillingfleet and Richard De Courcy, both Calvinists; the patron of the living was Richard Hill. Others named were John Fletcher, Thomas Powys and Captain Scott. Their number had increased but the writer could assign 'no Reason but the Love of Novelty'. There was no return from the Hills' parish of Hodnet but that from Stoke-upon-Tern reported increasing numbers of Methodists who met at Captain Scott's house. Richard De Courcy is of particular interest (Plate 1). Chaplain in Ireland to Lady Huntingdon's cousin Walter Shirley, he had been ordained deacon in Dublin; he came to England in 1768. Just at this time there was a rift between the Ladies Huntingdon and Glenorchy and John Wesley, who was no longer welcome in their pulpits. In January 1771 John Wesley recorded in his diary: 'I had an hour's conversation with that amiable young man, Mr de C[ourcy], whose opinion has not spoiled his temper. But how long will he hold out against its baleful tendency? I fear, not to the end of the year'.[29]

There is no record of De Courcy's ordination as priest but we may detect the influence of Lady Huntingdon (she arranged more than one ordination in London), in alliance with Richard Hill who provided the young man with a

Plate 1 The Revd Richard De Courcy. (From R. F. Skinner, *Nonconformity in Shropshire, 1662–1816*, 1964.

title for ordination by making him curate at Shawbury in August 1772. On 1 February 1774 he was appointed vicar of St Alkmund's in Shrewsbury.[30] Richard De Courcy proved a novelty among the Anglicans of Shrewsbury: he was young, Irish, and 'Methodist' – more accurately, Calvinist Evangelical Anglican. His neighbour at St Julian's, John Wingfield, had been vicar there since 1756; he also held the living of Atcham and served as minister at Berwick chapel. At nearby St Mary's Edward Blakeway, another pluralist, had succeeded Benjamin Wingfield in 1763. The Wingfields and Blakeways were 'dynastic' clerics in Shrewsbury. Edward Blakeway had come out on the side of Dr Adams in the 1770 controversy, publishing *The Church of England Vindicated*. William Gorsuch had been at Holy Cross since 1752, and William Adams at St Chad's since 1732. In 1775 Adams was elected Master of Pembroke College, Oxford, where he settled with his wife and daughter, receiving among his visitors his old friend Dr Johnson. In March 1776 Boswell and Johnson went to Oxford and 'waited on [Johnson's] old friend Dr Adams, the master of [Pembroke], whom I found to be a most polite, pleasing, communicative man'. They walked with Adams in the Master's garden and were taken to meet other professors. Adams said to Boswell of Johnson: 'I was his nominal tutor, but he was above my mark'. Johnson found this 'liberal and noble'.[31]

Adams' successor at St Chad's in 1775 was Thomas Humphries, second master at Shrewsbury School. In 1776 he wrote *A preservative from criminal offences: or the power of godliness to conquer the reigning vices of sensuality and profaneness*. Three editions of this work were published that year by W. Williams, printer and bookseller. In an attempt to propagate his message Humphries requested readers to lend the book to a neighbour, or to read it to those who could not or would not read it for themselves – there were none so bad but they may amend and be saved. If people heeded this there would be no need of prisons: 'And we shall be delivered from the dreadful necessity of dragging to prisons, and to death, many a one of our unhappy fellow creatures, to the great grief of every tender hearted person'. Later in the piece he asked: 'Why should we give men over for lost, when God never gives them over?' They could all become holy and happy, if they pleased.[32] This was not the doctrine preached at St Alkmund's; Humphries may have been responding to the Calvinist teaching of De Courcy. In December 1776 De Courcy preached two of the official fast day sermons against events in America: *National Troubles a proper Ground for National Humiliation w*as published in Shrewsbury, immediately. A generally censorious sermon, it castigates the Americans in particular as rebels not only against the earthly king but also against the King of Heaven (p. 77).

De Courcy was a popular preacher; he also published several works. One unusual publication, a small book, is a long verse composition satirising himself:

> Young Disputator, good and gifted,
> And to St Alkmond's [sic] pulpit lifted,
> Discharg'd the duties of his station,
> With pious zeal and reputation …
> Th'exalted Vicar from his chair
> Pontific, towring in the air,
> Beholds his Brethren far below,
> As his subjected slaves, that owe
> Obedience, passive and implicit
> To his sound creed.

Although the picture of the vicar in his three-tiered pulpit is self-mockery, we may also find egocentricity as well as Irish wit in the lines. In De Courcy's preface we read: 'He presumes that no serious reader who is acquainted with the rise of the present controversy, and hath read Mr De Courcy's numerous publications on the subject, can be reasonably offended at the irony of this Poem, since he encounters his literary antagonist with his own weapons'.[33] What was this controversy? It was De Courcy's attack on the Baptists in Shrewsbury. Hearing of the prolonged affair, Job Orton wrote from Kidderminster in 1777: 'Mr G--- [probably Gentleman] brought me no material news from Shrewsbury, but that the Baptists are exerting all their zeal to make proselytes, and the controversy is still going on between them and the vicar of St Alkmond [sic]. It is a great pleasure to me to reflect, that I was always upon good terms with the Baptists, and did what I could to serve them'.[34]

The Baptists, like the Quakers, reduced worship to essentials: 'in the simplicity of their first meeting-houses, in which a bench for their seniors and leaders replaced the central altar of the Anglican Church and the central pulpit and Communion-table of the Dissenting meeting-house'. They formed themselves into 'democratic fellowships', making no distinction between meetings for worship and business. The Baptists rejected infant baptism – hence their being called Anabaptists.[35] The first surviving Baptist minute book in Shrewsbury runs from 1718 to 1814; the history was not without disputes and divisions. In 1750 Mr Rhys Evans' wife brought 'great confusion into this Church'; her husband was dismissed. In 1762 Mr Pyne is named as pastor (the man named by Dr Adams in 1772). In 1773 the troubles in the Baptist Church in Shrewsbury necessitated the help of neighbouring ministers: Pyne with eight or nine others withdrew over the issue of 'dipping' (total immersion). Finally the church in Shrewsbury decided against immersion.[36] In 1776 De Courcy published a pamphlet in response to an address by Mr P[yne] 'to the Baptist-Church, Meeting in the Highstreet, Shrewsbury': De Courcy requested to be informed whether Mr M (Samuel Medley of Liverpool) said that adult immersion was essential. De Courcy had in press 'a treatise on the scriptural ground of infant baptism' and he took Pyne's address to be aimed against his own forthcoming treatise. Not only was this an unwarranted interference in the Baptists' affairs, but De Courcy was caustic and insulting, referring to Pyne's 'risible' address, with its grammatical inaccuracies and no shadow of an argument, and to his 'erroneous church', with what he called its 'superstitious bigotry'. De Courcy published other pamphlets, against Medley and in vindication of infant baptism, before producing his verse satire, *The Shropshire Zealot*, writing as 'John the Dipper'.[37] The presence of such a contentious, able and provocative preacher at St Alkmund's was obviously not conducive to religious harmony in the town. Yet he was popular – perhaps the popularity followed the performances in the pulpit. The potentially baleful side of his character had been detected by John Wesley in 1771, but Richard Hill supported De Courcy, going to hear him preach when he was in Shrewsbury: 'my predestinarian principles give me a much stronger penchant to attend the little vicar' he wrote to an unnamed friend in 1774.[38]

The Wesleyan Methodists had a distinct presence in Shrewsbury. In 1781 they had their own meeting-house, opened by John Wesley, as he recorded: 'Tuesday 27 [March]. "I went a little out of my way in order to open the new preaching-house at Shrewsbury. I did not so much wonder at the largeness as at the seriousness of the congregation. So still and deeply attentive a congregation I did not expect to see here. How apt are we to forget the important truth, that 'all things are possible with God" '. The meeting-house was built at the expense of John Appleton, currier (mentioned in the 1772 returns) and was situated in Hills Lane. Wesley's next visit to Shrewsbury was on 5 August 1784, to preach John Appleton's memorial sermon.[39] This was a critical period in the history of Wesley's movement: many Methodist societies had developed into institutions outside the Church of England. In 1784 Wesley made provision for the corporate body of the 'Yearly Conference of the People called Methodists'; this body could appoint preachers to preaching houses managed by boards of trustees.[40]

Among the anti-Calvinist churches in the town, St Chad's is of particular interest. The 1770 Hill-Romaine intervention had backfired, revealing pastoral work being conducted with tolerance and charity on the part of the Anglicans and Dissenters. The St Chad's friendships continued. Dr Adams had called on Orton in 1778; Orton

wrote: 'He seems well and hearty, considering his age, and is in high repute at Oxford'. Adams had a prebend and a house at Gloucester and was probably en route to or from Oxford when he made the visit to Kidderminster. (In 1789 Adams died at his Gloucester home.) In June 1783 Thomas Stedman, the recipient of many letters from Orton, was en route from Shrewsbury to Gloucestershire when he made a visit: 'called on good Mr Orton, took him a letter from Mr Fownes, found him much altered – in great weakness of body'. On his return journey Stedman called again: 'I found him less confused. He took his leave'. Orton died on 19 July 1783 and was buried according to his wish at St Chad's, next to the long-dead Presbyterian John Bryan. It was in 1783 that Stedman was married at St Chad's to Catherine Adams, on 14 September; the vicar of the church, Thomas Humphries, died in October; Thomas Stedman succeeded him. Samuel Palmer recorded, in his preface to *Letters to Dissenting Ministers*, that Stedman 'expressed great satisfaction in having the remains of that excellent man [Orton] deposited in his church, and in the idea of mingling his own dust with his'. Stedman also described Fownes as a friend, once more crossing the confessional divide.[41]

Joseph Fownes is worth a comment: it was he who led the 'Arian' faction at High Street, occasioning the secession to Swan Hill, approved by Orton; his letter to Orton, diffuse as it is, is filled with Christian compassion, recommending the sick man to 'the tenderness of the great Father of our spirits', citing the gospel of the Son. Another former Shrewsbury Dissenting minister and follower of Orton, Robert Gentleman, had also changed his views since going to Carmarthen; he became first minister of the New Meeting of Arian seceders in Kidderminster in June 1784; he remained there until his death in 1795.[42] An important figure in the Unitarian movement was Theophilus Lindsey, an Anglican vicar who left the Church of England, explaining his belief that the early Church was not trinitarian; he also cited Luther and Calvin (the trinity was a human invention). He had led an unsuccessful campaign to do away with subscription to the Thirty-Nine Articles, and to reform the Articles. Lindsey's revision of the liturgy was produced in 1774: *The Book of Common Prayer reformed according to the plan of the Late Dr Samuel Clarke*. He revised Clarke's plan also. The Unitarian theology is expressed most clearly in Lindsey's Exhortation in the Order of Baptism: 'By being baptized, you do not declare yourself of any religious sect or party: but a Christian'. The apostles, Luther, Calvin, Socinus, although eminent reformers, were fallible human beings, only to be followed as far as they followed Christ, 'our common Master' and the truth which he taught. Christ, while not to be worshipped, was to be revered as a teacher and prophet (even as a messiah, but a man). Lindsey found the greatest sympathy with his work among the radical Presbyterians, 'soon to be known as Unitarians', writes Horton Davies who also observes that the innovators of worship in the eighteenth century were the Methodists and the Unitarians.[43] In 1779 Lindsey's Essex Street liturgy, used at his London chapel, was unanimously agreed to and adopted by the High Street congregation in Shrewsbury. In 1780 William Tayleur, an associate of Lindsey, joined the High Street Chapel. In 1783 Tayleur was a founding member of Lindsey's Society for Promoting Knowledge of the Scriptures: its object, Lindsey told Tayleur in a letter of 1784, was 'to circulate rational sentiments of Christianity among the people'. Tayleur expressed doubts as to whether this would 'render the gospel level to the capacities of the common people' which Tayleur took to be the original objective. Through Tayleur and the Shrewsbury publisher Joshua Eddowes, Shrewsbury was linked to the network of towns receiving Unitarian tracts from London. The service books for the Unitarian liturgy were also supplied from London, in a choice of black or coloured bindings.[44]

In 1788, on 28 March, Wesley visited Madeley to see 'dear friends', including John Fletcher's widow Mary Bosanquet. The next day he went to Shrewsbury 'and spent an afternoon very agreeably. The room was so crowded in the evening as I never saw it before; perhaps the more, by reason of two poor wretches who were executed in the afternoon. It was given me to speak strong words, such as made the stouthearted tremble. Surely, there is now, if there never was before, a day of salvation to this town also.' In March the next year Wesley again followed visits to Midland towns with an excursion into Shropshire, to Madeley, of course, and to Shrewsbury. On Tuesday 24th, at six in the evening, he preached in the preaching-house on I Cor. 13:1–3: 'Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.' 'Several of the gentry and several clergymen were there, and I believe not in vain.' In March 1790 Wesley was in Shropshire again: at Madeley he judged that the church 'was filled with the presence of God'; at Shrewsbury he spoke to a crowded audience but as soon as he ceased they started talking among themselves – they had, he wrote in his diary, 'neither sense nor manners, being *gentlefolks*'. By this time Wesley's powers were failing, his voice barely audible. He died the following year.[45]

One assessment of Shropshire in the closing years of the eighteenth century is that, like Lancashire, it was remote and isolated, while the regional capitals, Shrewsbury and Manchester, were refuges for Catholics and 'bishops in the Nonjuring tradition'.[46] Not only does this sound like a southern viewpoint but by spotlighting two small peripheral groups it misses the main picture. The Roman Catholics in Shrewsbury, still referred to as Papists, numbered about 50 at the end of the century. They had a chapel near the town walls with James Cornes as priest: 'a very worthy, peaceable and learned person' as two Anglican ministers described him; he died in 1817.[47] The 'Nonjuring tradition' was represented by a very small group, led by William Cartwright: he had been ordained

by the Jacobite nonjuring 'bishop' Thomas Deacon of Manchester; Deacon's church was catholic but not papal. Cartwright was an apothecary and surgeon – perhaps a suitable occupation for a man of religion. He was a serious and learned man, as his writings show. He had a follower in Thomas Podmore, chaplain and schoolmaster at Millington's Hospital. Cartwright described his group as the Orthodox remnant of the Ancient British Church. He had his own liturgy and conducted services at his house in Mardol, in the spacious panelled dining-room with its portrait of Cartwright in episcopal robes. In his final illness, when he lived in Abbey Foregate, he received the sacrament from the curate of St Giles, the Rev. W. G. Rowland. Cartwright was buried at St Giles in 1799.[48] This remnant makes an interesting addition to the religious history of Georgian Shrewsbury, but it is insignificant. As for the Roman Catholics, their time was yet to come.

The Church of England still served the majority; whatever was happening inside the town's parish churches, their outer fabric was in need of renewal. St Julian's had been partly rebuilt in 1750, but the other buildings within the town walls were neglected until the 1780s. In spring 1788 Thomas Telford was invited to repair the medieval fabric of St Mary's; he also surveyed old St Chad's but the churchwardens disregarded his advice. In July that year the crossing tower of St Chad's collapsed, an event which disturbed the public. In the following year the bishop conducted a confirmation at St Julian's. St Chad's was rebuilt on a new site, in a new circular style, at great expense (over £17,000); the architect was George Steuart of London (then designing Attingham for Noel Hill, Lord Berwick). Following this, in 1793, St Alkmund's was declared to be in an advanced state of deterioration; it was rebuilt by a local firm (J. Carline and J. Tilley) at an estimated cost of under £3000: its oak furnishings included 'a neat Gothic Table for the Communion'. The new church opened for worship in November 1795.[49]

Richard De Courcy of St Alkmund's continued as a Calvinist evangelical and an adherent of the Hills of Hawkstone. A visitor to Shrewsbury in 1793, the sardonic John Byng, had heard of De Courcy: 'I enquired for the Church of St Alkmund (who was he?) where a famous preacher holds forth. So I went soon after ten o'clock [on Sunday 21 July] … the church was crowded to hear their famous preacher.- The service was drowsily perform'd by a sick looking curate. A Psalm, and a hymn were decently sung.- When I learn'd the ministers [sic] name (the far-famed) De Courcy – I guessed at his nation; with this his face corresponded; and he had a brogue, which few of them chuse to part with … This gentleman possesses, with all his countrymen, a lack of judgement; as never knowing when, or where to stop … an everlasting tongue, which, upon the smallest rest, will renew for another 3 hours! His discourse was rash, and bewilder'd … He went on for an hour, and twenty minutes!! Too long for my mind, or any attention: his auditors sleep'd, and waked; stood up, and sat down'. His obituarist was kinder about De Courcy's preaching: 'differing from those generally stiled Evangelical Ministers in this, that he never appealed to the passions of his auditors, but through the medium of the understanding'.[50]

Thomas Stedman of St Chad's was cast in a more liberal mould than De Courcy; he was the friend of Dissenters like Fownes and Orton, the latter having written to Stedman over many years. In 1791 Stedman wrote the preface to the two-volume collection of Orton's *Letters to a Young Clergyman:* the 'general contents of the following Letters being on subjects of considerable importance'. In 1789 Joseph Fownes had died, in his seventies, and his assistant since October 1787, John Rowe, was elected sole pastor at the High Street Chapel. Rowe was from a nonconformist family in Devon; he had attended two London academies, at Hoxton (dissolved in 1785) then at Hackney where one of his tutors was the Welsh-born Unitarian Richard Price. Price became involved in the political campaign of the Dissenters for toleration, maintaining that everyone had not only a right to worship God according to his conscience, but also the right not to be disadvantaged in the way Dissenters had been by the Test Acts, debarring them from public office unless they subscribed to the Thirty-Nine Articles. Price was a friend of Priestley and Lindsey, and also of Dr William Adams. Unitarians were further disadvantaged, being vulnerable to the Blasphemy Act of 1698; by 1792 they wanted a firmer legal status, but their petition in that year was rejected by parliament. Toleration was not extended to Unitarians until 1813. English politics were influenced by events in France: in 1789, on 4 November, birthday of William III, Richard Price was invited to give the address at a meeting of the Society for Commemorating the Revolution in Great Britain, of 1688. Price moved a resolution congratulating the French national assembly for *its* revolution while welcoming the prospect of common participation in civil and religious liberty. In 1791 the Constitutional Society of Birmingham held a dinner to celebrate Bastille day; a public riot ensued during which two Unitarian meeting houses and seven private residences were destroyed; Joseph Priestley's house, library, laboratory and papers were ruined, but Priestley had fled. By 1793 the hopes of the Revolution in France had turned to the horrors of the Terror, and the guillotining of Louis XVI (21 January).[51]

On 30 January, the anniversary of the execution of Charles I, Thomas Stedman preached the fast sermon in new St Chad's. In his elegant open pulpit, surrounded by pews and gallery seats, he was closer to the congregation than in a dark medieval church; the font was placed at the epicentre. As well as the light provided by the design, the acoustics had been considered: 'Columns, Gallery and flat Ceiling all contribute to destroy Echo'. Over a thousand persons could be accommodated. Stedman did not celebrate Charles the Martyr but the freedom from absolutism and popery obtained after the exile of his Catholic son James II and his replacement by the Protestant William of

Orange: people were now secure in their rights and privileges, in tolerable comfort and security, with a present king (George III) who respected the Christian religion. 'We are obliged likewise to pray for our Governors from motives of Charity and Compassion towards them'; Stedman referred to the 'horrid transactions' in France.[52]

In London in 1795 demonstrations, including throwing stones at the king's coach, led to Pitt's two 'Gagging Acts', restricting activities of radicals, including lecturers. One of these, active in Bristol, was the twenty-three years old poet Coleridge whose journal the *Watchman* (1796) had as its motto: 'A People are Free in Proportion as they Form Their Own Opinions'. At this time Coleridge was Unitarian in religion, influenced by Priestley; he lectured on religion in Bristol. It was this circumstance that brought him to Shrewsbury in January 1798, as a possible replacement for John Rowe who wished to return to Bristol. Coleridge preached at High Street Chapel, stayed at the new 'parsonage-house' on Claremont Hill and also visited the Unitarian minister at Wem, William Hazlitt, whose son heard the poet preach. 'I rose one morning before daylight, to walk ten miles in the mud, and went to hear this celebrated person preach … When I got there the organ was playing the 100th psalm, and when it was done, Mr Coleridge rose and gave out his text, "And he went up into the mountain to pray, HIMSELF, ALONE"… and when he came to the last two words, which he pronounced loud, deep and distinct, it seemed to me, who was then young, as if the sounds had echoed from the bottom of the human heart.' This episode began a new friendship, but Coleridge did not accept the post at High Street, being offered an unconditional annuity of £150 by his friends Josiah and Thomas Wedgwood, to devote himself to poetry. He returned to the West Country.[53]

Finally, we have a survey of religious groups in Shrewsbury, made at the end of 1799. Unitarians are calculated at 100, Presbyterians about 200, Anabaptists 100, Quakers about 18, Wesleyan Methodists 56, Roman Catholics 50, and Moravians (a new category) 20. The writer of the report was the Anglican archdeacon of Salop, John Chapell Woodhouse, rector of Donnington, Shropshire, since 1778. He adds a comment about the number of Dissenters: 'it appears that the Number of Dissenters who generally collect in Shrewsbury does not amount to more than 550. We may suppose that one half of the families (viz. the aged, the sick, children and their Nurses and Cooks and persons who take care of the horses) stay at home, so that the whole number may be 1120'. His tone is sanguine, suggesting that these Dissenters were not troublesome (though he could be harsh about 'the wildest and lowest of the sectaries' in Lichfield). At the Anglican churches, communicants were reckoned at about 10% the number of parishioners: 140 out of 1400 at St Alkmund's where Richard De Courcy was 'much followed by those Methodists who still do not entirely relinquish the Church'. Services, sermons, monthly communion, and catechising were all satisfactory at the churches visited. Holy Cross had now passed to Lord Berwick's patronage. The archdeacon also commented on the ornaments and fabric of the restored buildings: St Chad's was 'very handsome'; St Julian's 'neat commodious and handsome'; St Alkmund's 'very handsome' with a painted window by Francis Eginton (Woodhouse would have been familiar with the work of this artist-craftsman at Lichfield Cathedral). We learn also of the incomes of the clergy: £200 for Mr Stedman, £100 for Hugh Owen of St Julian's, £160 for De Courcy. In contrast to the parishes of Shrewsbury was that of Wem where Samuel Smalbroke (son of a former bishop) was still in place after over 40 years: 'the State of this Parish is certainly far from good – but what can be expected with such a Rector?' Aged 79, Smalbroke lay in bed most of the day, 'having done none of the Duty for some years past'. His parsonage had been lately repaired; he had an income of between £1400 and £1700 a year; that of his curate had recently been increased by the bishop to £75 a year. Dissenters flourished, while Anglican communicants were estimated at 50 out of about 1000 inhabitants. St Mary's in Shrewsbury was not subject to visitation but we learn from a later incumbent there that Edward Blakeway, 'like most of his predecessors and like his nephew and immediate successor, the Rev. J.B. Blakeway, was a pluralist, holding no less than three Cures at once, at long distances from each other'.[54]

Woodhouse also visited Hawkstone and its newly refurbished chapel of ease (to Hodnet) at Weston; this too met with approval. The chapel at Weston had been built, or restored, in 1791 by benefactions of the Hill family and friends: Sir Richard had given £720, his sister Jane £21, the Rev. Brian Hill 5 guineas, the Rev. Reginald Heber £21. Heber, a wealthy landowner, was the rector of Hodnet where a curate occupied the parsonage, being paid £100 out of the £1000 income; Heber also held the living of Malpas. Brian Hill, half-brother of Sir Richard, was rector of Loppington, Shropshire. Woodhouse was among his own gentry class here, admiring Hill's 'beautiful Residence' at Hawkstone. He decribed the chapel as 'a very compleat little place of divine worship, compleat in all its parts and ornaments, which do great credit to the taste as well as the Munificence of Sir Richard Hill'. We began with the layman and as yet untitled Richard Hill as a provoker of theological conflict in Shrewsbury; now he was approved of by the archdeacon. Woodhouse's role as a link between the cathedral at Lichfield and the parishes was important, especially as the very lordly Bishop James Cornwallis, heir to an earl and nephew to an archbishop of Canterbury, preferred to live in Surrey, visiting his diocese once every three years. As dean, from 1807, Woodhouse was active in Lichfield.[55]

This study shows that, while certain reforms were needed in the Church of England, it was not as negligent and corrupt as sometimes depicted. As a small but influential market town Shrewsbury offers us much in the way of evidence, not only about the established church in the later eighteenth century but also about the growth of

Nonconformity, before full Toleration was achieved. The study of the town therefore affords us valuable insights into its religious development. The main religious rift was within the Anglican Church, not as might be presumed between Anglicans and Dissenters, although there were divisions within Dissent too. The Methodists, still early in their development, were evidently in two camps. The whole picture is complex but study of documents allows us to uncover events.

Notes

1   *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [*ODNB*]: Romaine, Berridge; John Berridge is quoted in Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England* (**III**) *1690–1900*, 1961, 229–30; William Romaine, 'The Walk of Faith', in *The Life, Walk and Triumph of Faith*, Peter Toon (ed.), 1970, 192.

2   William Adams, *Test of True and False Doctrine* (1770): this sermon was preached on 24 September 1769 : H. Blakeway, *History of Shrewsbury*, 1825, **II**, 219n.

3   L.S. Sutherland and L.G. Mitchell (eds.), *The History of the University of Oxford*, **V**, 1986, chapters 13 and 14; Peter Martin, *Samuel Johnson: A Biography*, 2008, chapter 5.

4   Adams was chaplain to Bishop Edward Cresset of Llandaff; when the bishop died in 1755 his daughter presented Adams to Cound: Owen and Blakeway, *History*, **II**, 219.

5   Adams, *The duties of industry, frugality and sobriety* (1766). For an entirely secular survey of the town see Angus McInnes, 'The Emergence of a Leisure Town: Shrewsbury, 1660–1760', in *Past and Present*, **120**, 1988, 53–87.

6   *History of the University of Oxford*, **V**, 438–54.

7   Mark A. Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 2004, 62, 91, 96–107, 115–6; Alan Harding, *The Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion*, 2003, 24–7, 42.

8   W. R. Ward and R. P. Heinzenrater (eds.), *The Works of John Wesley*, **21–22**, 1992: **21**, 311, 353; **22,** 173–4, 197.

9   *History of the University of Oxford*, **V**, 459–61.

10   Julian McQuiston, 'Sir Richard Hill: Shropshire Evangelist', *Trans. Shrops. Archaeol. Soc.*, **LVIII**, 1965–68, 172, states this as a fact, citing Hill's first biographer, Edwin Sidney, but Sidney does not actually say this. He writes: 'The ministry of this excellent man [Romaine] had been very useful to [Hill] in London; it may therefore be imagined with what pleasure he welcomed him into Shropshire, and how delighted he was at his being permitted to preach at St Chad's' : *The Life of Sir Richard Hill*, 1839, 156. Imagining a situation is not the same as proving it.

11   *Works of John Wesley*, **22**, 341; *ODNB*, Richard Hill.

12   Tim Shenton, *Forgotten heroes of revival*, 2004, 62–89; Sarah Tytler, *The Countess of Huntingdon and her Circle*, 1907, 152–5 and *passim*.

13   Peter S. Forsaith (ed.), *Unexampled Labours: Letters of the Revd John Fletcher to leaders in the Evangelical Revival*, 2008, 12–15.

14   Edward Harold Browne, *An Exposition of the Thirty-Nine Articles*, 1887, 392–3.

15   *Diotrephes admonished*, 1770, 1–2, 5, 7–10, 17, 32, 58, 63–4.

16   Doddridge was orthodox though a non-subscriber and his Academy was 'the best small educational establishment in the country': Michael Watts, *The Dissenters*, 1985, 500–501.

17   *Shropshire Parish Registers: Nonconformist. High Street* Register, 1903, iii.

18   S. Palmer (ed.), Orton, *Letters to Dissenting Ministers*, 1806, preface.

19   M. McLachan, *Warrington Academy* (Chetham Society, **107**, 1943), 13–23; Robert E. Schofield, *The Enlightenment of Joseph Priestley*, 1997, chapters IV-VI; Diarmaid MacCulloch, *A History of Christianity*, 2009, 213.

20   *Shropshire Parish Registers: Register of Swan Hill Chapel Shrewsbury, 1767–1812*; Orton, *Letters to Dissenting Ministers*, xxxiv.

21   *ODNB*, Gentleman; Schofield, *Joseph Priestley*, 35.

22   *Alumni Oxon. 1715–1886*, 1347; Orton, *Letters to a Young Clergyman* (2nd ed.), 1800, *passim*.

23   *ODNB*, Brownlow North; Jeremy Black, *Eighteenth-Century Britain* (2nd ed.), 2008, 248.

24   *Alumni Oxon. 1715–1886*, 1308.

25   Charles J. Abbey, *The English Church and its Bishops 1700–1800*, 1887, **II**, 218–9.

26   Lichfield Record Office: B/V/5/18, 1772, archdeaconry of Salop.

27   John H. Tyson, *Assist Me to Proclaim: The Life and Hymns of Charles Wesley*, 2007, 57, 86, 96.

28   J. C. S. Mason, *The Moravian Church and the Missionary Awakening in England 1760–1800*, 2001, 146; *ODNB*, Benjamin Ingham, Rowland Hill.

29   Harding, *Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion*, 262–3; *The Works of John Wesley*, **22**, 216; Tytler, *Countess of Huntingdon*, 203.

30   Harding, *Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion*, 58–9; Church of England database, Lichfield diocese: the patron of St Alkmund's, Holy Cross and St Chad's was the king.

31   Owen and Blakeway, *History*, **II**, *passim*; *ODNB*, William Adams; R.W. Chapman (ed.), *Boswell: Life of Johnson*, 1976, 57, 691–3.

32   *Shropshire Parish Registers, St Chad's, Shrewsbury*, xix; *A preservative*, chapters [sections] V, VII.

33   [De Courcy], *The Salopian Zealot: or, The Good Vicare in a Bad Mood*, 1778.

34   Orton, *Letters to Dissenting Ministers*, 178.

35   Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology*, **III**, 123.

36   Claremont Minute Book, 1718–1814: Shropshire Archives, 2706/1. A 'new church' was formed in 1794 when 20 members sat down together; John Palmer of Bromsgrove became pastor, remaining for 27 years; they agreed at a meeting in 1800 'not to heed the rule of immersion'.

37   De Courcy, *A Word to Parmenas*, Shrewsbury, 1776, 1–10. His other pamphlets were advertised (at 1*s*. 6*d*. each) at the end of *National Troubles a proper Ground for National Humiliation*: *two sermons against the American rebellion*, 1776.

38 Edwin Sidney, *The Life of Sir Richard Hill*, 239.

39 *Works of John Wesley*, **23,** 196; **24**, 73.

40 F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone (eds.), *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (3rd ed.) 2005, 1084.

41 Orton, *Letters to Dissenting Ministers*, **II**, 223; preface, xliii-iv; *St Chad's Register*, xix.

42 *Letters to Dissenting Ministers*, **II**, Appendix 219–24; *High Street Register*, iii; *ODNB*, Gentleman.

43 Stuart Andrews, *Unitarian Radicalism: Political Rhetoric, 1770–1814*, 2003, 44, 14–17; Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England*, **III**, 76–93 (quotation p. 95).

44 *High Street Register*, iii; Andrews, *Unitarian Radicalism*, 110–12.

45 *Works of John* Wesley, 23, 196; **24**, 73, 125, 172; *ODNB*, John Wesley.

46 F. Mather, 'Georgian Churchmanship Reconsidered', in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, **36**, 1985, 273. The nonjurors were those clergy who, in 1688, would not take an oath to support the new regime, having already taken one to the Stuart monarchs.

47 Lichfield Record Office: 3916/1/1, visitation of 1799; Owen and Blakeway, *History*, **II**, 476.

48 William Phillips, 'William Cartwright, Nonjuror and his Chronological History of Shrewsbury', *Trans*. *Shrops*. *Archaeol*. *Soc*., 4th series, **4**, 1914, 1–30.

49 Terry Friedman, 'The Golden Age of Church Architecture in Shropshire', *Trans*. *Shrops*. *Archaeol*. *Soc*., **LXXI,** 1996, 82–134.

50 Bruyn Andrews (ed.), *The Torrington Diaries: Tours of Hon*. *John Byng*, **3**, 1936, 234–5; *Gentleman's Magazine*, **73**, 1803, 1094–5. For De Courcy's support of the Hills of Hawkstone in 1796, against the Attingham party: *A vindication of the character of Sir Richard* Hill, 1796. De Courcy died at the Mount, home of Dr Darwin, in 1803.

51 *ODNB*, Rowe, Price, Priestley; G. M. Ditchfield, 'The Unitarian Petition of 1792', in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, **42,** 1991, 39–67; Richard Brown, *Church and State in Modern Britain 1700–1850*, 1991, 110–11.

52 Friedman, *'Golden Age'*, 97–8; Stedman, *A sermon preached at St Chad's*, 1793.

53 Edward Vallance, *A Radical History of Britain*, 2009, 272; Roy Porter, *Enlightenment*, 2000, 462; A. C. Grayling, *The Quarrel of the Age: The Life and Times of William Hazlitt*, 2000, 50–1.

54 Lichfield Record Office: AO/3916/1/1, Visitation of Archdeaconry of Salop 1799, 77–81, 35; 3937/13, archdeacons of Salop, 4–5; Archdeacon Lloyd, *Notes on St Mary's*, 1900, 42.

55 Visitation 1799, 33–4; *ODNB*, Richard Hill; *Alumni Oxon*. *1715–1886*, 641, Reginald Heber; 659, Brian Hill; *VCH Staffs*, **XIV**, 69 (Cornwallis); 52, 173–4, 220 (Woodhouse).

The First Shropshire Mycologist and Lichenologist: Thomas Salwey, Vicar of Oswestry

By THOMAS PREECE[1]

The Revd. Thomas Salwey came from the ancient Herefordshire family, the Salweys of Orleton, near Ludlow. The family home was Moor Park in the parish of Richard's Castle, where the old Parish Church of St. Bartholomew contains many memorials to the family. Thomas, born in 1791, was the son of Theophilus Richard Salwey and Anne Marie Hill of Court of Hill, a member of the distinguished Hill family. He was educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, and ordained in the Church of England. Between 1817 and 1828 he was a Fellow of his college. In 1823 he became Vicar of Oswestry, where he remained beneficed for 48 years.

How he became obsessively interested in fungi, especially lichens, is not known, but it is possible that, like Charles Darwin, he was influenced at Cambridge by the Professor of Botany, J. S. Henshaw. There were living in Salwey's time several important mycologists (Table 1). He knew the Revd. W. A. Leighton, who had also been influenced by Henshaw, and who dedicated his 1840 (flowering plant) *Flora of Shropshire* to him, describing himself as 'his grateful pupil'. Leighton was briefly Curate of St. Giles's Church in Shrewsbury, but he devoted the rest of his life firstly to flowering plants and later, for many years, to lichens.

In 1838 Salwey was sending many named specimens of microscopic fungi to Kew. These included *Puccinia caricina* on the rare host *Carex elata* from Morda Pool, near Oswestry. Also, from places 'in Oswestry', he sent *P. caricina* on nettle, *Puccinia adoxae* on the Town Hall Clock, and *Puccinia calcitrapae* on knapweed, as well as

Table 1   Shropshire Mycologists, 1782–1916, and Other Naturalists Working in the Time of Thomas Salwey.

J. V. M Dovaston	1782–1854	Naturalist, botanist, tree nurseryman of West Felton, Oswestry
Revd. T. Salwey	1791–1877	Born near Ludlow. Botanist, mycologist and lichenologist. Vicar of Oswestry 1823–71.
Revd. W. A. Leighton	1805–1889	Of Shrewsbury. *Flowering Plant Flora of Shropshire* (1840). In 1871 his *Lichen Flora of Great Britain* became a standard text.
W. Phillips	1822–1905	Of Shrewsbury. In 1887 published *British Discomycetes*.
Revd. W. Houghton	1829–1895	Vicar of Preston upon the Weald Moors. His standard translation of Greek and Latin writers about fungi is still unsurpassed. Inspired many other mycologists.
Revd. J. E. Vize	1831–1916	Vicar of Forden, Montgomeryshire, on the Shropshire border. Mycologist, with a special interest in rust fungi.

other rusts from his vicarage garden on poplar, birch, and roses. The smut fungus on grasses, *Ustilago salvei*, was named in his honour in 1850. His specimen, collected in 1847 on cock's-foot grass at St. Martin's, Guernsey, is in the Kew herbarium, and is the type specimen of this fungus. It is now called *Ustilago striiformis*, and is found on many genera of grasses in Britain today.

Salwey produced a list of fungi (and a long list of lichens) from around Oswestry in 1855 in Cathrall's *History of Oswestry*. Identifying the spores of rust fungi and of lichens necessitates microscopy. The use by naturalists of a microscope in Salwey's time was directly the result of Robert Brown's description and illustration of cell nuclei for the first time in 1831. By 1841 the price of a microscope was 'reasonable'. Even before that, however, in 1834, J. V. M. Dovaston was grumbling at West Felton that 'naturalists here are becoming so damned learned that they will not look at flowers; nothing will go down with them but a minute moss, lichen or fungus'.

Lichens and microscopy took over Salwey's life as a naturalist, and between 1823 and 1863 he produced lists of lichens, not only for the Oswestry area, but also for Wales and Great Britain. He made important lichen collections from Guernsey, the Isle of Wight, and, more specifically, from Barmouth, Harlech, and Dolgellau. All his specimens were shared with the Revd. W. A. Leighton. Salwey prepared bound collections of lichen specimens for various museums (as was the custom then). One of these collections is in Bolton Museum. He corresponded with the eminent lichenologists of the day in long letters. These letters, some of which are in the British Museum (Natural History), show that he was *au fait* with the lichen literature, in English and other languages. His unstinted contributions to the Revd. W. A. Leighton's two books on lichens remain significant today. In 1851 Leighton published a superbly illustrated book on perithecial lichens, *The British Species of Angiocarpous Lichens Enumerated by their Sporidia*, using a number of specimens provided by Salwey. It contained coloured transverse sections of lichen thalli and coloured groups of individual spores, prepared 'using a large and powerful microscope of the best construction made by Powell & Leland, Opticians, of London'.

A good example from this book is the first lichen described in it, called by Leighton *Sphaerophorum coralloides*. Two types are given, the first from 'Shropshire, near Oswestry, Rev. T. Salwey' and the second from 'Craigforda, near Oswestry, Rev. T. Salwey'. These two types are now known as *Sphaerophorus fragilis* and *Sphaerophorus globosus*. Later in the book a lengthy description of a lichen by Salwey, written in 1844, is included *verbatim*.

Salwey was seldom in Oswestry after 1840, being in Guernsey, Jersey, or the Isle of Wight. He also stayed in places on the Welsh coast, including both Barmouth and Harlech, for prolonged periods. Curates cared for the parish of Oswestry from this date until he retired in 1871.

In 1871 Leighton produced a hugely significant and popular book, *The Lichen Flora of Great Britain, Ireland and the Channel Islands*. The text is replete with detailed references to Salwey's lichen collections, perhaps 300 of them. The book sold out quickly, a second edition was printed in Shrewsbury in 1872, and a third edition in 1879. Some of the lichens in the book are from Richard's Castle, which indicates that Salwey must have visited his old family home from time to time.

One lichen named after him has (remarkably) retained it name to the present day. This is *Acrocordia salweyi*, which has large black perithecia, found on soft rocks, mortar and cement, especially in south-east England. Another example of the continuing value of Salwey's work is revealed in a paper of 2008 by Ann Allen (*Bulletin of the British Lichen Society*, **102**) about the re-discovery of *Lobaria pulmonaria* and *Teloschistes* species in the Channel Islands. The author examined Salwey's 1847 Guernsey collection in the herbarium of the Natural History Museum. He called it then *Stica pulmonaria*. Salwey's 1877 collection from Sark of *Teloschistes chrysopthalmus* is also mentioned.

Apart from lists of his collections and their locations, Salwey did not publish scholarly papers on natural history. A very good account of his clerical work in his early years as Vicar of Oswestry is to be found in John Pryce-Jones, *An Oswestry Miscellany* (2007). Salwey did publish two books as Vicar, *Duties of a Christian Magistrate* (1835) and *Gospel Hymns* (1847). There is a fine stained glass window in his memory in his Oswestry Church, which is probably the only such window devoted to a biologist in Britain.

Note

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Signing the Pledge: Oswestry's Temperance Movement

By CAROL JAMES

Abstract: Oswestry Temperance Society was inaugurated in December 1834 at a time when the population of the town was poised to grow greatly, especially after the arrival of the railway. The temperance cause prospered in the nineteenth century among both Anglicans and Nonconformists, including members of the many Welsh chapels. The role of women in the Movement is considered, as well as the growth of Temperance Hotels and the activities of the Good Templars and the Rechabites. The Temperance Movement declined rapidly after the outbreak of the First World War, and by the end of the War temperance was no longer an important political issue.

The Background

The temperance and teetotal movement was a long and complex phenomenon, starting as early as 1828, when it was first associated only with abstaining from spirits. Gradually, however, the campaign turned from urging moderation to demanding total abstinence, and then often settling for the more moderate temperance pledge.

It is little wonder that drinking took such a hold, particularly among the poor. Cheap gin was introduced in the 1820s. Free trade beerhouses were allowed in 1830, when duty was abolished on beer in an attempt to counter the increasing reliance on gin. Anyone paying two guineas a year could open a beerhouse, and many did in Oswestry. As water was unsafe to drink in the early nineteenth century, and living conditions were often harsh and unhygienic for the lower classes, many turned to drink. It was widely believed, also, that beer boosted energy and virility and quenched the thirst of those in strenuous manual jobs. In fact it was often employers who distributed drink for the energy which they thought that it gave to their hard pressed workers, and drink was prevalent in even the skilled crafts such as tailors.[1]

Alcohol was seen as an effective pain killer, a protection against infection, and a consolation to the poor living in harsh conditions. It brought relief from stress, it was believed, cemented friendships and made life tolerable. Public houses provided much needed warmth and meeting places which were not then found in homes, public halls or assembly rooms. The inn could accommodate the traveller, the tavern catered for the casual drinker, the alehouse sold only beer, and the ginshop sold gin in the cities.

The railways made the wider distribution of beers easier, and the light and sparkling brews from Burton on Trent became available nationally. The railways, of course, also changed the face of Oswestry, bringing a great increase in population and jobs.

Between 1830 and 1881 the number of public houses in England and Wales rose by more than a half, and by 1900 90% were owned by breweries. Off licences developed as cheap bottled beers were introduced in 1834. These were powerful lobby groups, obviously against the temperance movement. The publicans and brewers were also often wealthy and influential people in their communities. It was certainly not in their interests to back a temperance movement aimed at curtailing the drinking habit.[2]

The anti-spirit movement started in Scotland, Ireland and America, and the first English temperance society was established in February 1830 in Bradford, followed by societies in Warrington and Manchester. In 1834 the British and Foreign Temperance Society had 655 members in Shropshire, but apparently it failed to reduce drunkenness in the beer drinking areas like Oswestry.[3] Teetotallers, who wanted total abstinence from any kind of alcohol, were sympathetic to the drunkards and wanted to reclaim them. They advocated regular meetings for support to replace

the visit to the public house. They created temperance hotels, friendly societies, built halls and printed periodicals as well as providing building societies.

It was the Nonconformists who led the way, persuading people to take the pledge and to talk about their past sins openly. In Oswestry many of the socially conscious families were Nonconformists and they became the driving force behind the town's temperance movement. The converted were encouraged to convert their friends and to take an active part in society, and they used badges, regalia, flags and processions to broadcast the message.

The Problem in Oswestry

Oswestry was like other market towns in having its fair share of drunken behaviour, and certainly there were plenty of places to buy a drink. A small regular paid police force was established in the town only in February 1836, following an Act of Parliament in the previous year allowing councils to appoint officers. Oswestry has been described as the most Victorian town in Shropshire, thanks to its great expansion when the railways came in the second half of the nineteenth century. The population increased by 300 per cent between 1800 and 1900, and by 1872 the Chief Constable admitted that Oswestry's force was now inadequate for the growing town.[4]

Writing in *The Holyhead Road*, Charles Harper observed in 1902 that Oswestry was a place of engineering shops, foundries and mining interests as well as the railway works. It was busy and prosperous but 'inns abounded in the grimy and slovenly place, a very different state to 100 years before when Rowlandson and Wigstead visited and found Oswestry was remarkable for having the fewest public houses we ever witnessed'.[5] In his booklet of personal memories, T. Owen wrote in 1904 that drunkenness abounded and that street fights in broad daylight were common. He complained that almost everyone's breath smelt of wine, beer or spirits, whether in the house, street or church.[6]

The town's Temperance Society was officially inaugurated at the Wynnstay Hotel on 30 December 1834 with 60 people present. The meeting was chaired by the Revd. A. Lloyd, with stirring addresses being given by a deputation from the Bible Society and the Revd. T. W. Jenkyn, Congregational Minister.[7]

Why was such a society needed in a town well removed from the industrial cities where drunkenness was such a problem? William Cathrall, writing in 1855, explained that the town was prospering commercially and 'diffusing much good, both morally and religiously'. But although improving and modernising, the town still contained unsightly dwellings with some little better than huts or hovels, ruined and desolate, occupied by the many poor.[8]

John Pryce-Jones in *An Oswestry Miscellany* refers to the concerns of the Revd. Thomas Salwey, Vicar of St. Oswald's from 1823 to 1871. The Vicar described the local colliers in the 1820s as a disorderly group, filling the streets of the town on Saturday night and Sunday morning with quarrelling and fighting because of drink. He complained, also, of the gambling, swearing, drunkenness, and dancing which occurred during the annual wake in August. The Oswestry Races, which ended in 1848, also brought the demon drink into town. The lower walls of the church tower were used as the target wall for a ball game with up to thirty men and a crowd of boys taking part and drinking from jugs of beer brought over from the local pubs. By 1843, however, Vicar Salwey reported to his bishop that things had quietened down a lot – perhaps as a result of the temperance movement in the town.[9]

But in September 1845 the Town Council were complaining that the Borough Gaoler, Richard Jones, was allowing intoxicating spirits to be brought into the town's gaol for John Haywood, who had been committed for trial for forgery. In the following month the magistrates refused to pay Jones's salary because he was drunk. He allowed a prisoner to escape and allowed male and female prisoners to associate, as well as having another prisoner drunk in gaol.[10]

The Temperance Movement in Oswestry

Not everyone agreed with the teetotal movement. Some, it seems, believed that more success could be had from urging moderation rather than total abstinence. *Bye-Gones* of 3 July 1901 contains a letter from 'G' stating that he had correspondence from the Revd. T. Salwey, Vicar of Oswestry, to Nathaniel Minshall, senior, solicitor of Willow Street, dated October 1836. In it the Vicar urged caution over the teetotal issue. He urged his friends to keep clear of the 'tea-totals', as he did not wish people to think that they wanted to draw them into the Tee-total declaration as it might cause people to hang back who might otherwise join them. Vicar Salwey felt that reformation of the confirmed drunkard was a hopeless case. He seemed to advocate a more moderate pledge.

In 1838 the Young Men's Institute began, set up by the Revd. W. Reeve of the Old Chapel to promote the moral and intellectual advancement of the young men of the town. It offered a range of activities to divert men away from the public houses and 'listlessness and low and debasing pleasures'. It began in the vestry and moved in 1841 to the British School rooms. After its initial success enthusiasm waned, but it was revived in 1850, when the clergy,

dissenting ministers and influential lay gentlemen formed a committee and raised subscriptions for meetings in the Guild Hall. It was not to last. By 1854 it had lost support again from both its young men and its backers.[11]

Early response to the temperance movement, however, seems to have been good. *Bye-Gones* of 18 September 1889 reports that 50 years earlier, the Oswestry Temperance Society had 1,400 members. An account in *The Friend* in the 1830s told of the Christmas Festival of the Society which met at the New Welsh Chapel at 10.30 a.m. After Divine Service at the Parish Church, where the curate, the Revd. Mr. Fallon was the preacher, a procession formed in the afternoon, with the intention of walking through the town to Morda. However, a rabble had assembled in Willow Street to upset the procession and Mr. J. Smith, the Police Officer, advised them to change the route, especially as there were a number of respectable women and children in the procession. Instead they went along Welsh Walls and through the churchyard into Church Street and avoided a disturbance. Support for the procession was considerable. There were nearly 1,000 members in the procession and it was felt that because of the heavy rain many more had decided not to attend. At Morda, tea and refreshments were provided in Mr. Minnett's Room which had been enlarged for the occasion and decked out with evergreens, artificial flowers and 'appropriate devices'.[12]

One of the most interesting reports on meetings of Oswestry's Temperance Society appears in the District News of the *Wrexham and Denbighshire Advertiser*. The issue of 17 January 1863 contains a long and full report of the annual meeting held in the Powis Hall when the Mayor, E. W. Thomas, presided, supported by W. H. Darby of Brymbo Hall, R. C. Rawlins of Bryn Alyn, W. Lester of Penygelli, Thomas Minshall and the Revd. R. Pattinson. The report gives a good account of the issues concerning the members of the Society over 30 years after the beginning of the movement. The Mayor felt that to promote order and preserve the peace of society it was important to adopt the principles of the Society which would be more effective than relying on the justice of the magistrates alone. Punishment in the courts did not deter men from continuing to drink in spite of fines and the threat of being locked up.

The Revd. Mr. Pattinson then read the annual report which showed how active the society had been during the year. They had affiliated to the National Temperance League in London which gave them access to a wider number of lecturers for their meetings. Temperance literature had been circulated amongst members and 22 lectures had been delivered, together with musical evenings and readings. The average attendance was an impressive 200 each time. The Band of Hope was also doing well, with 40 to 50 young abstainers meeting on alternate Tuesdays at the British School. During the year over 300 had signed the pledge in the town, and the Society was confident that most had continued to abstain. But, Mr. Pattinson concluded, there were still a couple of obstacles which stood in the way of progress.

The first was the lack of a suitable working man's hall or institute in which to hold meetings and where workers could meet for reading, recreation and amusement instead of sauntering on the street or taking refuge in a public house. Men who had signed the pledge, he explained, found themselves isolated from their former companions and had nowhere to go, often relapsing into their bad drinking habits. The second problem was the surprising absence of sympathy and co-operation on the part of ministers of religion towards the cause.

Mr. Pattinson ended his report by giving the financial statement which showed that subscriptions amounted to £11 9*s*. 3*d*. Proceeds from lectures were £33 17*s*. 5*d*. with expenses of £44 4*s*. 3*d*., leaving a modest balance of £1 2*s*. 5*d*.

In 1875 a report in the Wrexham paper gives a useful picture of a temperance outing. Various Temperance Lodges in Oswestry took part in a rural fête and picnic at Pen-y-Lan Hall, the home of T. L. Longueville. The event was organised to take advantage of the longest day, and in fine weather all kinds of activities were arranged. Although the afternoon session did not attract so many visitors, numbers were boosted in the evening. The Band of Hope choir, 150 strong, entertained with singing to the harmonium, and the Mechanics' Brass Band played for dancing later in the evening. There was a programme of sports as well and the whole enjoyable day ended with dancing and fireworks. A good day out was had by all – and not a drop to drink. These were good days for the town's temperance movement.[13]

The Church of England Temperance Movement

The Church of England Temperance Society attracted considerable support because it did not advocate total abstinence for all its members. The nucleus of the CETS dates from 1862, though it adopted this title only when it merged with a regional diocesan society in 1873. The activities of the two Oswestry branches representing the Parish and Holy Trinity churches and nearby village branches are documented in the Parish Magazines of the time, and are given prominence in the publications. The Magazines provide an insight into the way the society went about converting and holding on to its members by providing support and social activities.

A meeting was held on 11 July 1873 at Oswestry National School to form a C of E Temperance Society. The leaders did not want to compete with other organisations, but they wanted to join the battle against drunkenness.[14]

They organised annual days out, and in 1881 about 80 members went to Llangollen and visited Dinas Brân, Valle Crucis Abbey and Plas Newydd. They had a meat tea in a marquee at the Ponsonby Arms where they were addressed by the Vicar. Hostess for the day was the Hon. Mrs. Stapleton Cotton, who was heartily cheered at the end of the visit.[15]

The CETS held regular monthly meetings towards the end of the nineteenth century. As well as listening to the town's ministers and worthies, 'capital' entertainments were held in connection with the Band of Hope. The Girls' School was crowded with children on 13 December 1886 for a programme of songs, readings and hand bell ringing and a dramatic performance of a play.[16] At the annual meeting of Oswestry CETS in February 1887, at the Coach and Dogs, it was reported that there were 91 total abstainers and 48 partial abstainers on the books. The juvenile branch, however, had 125 on the roll and had done well during the year.[17] The Holy Trinity CETS, set up in 1871, also survived, and was reported in the Parish Magazines and the *Advertizer*. In January 1873 the Holy Trinity Church Temperance Society held a tea party in the school room which was decorated with flags, mottoes and evergreens, and lit by Chinese lanterns. Mrs. Cashel was presented with an oil painting by Charles Eyeley of her husband, the Revd. F. Cashel, who had founded the society. When Mr. Cashel died aged 67 in 1887, his funeral was one of the biggest seen in the town.[18]

Women's Temperance

Women were often heavily involved in the temperance movement in the town. In 1903 the redoubtable Hon. Fanny Bulkeley-Owen of Tedsmore Hall decided to hold a grand women's temperance meeting at the town's Public Hall. The National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, holds a letter from her to a friend explaining that she hoped for an attendance of as many as 600 women on the afternoon of Thursday 26 November. She wrote to the Roman Catholic priest and to all Dissenting Ministers to help, and she invited Miss Anna Allen of Lichfield and Dr. O'Conor to speak. Admission was free. Unfortunately Mrs. Bulkeley-Owen herself was too ill to preside over the meeting which she had gone to such lengths to organise and promote.

Other women played an important part in organising and supporting the temperance movement in the town. Foremost among them was Miss Prichard of 4, Picton Terrace, Oswestry, who acted as treasurer and secretary for many years to the North Wales Women's Temperance Union which had a branch in the town.

Five years later, in 1915, in spite of the distractions of the First World War, the Union had 295 branches with 18,129 members. Not surprisingly, concern was expressed about drinking in munition areas in North Wales. The leaders also decided to turn their attention to setting up Temperance Rooms at stations, and they became concerned about the use of alcohol in medicinal wines. After the war, however, the number of members began to fall and some branches closed. Attempts were made to boost the number of younger members with an organisation called the Snowdrop Bands, and even Babies Bands were formed. Now the women were also worried about the non-medicinal use of opium, morphine and kindred drugs and they wanted to see more scientific information given to teachers on the effects of alcohol.[19]

In 1925 Miss Prichard was still in post as secretary and she was congratulated on serving for 25 years. She reported that 34 Babies Bands with 607 on the roll were in place, with 20 Snowdrop Bands with from 20 to 138 members, catering for younger girls. Numbers were generally decreasing, but all was not lost for 745 new members had signed up, with six new branches formed. By 1926 the minutes record that Miss Prichard was ill and she resigned. In appreciation of all her years of hard work, she was voted an annuity of £1 a week and made permanent Hon. Vice President. The future looked uncertain as the Roaring Twenties progressed and by 1928 the Union agreed to allow men and boys to join to boost their numbers. A couple of years later a resolution to change total abstinence to the more tolerant temperance was overturned, and betting and gambling were added to the list of welfare concerns. The corruption of the cinema and its effect on children was the next concern. By 1934 membership had dropped to nearly 13,000, and the Second World War disrupted the Union and its council meetings. In 1947 the North Wales Women's Temperance Union amalgamated with that in Gwynedd.[20]

The Oswestry Public House Company and the Temperance Hotels

Oswestry's attempts to keep the demon drink at bay were not directed simply at the town's residents. Visitors must also be looked after in places where they could stay safe and sober. The trade directories of their day list temperance hotels in the county, and Oswestry had a remarkably large number for a town of its size. Perhaps the success of the Oswestry Temperance Public House Company reflects the strong support for the temperance movement in the town. It obviously attracted considerable investment from its shareholders, who must have had confidence in the need for such establishments. It was headed by no less a person than Lord Harlech, although no

record of his involvement remains in the Harlech papers at the National Library of Wales. The company was set up in the mid 1870s during the mayoralty of Mr. Spaull who became a director. It bought up several public houses and closed them down as drinking dens by turning them into coffee houses and temperance hotels. It lasted well into the twentieth century.[21]

The Coach and Dogs was bought in 1882 and converted into a cocoa house. The Smithfield Inn in Salop Road became the Black Gate tea rooms, and the Duke of Wellington in Bailey Street became a temperance hotel. The Three Tuns, which stood where Woolworths was later built, was a timbered inn, one of the main meeting places of the drapers. It was bought in 1880 by the pub company and converted to temperance as the Oswestry Castle.[22]

The headquarters of the OTPHC was at the Harlech Castle in Oswald Road. The road was developed after the coming of the railways in the 1860s, and the main new thoroughfare into the town also boasted a large new Temperance hotel, Matthews Commercial. The Pub Company's half yearly report in February, 1887 paints a picture of a business that was doing very well. They declared a 15 percent dividend to their shareholders at the meeting held at the new Navvies Coffee House in Arthur Street. Profits for the half year to December 31, 1886 amounted to £111 3*s*. 6*d*.[23]

A report in the *Advertizer* of 22 February 1888 shows that the Oswestry Public House Company Ltd. was still doing rather well. The chairman of the company was still Lord Harlech, who was absent for the presentation of the half yearly report. His place was taken by vice chairman, Thomas Minshull. Accounts for the year ended December 31, 1887 showed a profit of £120 13*s*. 5*d*. The regular dividend of 15 percent was paid to shareholders.[24]

An excellent Oswestry Illustrated publication, dated around 1903, shows that the Matthews' Temperance and Commercial Hotel was run by Mrs. Elizabeth Matthews. In the article Matthews' claimed to be the first house of its kind in Oswestry. It was established in the town about 24 years earlier in Albion Hill, with the Oswald Road premises having been occupied for over six years when the guide was published. The three storey Matthews' Hotel boasted a large and comfortable commercial room and a writing room on the ground floor with 14 airy and well-furnished bedrooms, with lavatory, hot and cold bathroom on the first floor. Matthews' Hotel occupied number 12 Oswald Road and it continued for many years, although by the 1970s it had become an embarrassing eyesore. It was later demolished.[25]

The Good Templars

The Good Templars did much to re-invigorate the temperance movement in and around Oswestry in the later nineteenth century when the population and the town were expanding so rapidly. They were modelled on freemasonry, although women were also admitted. They used a similar elaborate ritual with some degree of secrecy, regalia and titles, and traditions of mutual help, and they were established in local lodges. The order grew rapidly in America and Canada and when Joseph Malins returned to his native Birmingham in 1868 he established a lodge there, and the Good Templars quickly spread all over the UK. Within six years there were 4,000 lodges and more than 200,000 members, together with their own orphanage.[26]

The Good Templars started in Shropshire in 1868. By January 1872 a lodge was established by Miss Armstrong in Oswestry, with 22 members, and one of the town's worthies, Thomas Minshall, at its head. Ten months later, in October 1872, membership had risen to 500 with four lodges, three operating in English and one in Welsh. It was reported in the *Advertizer* that only 12 members were known to have broken their pledge. The Good Templars went from strength to strength and they moved from the British School to the Public Hall, when as many as 150 men and women would attend to sign the pledge. In the summer of 1872 a fête was organised in Wynnstay Park and a large sum of money was raised, which enabled the Templars to buy, for £150, the old Wesleyan Chapel in Coney Green, opened in December 1872.[27] At the dedication visitors heard that rapid progress had been made in 12 months, with 400 hard working members now on the books. Mr. E. Evans outlined the history of St. Oswald's Lodge, which had been formed on 10 January 1872 by Miss Armstrong of Nottingham. There was also an Oswald Well Juvenile Lodge of Good Templars, led by Mr. T. Miller.[28]

The Good Templars tried to get people to sign lifelong pledges not to drink. Politically they voted for whichever candidate would agree to abolish the drink traffic. They kept an eye on those who had signed the pledge, visiting people and keeping in touch. They boasted of being better organised than other temperance movements, who, they claimed, could rarely form a committee together. They put up a strong resistance to the united power of the publicans and breweries.

It was time to recognise one of the founders of the Good Templars movement, Thomas Minshall of the St. Oswald's Lodge. On 1 July 1873 at the Good Templars Hall he was presented with a vignette portrait worth 10 guineas. Thomas Minshall had done a great deal for the Templars locally, but he had had to consider deeply before joining the new organisation and leaving the old temperance movement. He took on the role of Chief Templar with enthusiasm and told the meeting that his own first step to abstinence was not to drink at dinner. Then he formed

the Working Men's Christian Temperance Society which met in the Rope Walk Chapel. Thomas Minshall was a solicitor in Arthur Street. He served as Mayor in 1851 and 1880, and came from a strong Nonconformist family with a history of service to the town going back many generations. He was also Vice Chairman of the Oswestry Public House Company Limited.[29]

Another great supporter of the temperance movement was Joseph Parry Jones, Thomas Minshall's nephew and a fellow Nonconformist. He became a partner in the solicitors' firm and was his uncle's right hand man. He also served as Mayor, and in 1898 became a Freeman of the borough for all his work in the town. Joseph was a keen supporter of local friendly society movements and with his wife was instrumental in erecting the Memorial Hall, which had a no alcohol policy.[30]

The splitting of the original lodge into three English and one Welsh lodges, however, was not entirely successful. In December 1890, at the opening of a new Good Templars Hall in Castle Fields, Mr. W. H. Davies outlined the history of the movement in the town. He believed that a mistake had been made in splitting the Lodge into four 17 years before. Debts built up, and the Lodge had to sell its original building for £175. The money was left in the bank. But with no headquarters, the Lodge lost continuity and there was a falling off of support. The decision was made to buy a site in Castle Fields for £43 10*s*. The total cost of the building came to £282 8*s*. with £5 donations promised from Lord Harlech, the Mayor, Mr. S. Parry-Jones and Samuel Lloyd. Mr J. Parry-Jones sent £1 and a letter of apology for his non-attendance because of a cold.[31]

In 1880 Oswestry Temperance Club was formed under the presidency of J. Parry Jones at the Oswestry Castle, a temperance establishment. This was no doubt a response to providing an alcohol free environment for those perhaps not totally committed to signing the pledge.

I have not been able to trace the final demise of the organisation in the town. The International Order of Good Templars no longer operates on a freemasonry styled structure, but it still has member organisations all over the world.[32]

The Rechabite Order

The Rechabite Order kept the principle of abstinence from all intoxicating liquor at the forefront of its work. The Order also advocated thrift and saving through Friendly Societies. There was a branch in Oswestry. Although I have found few references to the order, the *Advertizer* of 26 January 1887 reports a meeting, with Dr. Beresford presiding. Dr. Beresford was surgeon to the Rechabite Tent, a friendly Society which promoted thrift. He served for many years as Medical Officer of Health and was also Mayor.[33]

A Worthy Teetotaller

One of the town's worthy teetotallers was Alderman William Henry Plimmer, a staunch member of Castle Street Primitive Methodist Church and a notable lay preacher. He was born and bred in Oswestry and was obviously proud of his home town, and determined to keep up its standards. He died in 1936, aged 74. Alderman Plimmer was a prominent businessman who ran a shoe shop in the town. He was an avid teetotaller. He served as a magistrate for around 30 years and was Mayor in 1906–7. Alderman Plimmer was obviously a much respected man of humour and integrity who used his powers of oration built up from years in the pulpit to good effect. He was not afraid to let Oswestrians know his feelings on the evils of drink.[34]

Decline

In spite of men like Alderman Plimmer it appears that the temperance movement ran out of steam. The *Advertizer* of 22 November 1905 reported a conference on the implications of the 1904 Act on the town. This enabled the closing down of public houses if it was felt there were too many. A fund of £7,000 had been allocated to Shropshire to help reduce the number of public houses. By this time there were 38 fully licensed houses, 17 beerhouses and nine wine and spirit licences in Oswestry. This represented one pub for every 174 inhabitants of the town. It compares, however, to over 50 pubs in the previous century, when the population had been much smaller. Although the conference agreed that there were too many public houses, it was also felt that the compensation fund was too small to tackle closures.

Many in the town, however, still believed in temperance. The Memorial Hall, which did not have a licence for alcohol, was opened on 27 January 1906, a gift from Mrs. Sarah Parry-Jones as a memorial to her sisters. The Hall was to be used by the Oswestry Friendly and Trades Societies for their meetings, and by the Ladies' Committee as

a restaurant for the use of attendants at the Oswestry Markets. The Oddfellows Society had special rights for their observance of temperance.[35]

It was the First World War which finally brought a decline in the Temperance movement. At the outbreak of war licensing hours were restricted in many areas, changing from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. to 8 or 9 a.m. to 9 or 10 p.m. Duty on beer rose in the same year and weaker beer was introduced, reduced in strength from 9–10% to 5–7%. This inevitably had the effect of curbing drinking, and, of course, many men were away fighting. When they did come home on leave, treating soldiers to drink was widespread and it eventually became illegal to buy a serviceman a drink. Not surprisingly, many broke the pledge on enlisting. To save vital raw materials and labour, beer production was cut from 36 million barrels pre-war to 26 million by 1916. Prohibition, however, was never accepted. In 1917 beer prices were fixed at 4*d*. or 5*d*. a pint for the weaker brews and by the end of the war the price of spirits rose from 2*d*. to 4*d*. a tot to 6*d*. to 9*d*.[36]

By the end of the war there were shorter opening hours, higher prices and more civilised public houses. In 1914 89 million gallons had been drunk, but only 37 million in 1918. Cases of drunkenness in England and Wales fell from 184,000 to 29,000 and deaths from alcoholism were down by five-sixths. Gradually the drink problem declined. The temperance sentiment ebbed between the two World Wars. Between 1831 and 1931 spirit consumption fell from 1.11 gallons per head per year to 0.22, and beer from 21.6 gallons to 13.3.

Water supplies improved to provide safer non-alcoholic drinks. The growth of the railways improved the supply of fresh milk to the cities in particular. Non-intoxicating drinks were developed such as ginger beer and nettle beer, soda water and lemonade. Tea became more available to the poorer classes as duties were relaxed and coffee consumption began to rise.[37] Gradually more leisure time became available, and with it came open spaces, libraries, and music halls which diverted people away from drink. Opening hours became more restricted and by the end of the First World War, temperance was no longer an important political issue.[38]

In the 1920s opening hours were reduced to 8 or 9 hours a day and 5 hours on Sundays. Beer and spirits never regained their pre-war strength, and high prices became permanent. The Temperance movement declined. The Church of England Temperance Society nationally lost two thirds of its subscribers in the 1920s and the Good Templars shrank by 1931 to 27,000 adults. At the same time the Band of Hope declined by a half and the Young Rechabites lost 17,000 members in 12 months.[39] The British Women's Total Abstinence Union was left to campaign against the corrupting influence of a new evil – the cinema. The ultimate indignity must have come for many when some Temperance Halls were converted to picture houses.

Thanks

To Derek Williams and other members of staff in Oswestry Library and Philip Heath of Derbyshire for much assistance; to Sheila Brooks for allowing access to her unpublished research; to fellow members of U3A's Social History Research Group for much encouragement.

Notes

1   B. Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians*, 1971.
2   R. Tames, *The Victorian Public House*, 2003, 8.
3   B. Harrison, *Op. Cit*.
4   D. J. Elliott, *Policing Shropshire 1836–1967*, 1984.
5   C. G. Harper, *The Marches of Wales*, 1894.
6   T. Owen, *Personal Reminiscences of Oswestry Fifty Years Ago*, 1904.
7   I. Watkin, *Oswestry*, 1920, 95.
8   W. Cathrall, *History of Oswestry*, 1855, 90.
9   J. Pryce-Jones, *An Oswestry Miscellany*, 2007, 9–10.
10   Oswestry Town Council Minutes, 22 Sept. 1845.
11   W. Cathrall, *Op. Cit*., 115.
12   *By-Gones*, 18 Sept. 1889, 220.
13   *Wrexham Advertizer*, 26 June 1875.
14   *Border Counties Advertizer*, 16 July 1873.
15   *Wrexham Advertizer*, 27 August 1881.
16   *Oswestry Parish Magazine*, Dec. 1886.
17   *Ibid*., March 1887.
18   *Border Counties Advertizer*, 12 Jan. 1887.
19   North Wales Women's Temperance Union minutes, 1919.
20   *Ibid*., 1947.
21   *Kelly's Trade Directories*.

22   J. Pryce-Jones, *Historic Oswestry*, 1982, 56.
23   *Border Counties Advertizer*, 23 Feb. 1887.
24   *Ibid*., 22 Feb. 1888.
25   *Illustrated Guide to Oswestry* (Wm. McDonald and Co.), *c*.1900.
26   N. Longmate, *The Water Drinkers*, 1968.
27   *Border Counties Advertizer*, 24 Dec. 1890.
28   *Ibid*., 11 Dec. 1872.
29   *Ibid*., 6 Aug. 1873.
30   *Ibid*., 5 Jan. 1916.
31   *Ibid*., 24 Dec. 1890.
32   International Organisation of Good Templars (Wikipedia).
33   *Border Counties Advertizer*, 26 Jan. 1887.
34   I am grateful to Alderman Plimmer's grandson, Mr. W. L. Denny of Oxford, for material on his grandfather's life.
35   *Border Counties Advertizer*, 11 Aug. 2009.
36   N. Longmate, *Op*. *Cit*.
37   B. Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians*.
38   B. Harrison, *Op*. *Cit*.
39   N. Longmate, *Op*. *Cit*.

A full study of this subject in booklet form has been lodged with Shropshire Archives (F93 v.f) and Oswestry Library.

It is available, priced £4 plus postage, from Carol James, 44 Vyrnwy Road, Oswestry SY11 1NT. (Tel: 01691 657987).

SHROPSHIRE ARCHIVES REPORT FOR 2012 AND 2013

By MARY MCKENZIE, Team Leader, Archives

During 2012 and 2013 the Heritage Lottery funded Volunteering for Shropshire's Heritage project transformed the contribution of volunteers across Shropshire Archives and Shropshire Museums Service with over 300 individuals involved. As at April 2014 the project had catalogued over 90,000 records and objects, conserved over 9,000, and digitised almost 38,000, making a huge contribution to accessing Shropshire's outstanding collections. The project also supported the creation of a new local history centre in Whitchurch library.

In 2013 this approach was extended to the online world with the launch of the Virtual Volunteers project funded by Arts Council England; further details can be found at www.heritageheroes.org.uk.

Community Projects

During the year Shropshire Archives worked on a number of successful community projects. These included the continuing work, funded by the National Trust, on the papers of Lady Berwick (1890–1972) at Attingham Park; the Fordhall Farm Heritage project which told the story of one of Shropshire's first organic farms and a pioneer in the production of yoghurt; the Shelton Hospital Heritage project which aimed to capture stories and artefacts telling the story of the treatment of mental health Shropshire; and the Oswestry Cemetery project (also Heritage Lottery funded) which will research and catalogue the comprehensive archive that has survived from the cemetery, dating from 1862.

On Line Publishing

Shropshire Archives has entered into partnership with Brightsolid who run the Find My Past website. Shropshire parish and nonconformist registers dating up to 1900 are now available online on a subscription basis. Free access is available at Shropshire Archives and at all Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin libraries.

Events and Friends

In 2012 the Friends' programme included a well-attended History Day in Church Stretton, and the biannual Discover Shropshire Day continued its success format with a fascinating talk from Nigel Baker on Medieval Shrewsbury. In 2013 a day to celebrate the life and studies of Ken Jones, organised with the Friends of Ironbridge Gorge Museums, was a sell-out. In the summer of 2013 the Friends organised a series of visits to some of Shropshire's most fascinating houses which also proved popular, and a History Day in Whitchurch which included folk music completed the year's programme.

Shropshire Archives also developed a series of short talks and workshops on Thursday evenings which proved popular in highlighting some of the gems in the collection.

Accessions

Accessions received during 2012 and 2013 have included:

Records of Claremont Baptist church, Shrewsbury, 1877–2012 (8472, 8638)
Minsterley parish council records, 2005–2010 (8473)
Records of D. Roberts & Partners Ltd., House builders, 1960s–1990s (8479)
Meole Brace scout group, 1997–2009 (8481)
Hopesay parish records, 1959–1993 (8482)
Records of the Friends of Shrewsbury International Music Festival, 1990s–2007 (8483)
Shropshire and Marches Methodist Circuit records, 1864–2005 (8484,8485, 8685, 8702)
Personal papers of the Rt. Hon. Lord Grocott of Telford, 1987–2001 (8488)
Corvedale Church of England School records, 1999–2012 (8492)
Telford Methodist Circuit records, 20th–21st century (8498, 8637)
Barrow parish records, 1932–2007 (8500)
Benthall parish records, 1837–2006 (8501)
Broseley parish records, 1897–2010 (8502)
Jackfield parish records, 1863–2006 (8503)
Linley parish records, 1860–2006 (8504)
Shawbury parish council records, 1931–2010 (8505)
Myddle & Broughton parish council records, 2005–2010 (8506)
Worfield parish records, 2001–2005 (8511)
Telford Development Corporation records, 1980s–1990s (8512, 8623)
Fletcher Homes builders: company records, *c*.1935–1994 (8527)
Ruyton XI Towns parish council records, 1875–1913 (8531, 8537)
Acton Burnell parish council records, 1969–2004 (8533)
Church Stretton parish records, 1936–1997 (8534)
All Stretton parish records, 1957–2001 (8535)
Shrewsbury St. Alkmund's parish records, 18th–19th centuries (8536)
Westbury parish records, 1990–2010 (8538)
The Tom Edwards collection, 1970–2010 (8540)
Pontesbury parish council records, 1895–2002 (8546, 8553)
Market Drayton Methodist Circuit records, 1809–1989 (8551)
Shelton Hospital records, 1950s–1990s (8556)
West Felton parish council records, 1984–2010 (8564)
Badger parish records, 1813–1995 (8568)
Beckbury parish records, 1813–1954 (8569)
Kemberton parish records, 1813–2001 (8570)
Ryton parish records, 1939–1995 (8571)
Stockton parish records, 1937–1992 (8572)
Sutton Maddock parish records, 1874–2012 (8573)
HM revenue and customs (formerly Inland Revenue) records, 1800–1944 (8576)
Clun, Bettws y Crwyn, Clunton, and Newcastle on Clun parish records, 1730–2009 (8582, 8756)
Meole Brace school records, 1878–1911 (8585)
Upton Magna parish records, 1750–1979 (8588)
Astley parish records, 1933 (8589)
Records of Severn Trent Water Ltd., 20th century (8590)
Kinnerley parish council records, 1890s–1950s (8595)
Deeds and papers relating to the Chetwynd estate, Newport, 19th–20th centuries (8604)
West Felton parish council records, 2010–2012 (8608)
Llanyblodwel parish council records, 1928–2003 (8609)
Hadley parish records, 1958–2005 (8616)
Wellington Christ Church parish records, 1837–2009 (8617)
Wem Town Council records, 1970–2010 (8618)
Records of Stottesdon Women's Institute, 1950s–2008 (8619)
Lyneal cum Colemere parish records, 1884–1992 (8624)
Astley Abbots parish records, 1837–2010 (8626)
Bridgnorth, St. Mary parish records, 1966–2012 (8627)

Oldbury parish records, 1814–2011 (8628)
Quatford parish records, 1904–1999 (8629)
Tasley parish records, 1815–1999 (8630)
Ruyton XI Towns parish and parish council records, 1822–2013 (8633)
Lydbury North parish council records, 1940s–2009 (8634)
Monkhopton parish records, 1813–2013 (8641)
Communication Workers Union records, 1990s–2000s (8654)
Photographs of Edith Pargeter, 1930s–1940s (8658)
Oswestry Athletic Company Ltd., records, 1920–1955 (8660)
Deeds relating to the Wentnor area, 18th–19th century (8661)
Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital records, 1819–1990s (8662)
Dawley Heritage Project records, 19th–21st century (8668)
Ellesmere parish poor law documents, 1718–1787 (8674)
Uppington parish records, 1845–1999 (8683)
Maesbury school records, 1872–2011 (8693)
Records of Church Stretton Arts Festival, 1988–2013 (8694)
Stirchley parish records, 1986–2013 (8703)
Selattyn parish records, 1888–2011 (8705)
Shropshire Federation of Women's Institutes records, 20th–21st century (8709)
Wellington High School records, 1953–1957 (8715)
Hordley parish records, 1813–2012 (8720)
Whittington parish records, 2008–2013 (8722)
Day book of Thomas Graty and Sons, Wem, 1913–1962 (8723)
Records of the Redlake Press, Clun, 1970s–1990s (8724)
Wakeman School records, 1957–2013, (8725)
Leaton school, Bomere Heath, records, *c*.1897–1900 (8727)
Wrockwardine Wood parish records, 1978–2012 (8735)
Sandford family papers, 17th–18th centuries (8736)
Llanymynech and Pant parish council records, 1966–2000 (8740)
Telford Caledonian Society records, 1948–2000s (8743)
Records of Shropshire breweries, 20th century (8745)
Oakengates parish records, 1960s–2003 (8746)
Shrewsbury St. Alkmund's parish records, late 17th century (8747)
Shropshire Association of Women's Clubs records, 1947–2003 (8749)
Papers of the Eglantyne Jebb Community Association, 1988–2013 (8758)
Shropshire Wildlife Trust records, 1978–1998 (8760)
Much Wenlock Town Council records, 1947–2007 (8762)
Shrewsbury Gas Light Company records, 1868–1933 (8779)
Ellesmere Society records, 20th century (8783)
Much Wenlock Festival records, 1981–2008 (8784)
Ashford Bowdler parish records, 1840–2006 (8791)
Stoke St. Milborough parish records, 1837–2010 (8792)

BOOK REVIEWS

Richard Bryant with Michael Hare, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture, Volume X:* The Western Midlands. Oxford University Press/British Academy 2013. ISBN 978-0-19-726515-4. 620 pp. £95.00.

Those with an interest in Anglo-Saxon Shropshire have had to wait almost 30 years since the publication of the first volume in the series, the Corpus of Anglo-Saxon sculpture, for Volume 10, for the Western Midlands, to come out, but it was worth the wait. The background of the Corpus in general and this volume in particular is that it is an admirably collaborative undertaking. The series has been driven during its lifetime by Professor Rosemary Cramp, and is a project of The British Academy published with financial support from The Headley Trust. This particular volume is the work of a group of people who have been friends over many years and who all had other jobs during the extended period of research and publication (in Bryant's case, this includes being a non-stipendiary Anglican minister). You can sense the enjoyment they got from the process.

The early medieval stonework of West Mercia has not previously been investigated as a whole. Earlier scholars concentrated on Gloucestershire for obvious reasons (it takes more than 40 pages here to describe two churches: St. Mary's at Deerhurst and St. Oswald's in Gloucester). In addition to Gloucestershire, this book deals with Herefordshire, Shropshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire. The principal sites for Shropshire are the churches of St. Eata at Atcham, St. Mary at Bromfield, St. Peter at Diddlebury, St. Mary at Shrewsbury, St. Mary at Westbury and St. Andrew at Wroxeter. Further sculpture not in or from extant churches is also described.

Authors Richard Bryant and Michael Hare provide a considerable amount of new material; so much so that the editors felt it required a more substantial background and asked for the historical chapter to be expanded. Published sources from Wales were researched for the two border counties, allowing the authors to catch previously overlooked material, and the volume provides a synthesis of the last *c*.50 years of specialist/academic studies, both of particular sites as well as synthetic treatments of groups of sites.

Of the counties addressed, Shropshire was the least well-published in the 19th century. The main antiquarian sources are Leighton's 1882 survey and Cranage's early 20th-century *Architectural Account of the Churches of Shropshire*, though Cranage was not specifically interested in the Anglo-Saxon period, and does not always mention work of that period.

Most images, comprising line drawings and photographs, were newly produced for this volume. The chapter on the geology of the region is particularly useful. Bryant and Hare move on from there to consider monument types (forms), and ornament and imagery, and have provided a table relating form to motif. Architecture and sculpture, along with manuscripts, are among the main sources of surviving information for Mercian culture, and one of the principal ways this is dealt with here is by bringing the art historical account of St. Mary's at Deerhurst up to date.

For the Shropshire audience, it is a nice coincidence that the 5th/6th-century Cunorix stone from Wroxeter – the earliest piece identified in their survey – has just gone on display in the new Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery at the Music Hall. The authors have also provided a wider context for the early 9th-century Wroxeter church cross.

This handsome book is for both the academic specialist and the interested general public, and will certainly inform this reviewer's future outings. I look forward to seeing, for example, the sculptured panels at Daglingworth and the cross at Newent, both in Gloucestershire.

CAMERON MOFFETT

Ralph Collingwood, *Shawbury; the People and how they Lived, 1538–1725*. Logaston 2011. ISBN 978 1 906663 59 9. viii + 164 pp. £10.

This is one of a number of studies of Shropshire parishes published by Logaston, but it is different; it covers a limited period, 1538–1725. Shawbury was a large parish of 7,650 acres, comprising eight townships, where the major landowners were the Corbets of Moreton Corbet and Acton Reynald. Using estate and parish records, wills and inventories, Ralph Collingwood, subjects the people and agricultural produce of the parish to close statistical analysis based on the survival of 268 probate inventories 1538–1725. These are tabulated in two very useful appendices, firstly by values and percentages under different headings and secondly by types of animals. The parish was primarily pastoral. Using the inventories wealth is carefully analysed and, taking into account inflation, there seems to have been no real increase in riches during the period. There is an interesting section on credit and money lending, though the credit given by way of loans by Ralph Collins, the hammerman of Moreton forge, recorded in 1693, totalling £695, merits further consideration. He, incidentally, gave £80 for a schoolmaster to teach the children of Shawbury. Population is carefully calculated; the parish escaped all plague visitations in the period. The author demonstrates, using rentals and parish records, that the 1672 Hearth Tax returns are highly unreliable for calculating population. (He and Dr. Sylvia Watts have a detailed unpublished study demonstrating this.) Agriculture rates a whole chapter and, after a detailed study, the conclusion is that Shawbury 'like some other parishes, responded little to the demands of England's increasing population for more food'. Survival remained the aim, with cash from surpluses used to meet the rent and entry fines.

The church *per se* receives little attention, but John Dicher, the parson between 1555 and 1620 deserves comment. He came from a local minor gentry family and it is noted that he witnessed eighteen wills in the period 1556–1596, but it would have been interesting to know how near death the testators were when the wills were made. There is no evidence that he adhered to the 'Old Faith', but he never married and at his death disposed of his extensive flock of sheep amongst his relatives, who included minor gentry, servants and godchildren. Remarkably the parish register records god-parents into the 1590's. His inventory reveals a collection of books which included fifteen 'great' books, seventeen 'smaller' books, six 'little' books in English and eight 'written' books. In 1606 he had given a large folio MS of the Vulgate to Shrewsbury School along with a 13th century MS commentary on the Psalms by Peter Cantor, which is the only surviving MS from the library of Wombridge Abbey. In his study there were shelves, a desk and a standish for his writing equipment, Although not a graduate, he was clearly a learned man and probably a conservative in ecclesiastical matters, unlike the Corbets, who were strong Protestants and who presented extreme Puritans to Moreton Corbet. His successor, named in his will as 'Sir' Richard Wood, possibly a relation, was of a new generation, a bachelor of divinity who held the rectory of Cound in plurality from 1620 until his death in 1648. He gave £40 to the poor. Their incumbencies spanned over ninety years.

The parish was remarkable for a very early papermill, working from at least 1637 until *c*.1747. The river Roden also served two iron forges which were active during the period. These are mentioned, but not really considered. Moreton forge, otherwise known as Sowbath in the text, was owned by the Corbets and may have been built by 1600. (The author calls it Sowbath, the modern OS Sowbach and earlier records, including maps by Baugh 1808, and Greenwood, 1827, Sowbatch.) Great Wytheford forge owned by the Charltons of Apley Castle started before 1642. Francis Charlton had promised to save the parish harmless from the poor at the latter prior to 1642. By the mid 1600s both were leased to the ironmaster John Browne, and were probably converting pig iron from a variety of furnaces into malleable iron of different qualities. (The iron was not from bloomsmithies as stated.) The only surviving account is for 1687–8 when Wytheford was in hand. Pigs from furnaces at Willey, Coalbrookdale and the Forest of Dean were being processed and the product was presumably coldshort or tough iron bar and possibly a blend to produce merchant bar. The retail customers are named and the price of their purchases, but not the quantities or qualities sold; there is no suggestion that bar iron was being produced for the slitting mills at Stourbridge or more nearly at hand at Tibberton. The pig iron was shipped up the Severn to Pimley wharf (Uffington), where it was weighed and stored and then carted to Wytheford. Other forges on the Tern were similarly served. It would have been interesting to know whether the inventories record stocks of fuel. Rights of turbary are mentioned and John Dicher had *woode, gorse, coales and peates* valued at 13*s*. 4*d*. as well as *turffes* at 1*s*. and a peat iron in his inventory. It has to be said that his fuel store would have been full when his inventory was made in December 1620.

<div align="right">JAMES LAWSON</div>

M.A. Faraday (ed.), *Deeds of the Palmers' Gild of Ludlow* (privately published by the author). ISBN 978-1-291-25715-1, xxv + 329 pp. Obtainable from the author at 47, York Gardens, Walton on Thames, Surrey KT12 3EW at £34 (hardback) or £24 (paperback).

This work originated in a chance encounter between its author and the founders of the Ludlow Historical Research Group in the old Public Record Office some 35 years ago. Michael Faraday, a scholar with a number of publications in his specialised fields of taxation and probate records to his name, generously offered to make his services available to his native town. One of the first of his many contributions was the compilation of abstracts of the 1466 individual documents which formed the collection of muniments of title of the Ludlow Gild of Palmers. Working initially from photocopies, reinforced by examination of the originals when holidaying in Shropshire, Mr. Faraday produced two volumes of typescript, copies of which were lodged with Shropshire Archives and the Ludlow group. After revising his original versions, he has incorporated them into this most valuable volume.

The Palmers' Gild and its rich archive has aroused intermittent interest among historians since the Rev. W. C. Sparrow's article in the first volume of this Society's *Transactions* in 1878. Sparrow published transcriptions and abstracts of forty of the Gild deeds, together with two rentals and a list of early donations to the Gild, now presented in a more accessible format in the present volume (pp. 256–259). Despite this promising beginning, the Gild and its properties received fairly scant attention until the publication of Alec Gaydon's article in vol. ii of the *Victoria County History of Shropshire*. Michael Faraday devoted a whole chapter on the Gild in his study of *Ludlow 1085 – 1660* (Phillimore 1991), which, with some revisions, forms the basis of the introduction to the present work.

As the author explains, the documents are mainly the title deeds of properties granted to the Gild over a period of some three centuries, following its foundation at some time in the mid-thirteenth century. Like other similar gilds in mercantile towns, the Palmers' Gild offered a range of services to its members, most importantly providing chaplains to pray for their souls after death, and also various forms of insurance. Initial donations were mostly of rent charges arising out of properties in Ludlow, but soon the Gild began to receive grants of houses and lands, which made it the largest property owner in the town by the time of its dissolution in 1551. Unlike its successor, the Ludlow Corporation, the Gild did not tend to keep the leases which it subsequently made of these properties, but despite this the collection of deeds forms a most valuable source about a wide range of aspects of the history of medieval Ludlow.

The collection consists of 1462 documents which form class LB5/2 in the Shropshire Archives collection; four other items, which belong with the rest but have been accessioned elsewhere; and the 29 deeds which make up the Pottesman Collection (SA: 4032/1–29). This small archive, which was purchased by the then Shropshire Record Office in 1980, dovetails in with the main collection. Most of the deeds are written in Latin, with some in Norman French, and a few of the later examples in English. All follow fairly similar formulae, and many, particularly the earlier examples, are fairly brief. Details of present and former ownership, and location, form the bulk of the text. In later examples location tends to become increasingly specific, with reference to neighbouring properties. The editor has wisely reduced some of the most common formulae to initials, which are explained in a key at the start of the abstracts. One minor criticism is that where Latin names are quoted, they are rendered as written in the text rather than in the nominative. In an age when Latin has all but disappeared from the educational system, certainly in the state sector, it might have been helpful to the non-specialist reader if, for example 'Roger son of Philip *Monetarii*' had been written as 'son of Philip *Monetarius*', possibly with the translation 'Moneyer' in parentheses. This is, however, a minor point which should not detract from what is a remarkable piece of scholarship.

This is a book which should have a place on the shelves of all who have a serious interest in medieval Shropshire, and Ludlow in particular. Its potential uses are many. It provides a vast and easily accessible resource about the ownership of property in the medieval town, and when used in tandem with the Gild rentals and the burgage rentals kept by the Corporation after its incorporation in 1461, makes possible the tenurial reconstruction of the town streets. This work was begun by the Ludlow group in the nineteen seventies, but was, alas, never completed. Perhaps this book will stimulate a re-awakening of interest in this area of study. In addition there are deeds of properties in neighbouring parishes such as Richard's Castle and Orleton, and even as far away as Marlborough. For the student of the pre-Reformation church there is much material about obits and other arrangements for the spiritual well-being of deceased members, and even a contract dated 1525 with a stone carver for a reredos in the Gild's chapel of St. John in Ludlow parish church.

Ludlow is fortunate that Michael Faraday has made this archive available to a much wider audience than were able to use its typescript forerunner. It is very much to be hoped that he might be persuaded to publish more of his Ludlow abstracts and transcriptions, particularly the remaining documents of the Palmers' Gild archive.

MARTIN SPEIGHT

Madge Moran, *The Guildhall, Ludlow*, Ludlow Historical Research Group, 2011. ISBN 0-9536113-8-8. 56 pp. £12.

This is a book which was long in coming to print, and is all the more welcome on its eventual publication, 600 years after the building of Ludlow's mediaeval Guildhall. Originally it was envisaged as a collaborative work between Madge Moran, the outstanding specialist on Shropshire vernacular architecture, and David Lloyd, the historian of Ludlow. David's contribution to this had, owing to the many projects he always had in hand, never progressed beyond the initial planning stages by his death in 2009.

Madge's work on the architecture of the Hall was then virtually complete, and she was able, with the assistance of other local scholars and of Jonathan Wood, current Chairman of the Ludlow Historical Research Group, to make good the historical element of the work. If the resultant book now leans more heavily on its architectural content than it might otherwise have done, it is this element which provides a real addition to knowledge, which no other scholar than Madge could have provided.

The booklet opens with a general introduction to the history and purpose of such a religious fraternity as Ludlow Palmers' Guild, tracing it from its first records in the thirteenth century to its dissolution at the Reformation. A chapter describing the exterior of the Guildhall, as reconstructed in the 1760s, is succeeded by three important ones on the interior, both in its current (2011) state and the mediaeval aisled hall of 1411 which it incorporates. Here Madge's expert knowledge is best deployed, and the architectural analysis provided by chapters 4 and 5 is invaluable.

Later chapters assess the work of the eighteenth century architect, Thomas Farnolls Pritchard, responsible for the current appearance of the Guildhall within and without. Ludlow can be thankful that he was something of a Gothic revivalist and respected the work of mediaeval craftsmen, preserving most of what is of value in the original structure, of which a dramatic artist's reconstruction is reproduced as the front cover of the book. A final chapter by Jonathan Wood traces the later history of the Guildhall from Pritchard's day until the closure of the Magistrates' Court in March 2011.

Thus within a modest span a useful history and architectural evaluation of an underrated building in one of Shropshire's most iconic towns is clearly presented. It should prove of value to scholars seeking to increase our understanding of the mediaeval fraternity, to all those wishing to further their knowledge of vernacular architectural styles, and to lovers of Ludlow, whatever their background may be.

MARGARET CLARK

Sharon M. Varey and Graeme J. White (eds.), *Landscape History Discoveries in the North West*. University of Chester Press 2012, ISBN 978-1-908258-00-7. xvii + 272 pp. £12.99.

This stimulating volume contains eight articles and four shorter communications given at a conference in September 2011 to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Chester Society for Landscape History. It begins with a superb introductory essay by Dai Morgan Evans on the meaning of 'landscape history'.

Stewart Ainsworth's account of Stanlow Abbey is a triumph. The scanty remains of this Cistercian abbey on the south bank of the Mersey have in effect been situated on an 'island' since the building of the Manchester Ship Canal. The site is now part of an extensive oil refinery, and the author was allowed access for no more than a single day. But using a series of Ordnance Survey maps and lidar (light direction and ranging) he has been able to trace the history of the abbey and its successor buildings with considerable success. (One fears for the ability of future historians to use OS maps when and if maps are produced only on demand.)

The second chapter is Anthony Annakin-Smith's investigation of curvilinear enclosures in Cheshire, with special reference to Willaston in the Wirral. Clear plans and good photographs serve to enhance his argument. Then Mike Headon discusses settlements and their shapes in historic Denbighshire and Flintshire. (This is, of course, the north east, of Wales, so the title of the book is rather misleading!) The author identifies 14 types of rural settlement, subdivided into 46 sub-types. Graeme White contributes a study of the process of enclosure in West Cheshire, and John Whittle writes on Walk Mill at Foulk Stapleford in the Gowy Valley, a 17th-century mill now reconstructed.

Shropshire readers will perhaps find Sharon Varey's lucid account of the farming economy of the parish of Baschurch of greatest interest. Dr. Varey, who has contributed a paper to this volume of *Transactions*, traces the agricultural history of this North Shropshire parish from about 1550 to the present day. The balance between livestock and crops fluctuated over the centuries, often in response to wars.

The two final full-length papers are by Alan G. Crosby on Cheshire turnpikes between 1700 and 1850 and Tom Swailes on the early industrial landscape of Bollington. The volume finishes with brief notes on Cheshire field-names, on the rise and fall of Llanbedr Hall, near Ruthin, on Dawpool Hall, Thurstaston, and on the Society's newest activity, Lifelong Learning.

Many of the articles stress that the matters discussed are 'work in progress', which is, of course, true of all historical projects. The writers have given us much food for thought from their studies of the county to our north (and adjacent parts of North Wales), and the editors are to be congratulated on providing such an attractive volume so speedily after the Conference. *Ad multos annos* to the Chester Society for Landscape History.

WILLIAM PRICE

Obituary

Christopher John Phillpotts, M.A., Ph.D., F.S.A. (1954–2013)

Chris was brought up in Bristol and read history at the University of York (1972–1975) before undertaking an MA in medieval history at King's College London (1975–1976). Between 1977 and 1984 he completed research for a PhD on *English Policy towards France during the Truces 1389–1417* at the University of Liverpool. During his university years he attended courses in medieval palaeography, Latin and French, which would stand him in good stead during his future career.

His archaeological experience was gained during the 1970s and 1980s in England, Wales and France – notably at the Neolithic causewayed enclosure/Iron Age hillfort at Crickley Hill (Gloucestershire), where he was a regular excavator – and an enthusiastic contributor to the off-site social activities – for over twenty years from 1972. He became an associate of the Institute of Field Archaeologists in 1991.

After gaining his PhD he spent several years honing his skills as an historical researcher, while working on projects in Gwent and Hampshire, before taking up a post, in 1986, with the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MOLAS), where he remained until 1993, rising to the position of Senior Archaeologist. During these years he worked on a huge number of projects under often onerous conditions and contributed meticulously researched reports to publications covering a diverse range of topics including Shakespearean theatres, medieval monastic houses and Royal Navy victualing yards

In 1993 he and his partner, Alison, relocated to Shrewsbury, where he spent much of the next twenty years carving a successful niche as a freelance historical and archaeological consultant, specialising in the medieval and early post-medieval periods. Throughout his career he combined his extensive field experience with his palaeographical skills in the production of a wide range of specialist reports and papers in monographs and journals, acting as author or co-author of some seventy articles. He contributed an appendix covering the documentary evidence for the history of Madeley Court to Volume LXXXI of these *Transactions*[1] and his most recent publication was as co-author of a major research article in Volume 92 of *The Antiquaries Journal*.[2] He was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in November 2012.

Chris never lost his passion and enthusiasm for his chosen fields of research, and he is remembered by many colleagues and friends as that rare beast, a man equally at home in the disciplines of archaeology and history, as an intelligent, humorous and generous friend, and as a devoted companion to Alison and a loving father to Greg and Ellie.

He died on 28 January 2013 at the early age of 58 after a brave fight against cancer.

Julian Parker and Christopher Thomas

Notes

1   *Trans*. *Shrops*. *Archaeol*. *Soc*., **LXXXI** (2006 issued in 2009), 53–57.
2   'The King's High Table at the Palace of Westminster', in *Ant*. *Jnl*., **XCII** (2012), 197–243.

THE SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society was founded in 1877 (as the Shropshire Archaeological and Natural History Society), and from that time it became, and has remained, the foremost continuous promoter of research into the archaeology and history of the county. The Society's regularly published *Transactions* have become the journal of record for the county's history and archaeology.

In its early years, and for long, the Society organized an annual excursion for its members. In recent times, however, that side of its activity has increased, and there is now a regular programme of summer excursions and a winter programme of lectures, for which speakers well qualified in their specialisms are engaged. Early in December there is also an annual social meeting, and from time to time day schools are organized – sometimes on topics such as industrial archaeology (so important in Shropshire) and sometimes on a subject of current interest such as that provided in 2009 by the Anglo-Saxon treasure found in Staffordshire.

In 1923 the Shropshire Parish Register Society (founded in 1897) amalgamated with the Archaeological Society, and the work of publishing the county's parish registers was continued. After a lapse that work has been resumed, and the most recent achievement has been the publication of the Bishop's Castle register. Work continues on other parishes, and the Society's as yet unpublished transcripts are available for use.

In addition to its *Transactions* and the parish-register programme, the Society has published occasional monographs and other works: notable in recent years have been the cartularies (registers of property deeds) of Haughmond Abbey (1985; jointly with the University of Wales Press) and Lilleshall Abbey (1997); Dr. Baker's *Shrewsbury Abbey: Studies in the Archaeology and History of an Urban Abbey* (2002); D. and R. Cromarty's *The Wealth of Shrewsbury* (1993: a detailed study of early 14th-century Shrewsbury people from taxation records – which survive so abundantly in the Shrewsbury borough archive and so rarely elsewhere); H. D. G. Foxall's *Shropshire Field-Names* (1980); and the historic county maps published by Robert Baugh in 1808 (1983) and by Christopher Greenwood in 1827 (2008). These maps, whose detail was unrivalled until the Ordnance Survey began work in Shropshire, give a vivid bird's-eye view of the county before the great changes of the Victorian period. Greenwood's map is available as paper sheets and on a CD. Further details of the Society's publications for sale appear elsewhere in this volume.

In addition to the *Transactions* members receive a twice yearly *News Letter*, which keeps them in touch with all the Society's activities and work and with its programmes of excursions and lectures.

For further information about the Society, and how to join it, see:

www. shropshirearchaeology.org.uk

RULES

1. The Society shall be called 'The Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society (with which is incorporated The Shropshire Parish Register Society)'.

2. The Society's objects shall be the advancement of the education of the public in archaeological and historical investigation in Shropshire and the preservation of the county's antiquities. In furtherance of those objects, but not otherwise, the Society shall have the power (i) to publish the results of historical research and archaeological excavation and editions of documentary material of local importance including parish registers, and (ii) to record archaeological discoveries.

3. Management of the Society shall be vested in the Council, which shall consist of the President, Vice-Presidents, Officers, and not more than twenty elected members. The President and Vice-Presidents shall be elected at an annual general meeting; they shall be elected for five years and shall be eligible for re-election. The Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected at each annual general meeting; the other officers shall be elected by the Council and shall consist of a Membership Secretary, Editor, Editor of the *Newsletter*, Meetings and Field Meetings Secretary, Librarian, Publications Secretary, and any other officers deemed necessary by the Council. Officers shall act in an honorary capacity. Not more than twenty members of the Council shall be elected by the annual general meeting. Members of the retiring Council shall be eligible for re-election and their names may be proposed without previous notice; in the case of other candidates a proposal signed by four members of the Society must be sent to the Secretary not less than fourteen days before the annual general meeting. The Council may co-opt not more than five additional members for the year.

4. At Council meetings five members shall be a quorum.

5. The Council, through the Treasurer, shall present the audited accounts for the last complete year to the annual general meeting.

6. The Council shall determine what number of each publication shall be printed, including any complimentary offprints for contributors.

7. Candidates for membership of the Society may apply directly to the Membership Secretary who, on payment of the subscription, shall be empowered to accept membership on behalf of the Society.

8. Each member's subscription shall become due on election or on 1st January and be paid to the Membership Secretary, and shall be the annual sum of £19 for individual members, £20 for family and institutional members, and £23 for overseas members, or such sums as the Society shall from time to time decide. If a member's subscription shall be two years in arrears and then not paid after due reminder, that membership shall cease.

9. The Council shall have the power to elect honorary members of the Society.

10. Every member not in arrears of his or her annual subscription shall be entitled to one copy of the latest available *Transactions* to be published, and copies of other publications of the Society on such conditions as may be determined by the Council.

11. Applicants for membership under the age of 21 may apply for associate membership, for which the annual subscription shall be £1. Associate members shall enjoy all the rights of full members, except entitlement to free issues of the *Transactions* and occasional publications of the Society. Associate membership shall terminate at the end of the year in which the member becomes 21.

12. No alterations shall be made to the Society's rules except by the annual general meeting or by an extraordinary general meeting called for that purpose by the Council. Any proposed alteration must be submitted to the Secretary in time to enable the Secretary to give members at least twenty-one days notice of the extraordinary general meeting. No amendment shall be made to the rules which would cause the Society to cease to be a charity at law.

13. The Society may be dissolved by a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of those present with voting rights at either an annual general meeting or an extraordinary general meeting called for that purpose, of which twenty-one day's prior notice had been given in writing. Such a resolution may give instructions for the disposal of any assets held by the Society after all debts and liabilities have been paid, the balance to be transferred to some other charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to those of the Society.