

March 2012



WORCESTERSHIRE I.A. & LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

# Winter Newsletter

## An Evening with Henry...

At the December 2011 meeting of the Society, the chairman, Michael McCurdy invited Dr Malcolm Nixon to introduce the speaker for the evening, Henry Sandon.



Malcolm Nixon introduces Henry Sandon

A long-time Patron of the Society, author and national treasure, Henry presented 'Henry Sandon's Guide to Royal Worcester Porcelain' in which he fronted a DVD about the company, made in two days by a producer from the Antiques Roadshow.

The film covered the history of the factory from its early beginnings with John Wall in Walmstrey House, the development of its early heat resistant porcelain, which made it so significant in the making of tea ware, through the granting of the Royal Warrant in 1798 which preceded its recognition as the premier producer of decorated porcelain in Europe in the early 1800's.

Detailing the different periods of the factory's ownership, production, decoration and products (including false teeth) we followed the Company from the glory days, to the recent attempts to change the range to household wares meeting modern demands which leading to the decline in its fortunes and to the sale to Portmerion in 2010.

Following a short break for seasonal refreshments, Henry took questions ranging from the fate of the archives, specific items produced by the factory, to the state of modern porcelain industry and its heritage museums.



Christine Silvester thanking Henry

A vote of thanks was proposed by Christine Silvester

*Text by Sue Bradley, Pictures by David Attwood*

## Exciting Summer Programme

We are pleased to announce with this issue the 2012 Summer Programme, which is detailed on the inside pull-out section.

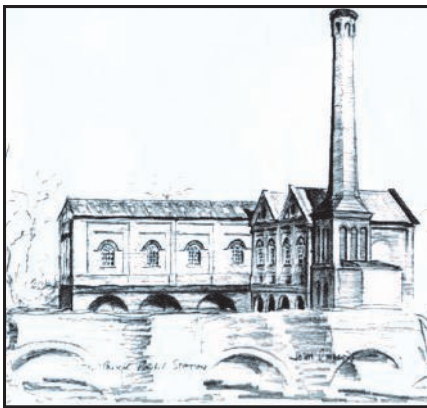
Highlights of this year's programme include: the Wolverley and Cookley Trail, a visit to Stratford and Kenilworth on a restored Midland Red double-decker, a coach trip to Buxton, visits to Ombersley Quarry, visits to two Droitwich churches with Mike Wall, Perrycroft, and Boughton House and Estate, a walking tour

of Hereford by train, and a day on the Kennet and Avon Canal including Claverton Pumping station and a boat trip.

Thanks should go to Mike Hayzelden and helpers for organising such a superb programme. This year Mike has produced an excellent and thorough guide to each event, which we hope you will find helpful. Please support these trips and reserve your place as early as possible.

### Inside this issue:

Chairman's Report	3
Cambridge Visit Report	4-7
Winter Programme Reports	7-8
Summer Programme	9
Worcestershire Local History Forum	10-12
History of Droitwich Fire Brigade	13
St. Cuthbert's Chapel, Lower Wick	16-17
Industrial Archaeology of the Isle of Man	19-20



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NOTE: Committee Details may  
change at the AGM on 9th March  
2012

## When will *The Journal* appear ?

*John Beale*

As reported in the last edition of the Newsletter, its is intended that the Society publishes an annual journal containing high quality research and review articles by its members. We are sure that

many of you are engaged in your own research projects, so this is your opportunity to present your work to a wider audience.

It is planned to produce the first issue in

the late Summer, but as yet there is very little material. Please get writing as soon as possible and send your ideas and/or documents to Malcolm Nixon

## Welcome!

We are pleased to welcome the following new members:

Bill Amos  
Mo Blinkhorn  
Dennis & Jean Chamberlain  
Adrian & Gill Bowden-Green  
Michael Follet



Gordon & Sue Gething  
Margaret Hurley  
David & Hazel Nolan  
Mary Hyde  
Heather Pitts  
Graham & Ann Rhodes  
Cheryl Robertson  
Debbie McEvoy

# Changes to the Constitution

John Beale

The Heritage Lottery Fund bid to undertake our gloving industry project required two changes to our constitution. The alterations are both sensible and practical which could make the workings of the Society clearer.

As you are all aware the timing of our lottery bid is very important because we don't know how much longer Alywn's glove factory will continue in business. The meeting on January 13th was upgraded to an Emergency General Meeting to discuss and approve the constitutional alterations.

The alterations made are:

Item 1. A New Clause 1.3:

*The assets and funds of the Society may only be used for promoting the objects set out in 2.1. and do not belong to members of the Society or the committee.*

Item 2. Replace previous Clause 8 with:

*8.1 In the event of a formal winding up of the Society the proposal must be put to a properly convened EGM and confirmed by at least two-thirds majority of members present.*

*8.2 Where winding up has been agreed, after all debts and liabilities have been satisfied, any assets remaining shall be distributed to charities or "not for profit" organisations whose interests are similar to those of WIA&LHS within the County of Worcester as determined by the committee and members present. Such arrangements are to be verified by a postal vote of members.*

The changes were proposed by Michael McCurdy, seconded by Dr Malcolm Nixon and accepted by a vote of those present at the EGM. These changes are now in force.

## Summary of the Chairman's report to the AGM

Michael McCurdy

I am pleased to report that we have had another successful year which included celebrating our 40th anniversary and the publication of the first edition of our new style newsletter. Thank you to John Beale for constructing, formatting and producing an excellent publication.

Membership is holding steady at around 190 members. Although a number have resigned, 30 new members have joined since the last AGM. Like all societies we would hope to encourage younger members to join.

Our summer programme comprised of 14 events, which, included 4 coach trips and one by rail. They were all very well supported, apart from two. A disappointing number turned up at Hadley Quarry, Ombersley, despite the event being initially oversubscribed. Our bus trip from Wythall Museum had to be cancelled due to lack of support but has been included in this years programme with a modified route. I would like to thank everyone who arranged the summer outings especially Mike Hayzelden who co-ordinated and managed the programme so effectively. I would also like to thank Roger

Tapping and Hugh and Jenny Field for all their hard work in organizing our two-day trip to Cambridge, which rounded off our summer activities splendidly.

In May about 40 of us celebrated our 40th anniversary with a dinner at Worcester Golf and Country Club. The guest of honour was one of our founder members, Max Sinclair, who entertained us with a series of reminiscences and anecdotes.

The winter programme meetings have been very well attended and this year we have tried to concentrate more on items of local interest which included talks on the history of Barbourne, Stoke Prior Salt works, Dyson Perrins and Williams of Pitmaston. Attendance at the Dyson Perrins talk was boosted by an unusually high number of visitors, some of whom subsequently joined the society. An evening with our Patron, the inimitable Henry Sandon, proved very popular. Thanks to Christine Silvester for organizing the winter programme and the provision of mulled wine and mince pies for the evening with Henry.

During the year we have started two new ventures. The first, which I am sure you all know about, is an application for a Heritage Lottery Fund grant to enable us to do some research into the Gloving Industry and Alwyn's Glove factory in particular. After leaping numerous bureaucratic hurdles the final application was submitted at the end of January and a formal response is expected within the next two months. We will be working actively with Tudor House, The Commandery and the Museum Service to deliver the project and are keen to get as many of our members involved as possible.

The second new venture involves the society co-operating with one of our members, Miriam Harvey, in the production of her book on Worcester Royal Infirmary; the target date for publication is May this year.

I want to re-iterate my thanks to all members of the committee for their enthusiasm and continued help and encouragement.

*Michael McCurdy, Chairman*

## Use of E-mail for Communications

The committee have discussed ways of keeping costs down in order to maintain the membership subscription at its current level. One way of doing this would be to send mailings and newsletters electronically to members who would be happy to receive it this way.

Members who have given me an email address have already been contacted. I

would be grateful if members, who have not already done so, would contact me on suemccurdy@yahoo.com if they are happy to receive items such as the newsletter, AGM notification and other short notice items by email.

Some members may be concerned about the confidentiality issue of their address being used for group emailings. I can

assure you that communications will only be sent to WIA&LHS members and I will, in future, hide all addresses so confidentiality should not be a problem.

Any comments you may have will be passed on to the committee for further discussion.

*Sue McCurdy, Membership Secretary.*



# Reports of Cambridge Visit (6-9 September 2011)

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*Thanks are due to Roger Tapping, Christine Silvester and others!*

## SUMMARY

Our Society members were again invited to stay at Queens' College as guests of Hugh and Jenny Field, this time in particular to enjoy the rare privilege of dining in the magnificent Old Hall, which dates back to 1448. This meant that our 'weekend' was in fact to be midweek from Tuesday to Thursday as the Old Hall is a valuable asset for hire at weekends.

Having fixed the dates I now constructed a programme of events around them. Our full day, Wednesday, was to be an either or visit to Duxford Air Museum or Audley End House, both being to the south of the city and within easy reach of each other. The evening was set aside for our evening meal in the Old Hall and in order to provide a link with a visit on Thursday we were to enjoy a lecture on the history of the 'Stourbridge Fair' prior to the meal.

Our route to Cambridge from Worcester was to be via the A14, which is a notorious road for delays and having no recognised service stations suitable for coach parties. After some research I settled on a 'flying visit' to Boughton House, just north of Kettering where we would have a private tour of the house and be able to eat our own picnic lunch.

After arrival and registration at Queens' College we were scheduled to enjoy a unique tour of the College, guided by Hugh & Jenny and some of their colleagues. Evening meal was available in the College cafeteria or of course anywhere in Cambridge.

Thursday's itinerary was to start with a visit to an Industrial & Technology Museum at Cheddar's Lane, to be followed by a visit to the Leper's Chapel and site of the Stourbridge Fair as discovered in the lecture the previous evening.

Lunch was to be taken at a local Garden Centre and in the same area we would be able to see the American War Graves Cemetery before starting our journey home.

I had hoped to arrange a surprise visit to the vast former airship hangers at Cardington and early dealings with the site's owners were very promising. However at the last minute permission was denied

and keen to find a comfort stop with some interest I settled on the Old Warden airfield, home of the Shuttleworth Collection of vintage aircraft.

Thus the itinerary was complete and after an overwhelming response from our members we set off from Worcester with a full coach to spend a few days in Cambridgeshire. It was a very good trip and my personal thanks and those from all our members go to Hugh & Jenny for their meticulous assistance and planning to make the visit absolutely flawless. It was a trip that revived many memories with some of our members and for me personally meeting an old flame from 55 years ago at Boughton House, where she is now one of the guides, was very nostalgic. When I mentioned this fact later to my daughter she cruelly asked 'was she on a Zimmer frame'. Needless to say she has now been disinherited!!

I am indebted to those of our members who agreed to write reports of the various visits which will appear as individual records and my thanks go to all those who attended and, I hope, enjoyed the break.

*Roger Tapping*

## BOUGHTON HOUSE

The visit to Boughton House was our first stop en route to Cambridge. The first view of the house was amazing - it was more like a palace and could have been a chateau in France - enormous and in beautiful parkland.

The house is built of cream coloured limestone, with tall first floor windows and a mansard roof with prominent dormers. Even the stables, where we collected, looked French. The amazing thing is that this is the seat of the Dukes of Buccleuch and even more amazing that it was left uninhabited, except for caretaker staff for 150 years, because it was not needed by the family.

Possibly even more surprising is that this enormous mansion was never completed and one wing remains unfinished except for the top floor where more rooms for servants were needed. This wing was extremely interesting because it shows exactly how these great houses of the 17th Century were built.

The front of the house is very impressive and is a red-faced Tudor mansion

set around a series of courtyards. The interiors are those of two houses, a grand palace attached to an earlier and more intimate predecessor as can be seen by the height of the ceilings.

We visited room after elegant room, the Audit room with an enormous 84' table. It was probably here that the tenants came to pay their rents or to be entertained. The Little Hall which is the heart of the house where people gather when the family is at home. The Rainbow Room has elegant tapestries and a rather wonderful 16th Century Isfahan carpet.

We also visited the Great Hall, the largest room and a very imposing space, with a black and white tiled floor, panelled walls hung with paintings and tapestries and paintings and a rather magnificent painted ceiling with a carved coat of arms at one end. Another space we saw was the Armoury - decorated with weapons and display cabinets, it was once a servants hall next to the kitchen.

The State Rooms were all very impressive, but none were either cosy or particularly comfortable and I doubt that they could ever have been very warm.

There were paintings throughout the house and the family tree is very interesting, the main family is Montagu, now Montagu Douglas Scott who are the Dukes of Buccleuch and as all aristocratic families they have married into like families.

We ate our picnic lunch in the stables - very impressive, showed just how much they valued their horses. This is truly a wonderful place to visit and we have the opportunity for a second visit and to take our coach around the entire estate.

*Christine Silvester*

## AUDLEY END HOUSE

The group that chose to visit Audley End House were not disappointed. Considered one of the great houses in East Anglia, now owned by English Heritage, the house retains many Jacobean interiors and a magnificent brick built stable block dating from the 17th Century. The house was built on the remains of Walden Abbey, dating from the 12th century, when Henry VIII in 1538 gave the remains of the monastery to his Chancellor Thomas Lord Audley, who

## Cambridge Visit Reports (Continued)

built the present house. Queen Elizabeth I visited Audley End in 1571 and 1578 and James I in 1614.

It passed to Audley's grandson Thomas Howard, 1st Earl of Suffolk and treasurer to James I and later Charles II bought the house in 1666 as it was close to Newmarket for racing! The Howards were given it back in 1701 and it remained in the family but needed work done on it. In 1784 many Jacobean features were restored; Robert Adam was commissioned to design a new suite of rooms and to design the bridges and the Victory Temple; and "Capability Brown" redesigned the garden.

During World War II the house and gardens were used as the training HQ for the Polish SOE and a memorial stands near the entrance to the property. In 1948 the house was brought for the nation from the 9th Lord Braybrooke, and English Heritage took over in 1984.

The house tour was invaluable in explaining the history of the building and its artefacts. One wanted to linger in the magnificent hall and dining room, library and drawing rooms to view the furniture, many tapestries and portraits, some by Holbein and Canaletto. Included in the tour were the bedrooms and the chapel; and the long galleries housed many stuffed animals and birds in glass cases.

Outside in the stable block, including the tack room and coach house, a multimedia exhibition showed life as lived by the servants who worked in the gardens and grounds. The nearby servants' wing housed the well stocked kitchen, dairy and laundry and once again a video presentation showed how these areas were organised and brought the lives of the people who worked there to life.

A cup of coffee was needed before embarking on a tour of the gardens – this was taken in the Cart Yard alongside a new children's play area. A favourite for the gardeners among us was the Victorian walled kitchen garden exhibiting well maintained vegetable plots, ripening pumpkins and many varieties of apple and pear, (fruit and vegetables are used in the restaurant) and the glasshouses, now restored, grow peaches and grapes. Paths led from the walled garden, among trees, alongside ornamental ponds to Robert Adam's Palladian Tea House Bridge. Behind the

house a colourful parterre garden, with orange and yellow flowers, drew the eye towards the Temple of Concord built for George III's visit, which never took place; (likewise a specially made bed for His Majesty remains in a bedroom and was never slept in). A 6' deep Ha Ha separates the immediate garden. "Capability Brown" designed the magnificent landscaped gardens which were breathtaking. He would have marvelled at the maturity of the trees which reached down to the ground. The River Cam was widened in the design and now provides a wide expanse of water sweeping towards the house.

The wonderful visit left one wanting to come again, and the property was such a contrast to the English Heritage houses in our area, namely the ruins of Great Witley and Kenilworth Castle.

*Meg Allsopp*

### DUXFORD & THE AMERICAN WAR GRAVES CEMETERY

*This is a personal report by Henry Powe and gives an insight into some of his amazing experiences during a flying career that covered the period 1933 to 1947. (RT)*

I did not intend to visit Duxford or the American War Graves Cemetery, however at the very last moment I did overcome my fears and did manage to get off the coach. The full story of my experiences is not the right thing for this publication. But the visits both made me think and reflect very hard.

The layout at Duxford is first class and the site needs several visits to pack it all in, there is so much to see.

One display was a ME 109, which had been shot down in the Battle of Britain and then sent off to America to raise funds for the war effort. It was found after the war in a scrap yard and was sent back to the UK where it was put on display at Duxford. It is now in very good condition with a bent propeller and one or two dents. On the fuselage there are some signatures done when it was in the USA.

Much to my joy I saw a De Havilland Dragon Rapide fly by, I crashed one when I was a cadet aged 16. (I have suffered from it ever since!!).

As I left the reception area the first thing I saw was a Spitfire doing an engine run, the sound made my heart flutter as I had first heard that as a 16 year old. I also then fired the eight guns in the butts; I never forgot the sound of those eight guns.

On my way back to the coach the Spitfire "shot the runway up" and then landed and taxied right past me. I waved to the pilot and he waved back. He must have known of my long attachment to Hurricanes and Spitfires.

My one regret is not to see a Wellington; did anyone see one at the Museum? I had a near miss in one in 1945.

*Henry Powe*

As you can imagine this was a very emotional visit for Henry. It took a great deal of courage to take those first steps to get off the coach after previously deciding to visit Audley End. His emotional ride did not stop there. The next day on our way home we visited the American War Grave Cemetery at Cotton. This is a magnificent site created in the memory of the several thousand American servicemen who died in the cause of helping out country. As we left there a Spitfire flew overhead as if to mark our visit in a very special way.

Finally we called at an airfield (Old Warden) on the last leg of our journey. This is the home of the Shuttleworth Collection a fabulous display of early aircraft, mainly biplane and single propeller. Here Henry was discovered trying to peep into the hangers and was then invited in where he was shown a Miles Magister (see below), which he also flew. *Roger Tapping*



# Cambridge Visit Reports (Continued)

## CAMBRIDGE MUSEUM OF TECHNOLOGY, Cheddars Lane CB5 8LD

### *A Victorian Pumping Station and Working Museum*

Queen Victoria asked "What are those pieces of paper floating in the river?"

The Master of Trinity replied "Those, Ma'am, are notices prohibiting bathing."

Thus was set in motion (!) the need for the City of Cambridge to stop discharging their raw sewage into the River Cam

### *The Background*

In the early 1890s it was decided to build a pumping station (located next to the existing gas works) and to pump sewage two miles to a sewage farm at Milton. (Sewage was spread on the land where it was ploughed and crops grown). In 1937 the land (because it had become sour) was converted to a sewage treatment works, still being supplied by the pumping station.

Initially household rubbish was burned in destructor furnaces after tins had been removed. Heat from the furnaces raised steam to power pumps. The residue clinker was used for road making.

The station was equipped in the main engine room with two steam-powered pumping engines supplied by Hathorn Davey & Co of Leeds. The steam powered pumps supplied by Hathorn Davey and Co are considered to be the final development of the beam engine and are unique. Several auxiliary steam engines are also on display.

Steam was initially supplied by three Babcock and Wilcox water tube boilers fired by "Fryer's Improved Destructor Furnaces, including Messrs Boulnois and Wood's Patents (top fed)". These are still in situ and one has been displayed to show the inside construction of the boiler.

As time went on problems started to occur. The calorific value (heat potential) of the refuse declined and it was necessary to add a fourth, coke-fired boiler by Babcock and Wilcox in 1923 to provide extra steam. With the expansion of the city, rain water which went into the sewers caused additional demands on the pumps. In 1909 two gas-

fuelled internal combustion engines and extra pumps (housed in a new building) were installed and in 1937 an electric pump was added. In addition large storm water holding tanks were built to which the output of the pumps could be diverted. The storm water could be held until the main pumps could cope. However in times of heavy rain, sewage would be discharged to the river when the tanks were full.

In the 1960s a new separate pumping station was built on an adjoining site and demolished some 30 years later when a 48inch (1.2m) sewer was laid to the sewage works.

### *The Site Now.*

Thank goodness the historical importance of the site and buildings was recognised in 1968 when the old pumping station was finally declared redundant. Interested people and representatives of Cambridge University formed a Trust and purchased the site from the Council. The Cambridge Industrial Archaeology Group was also established.

### *The Visit.*

If you want to see a museum where you are kept away from exhibits, plenty of flashy signs and perfect footways to walk on then don't go here!

This place is a gem. The machinery (steam is raised and machines run on certain days) is gleaming with brass polished and pristine paint. These have to be guarded for safety reasons. The rest of the site you can wander at will and touch the exhibits and get dirty.

The other exhibits are:

The Baling Shed which now houses an example of Blackstone oil engine from a Fenland pumping station but originally was used to flatten and bale up cans.

- \* The Winch Engine House and Ash Railway which recreates a system which pulled skip wagons containing ash from the boilers to a tipping area.
- \* The Top Bay where the refuse was tipped prior to charging the destructor.
- \* The Ash Tunnel where the ash and clinker were removed from the boilers.

\* The Electric Room which houses a number of radios, televisions and scientific instruments made by Pye of Cambridge, The Cambridge Instrument Company and other local firms.

\* The Print Shop which contains a collection of printing machines and associated equipment with Cambridge connections

Like many museums and heritage centres finance is a problem. The proposals set out for the future detailed in 1977 show new buildings and extensive alterations. There appears no evidence of progress, but you know, there is something magic about the site as it is.

A wonderful visit.

*Roy Fidoe*

## THE STOURBRIDGE FAIR AND THE LEPER CHAPEL

Following our visit to RAF Duxford or Audley End our party returned to Queens' College to dress up for dinner in the splendidly over-decorated Old Hall. But first we gathered in another very fine room, the Old Kitchen to hear a fascinating and informative talk by Honor Ridout on the Stourbridge Fair.

Granted its charter in 1211 by King John, the fair was held annually for 3 days around the Feast of the Exultation of the Holy Cross (September 14th).

To begin with it took place in the grounds of the Leper Hospital, by the Newmarket Road about one and a half miles from the centre of the old city of Cambridge. Originally the proceeds supported the hospital, but this ceased to function by the end of the thirteenth century and the responsibility for the fair passed to the burgesses and freemen of the city.

From a small three day event the fair gradually expanded in area and duration until, by the end of the sixteenth century it lasted up to three weeks and covered a large area between the river and Newmarket Road. By 1720s it was reputed to be the largest in England, if not Europe according to Daniel Defoe.

Unlike most of the fairs held in the Midlands this was not a Mop or Hiring fair, but rather a trade fair, dealing in a variety of merchandise. A large selection of



## Cambridge Visit Reports (Continued)

goods were brought from far afield and often bought by dealers to be traded on throughout the country.

Because of the huge profits generated by the fair, there was considerable rivalry between the city and the University, the latter taking over responsibility for weights and measures while the town received most of the profits.

A number of very large temporary booths, owned by local citizens, were erected and rented out for the duration of the fair. These provided a good income and were stored for the rest of the year in the now disused chapel of the hospital.

Apart from vast numbers of oyster shells, there is very little archaeological evidence of the site of the fair, but there are clues in the modern road layout and street names, such as Garlick Row and Oyster Row. Maps exist to confirm this.

Entertainment was also an important feature towards the end of the fair's glory days. This included a purpose built theatre. Our party were amused to hear that one of the more colourful characters was a Mrs Sylvester exhibiting

her collection of waxworks.

By the mid 18th C the fair began to decline, although the charter required it to be held annually. It was last opened in 1933 with just a handful of people present.

The following morning we visited the Leper Chapel. Situated inauspiciously next to the railway and opposite a scrap metal yard, it is a little gem of Norman architecture.

Initially a group of wooden structures, the leper hospital was founded between



1125 and 1150 a suitable distance from the city. A conspicuous site close to the busy Newmarket Road was chosen in order that passers-by might admire the piety of the benefactors.

By the 1270s the hospital had closed, but the amount of land and rents from the fair made the chapel a rich living, although by 16th C it was not regularly used for worship and by the 1750s it was used to store the temporary booths for the fair and as a drinking den for the duration of the fair itself.

In 1816, in a dilapidated state and threatened with destruction, it was bought for £160 by Rev Thomas Kerich, who began the restoration. Around 1400 the roof had collapsed and was replaced by a recycled roof from another building, rather clumsily inserted, with some beams partly obscuring windows and others unsupported. 19th and 20th C restorations retained this roof, while remaining sympathetic to the Norman features.

The visit was very interesting and put into context the previous evening's talk.

The Cambridge Preservation Society now commemorate the fair with an annual event, appropriately enough celebrating its 800th anniversary on the weekend following our visit.

*Susan and Michael McCurdy*

## Winter Programme Reports

16th September 2011

### THE HISTORY OF BARBOURNE

**Terry Wardle**

The mysteries of lost medieval tunnels, secret wartime installations and Worcestershire's long-forgotten first hospital were amongst aspects of the history of Barbourne and north Worcester dealt with in a talk by Terry Wardle.

Mr Wardle, co-author with his youngest daughter Claire of a history of the area, explained to members of the WIALHS how the name Barbourne evolved from Barbourne Brook's ancient history as a beaver stream, and how the once independent area had become Worcester's 'millionaire's row' and then a city suburb in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

He also looked at some of the area's impressive stately homes, and at Barbourne's 'hidden history', including the birth of the first Daily Telegraph editor at Baskerville House, a decision

taken at Barbourne Bridge that saved the life of Charles II and perhaps saved the monarchy, and an uncompromising gatekeeper who achieved national notoriety by holding up George III for several hours at the turnpike toll gate in Ombersley Road. *Terry Wardle*

7th October 2011

### WATER OVER MY WELLIES

**Brian Draper**

The October meeting was entertained by Brian Draper MBE, the local expert on rivers, wildlife and local history, telling the story of his working life in and around rivers in a talk entitled "Water over my Wellies".

He established an early connection with the society, as one of his teachers at Christopher Whitehead School was Bill Gwilliam, the founder. After several false starts in his career, he went to work for the Severn River Authority-

these were the days before Health and Safety and the men were left to their own devices to get the job done, leaning from the experience of fellow workers (one of which retired aged 85) and having little supervision from 'Management'.

His love of his environment and wildlife contributed to his becoming Conservation Liaison Officer, travelling to Shrewsbury daily for 15 years. He worked closely with the RSPB, Wildlife Trusts and other interested bodies to produce a conservation strategy scale for the National Rivers Authority which was later adopted on a national scale as best practice. He was awarded the MBE by the Queen for this work.

From 'the best tea boy in the business', to the corridors of Buckingham Palace, he took us through his life in his usual enthusiastic and entertaining fashion, meeting characters every step of the way. *Sue Bradley*

# Winter Programme Reports (Continued)

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11th November 2011

## STOKE PRIOR SALT WORKS

**Rev. Alan White**

The Chairman, Michael McCurdy, introduced The Rev Alan White a member of the society and the author of a book on Worcestershire Salt, to talk about the Stoke Prior Salt Works.

Digging the Worcester Birmingham canal through Stoke Prior 1812-1813 revealed a high concentration of salt and the first works were established in 1825, unlike the surface brine supply to the Droitwich salt industry the altitude meant that the salt had to be recovered from 300ft down.

Rival companies established themselves east and west of the canal becoming the British Alkaline Company and the Imperial Salt and Alkali Company, in the 1840's water seeped into the workings and both companies were in financial trouble in the 1850's when John Corbett came as an agent for Farnon and Gossage, leasing the firm in 1852 on inheriting money following his father's death. By 1862 he owned both business's and cured the site problems which had diluted the salt. With his canal knowledge and business acumen he united both works, developed a fleet of 50 barges, and owned his own boatyard, wagon works, along with timber and brick yards.

He was an enlightened employer, concerned for the welfare of his workforce, particularly the women, and he continued his charitable works long after he sold the business to the salt union in 1889. ICI took over the works in 1937 and continued production until it became uneconomical and it was closed in 1972.

Illustrated with slides showing the plant and production processes over the years to its sad decline and removal of the historic old salt pans in the 1950's it was

an interesting insight into one of the important industries of the area.

The vote of thanks was given by Roger Tapping. *Sue Bradley*

9th December 2011

## AN EVENING WITH HENRY SANDON

See cover story.

13th January 2012

## C.W. DYSON PERRINS - A QUIET HERO

**John Handley**

The Chairman, Michael McCurdy introduced our first speaker of the New Year, John Handley, the former Chairman of Malvern Civic Society and a local historian. The subject was 'The Quiet Hero' The story of C. W. Dyson Perrins 1864-1958.

Dyson Perrins is an important figure in the history of this area. His life followed many paths, soldier businessman, public servant and his fortune, derived from the family involvement with Lea and Perrins Sauce, enabled him to become a collector of artworks in many fields including paintings, manuscripts and Worcester Porcelain. His enthusiasm for the latter developed the important personal collection which he later donated to start the Worcester Porcelain Museum, his investment in the factory itself had prevented its closure, ensuring its future for almost three quarters of a century.

His generosity to the City includes the Perrins Hall at Worcester Royal Grammar School, while Malvern received both a new Library and a Hospital; many donations were made to projects near to his Scottish estate. His innate modesty led to the choice of subtitle for the talk and his book *The Quiet Hero*, copies of which were for sale at the end of the evening.

The vote of thanks was given by Roy Fidoe.

*Sue Bradley*

10th February 2012

## WILLIAMS OF PITMASTON

**Murray Mylechreest**

The Chairman Michael McCurdy Introduced Dr Murray Mylechreest to talk about John Williams of Pitmaston, (1773-1853), a local pioneer of the application of science to agriculture.

A son of a local businessman with a distillery near the now Cripplegate Park, on his marriage he moved into Pitmaston house on the Malvern Road where he investigated the effect of climate on growing plants under glass, especially grapes and melons. His interests in local affairs included Worcester Royal Infirmary and the work carried out by Dr Wilson Philip at the time of Charles Hastings, founder of the British Medical Association

He was a friend of Thomas Andrew Knight of Herefordshire who was also interested in breeding new varieties of fruit, growth of plants under protected cultivation, pests and diseases and the growth of roots and shoots. In 1811 Knight became the second president of the Royal Horticultural Society. Both men produced new varieties of fruit, Williams' Pitmaston Duchess pear is still grown today and both promoted the science of Horticulture, locally and nationally. They were significant attendees of the third anniversary meeting of the Worcestershire Natural History Society meeting in the Guildhall in 1836, along with Charles Hastings.

The vote of thanks was proposed by the Chairman.

*Sue Bradley*

## Please send in your reports!!

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You will, no doubt, have noticed that we are indebted to a relatively small number of our members who are diligently writing up reports of our Summer and Winter events. Whilst they are doing an excellent job, it is something of an imposition on them and it would be nice if they

could be allowed to relax once in a while, knowing that someone else has volunteered to take a few simple notes and write it up afterwards. The write-ups can be short and brief and need not be typed or emailed (though that helps!) as I will accept any legible scrawl, within

reason. Please do come forward, it will produce a more balanced view of our activities! Please send your reports to me (address on centre pages).

*John Beale.*



# SUMMER PROGRAMME

## Pullout Page 1

Enclosed with your newsletter is a booklet describing this year's Summer Programme, and a booking form. For your convenience the programme is summarised below. You can pull out these centre pages, which also contains details of other events, and pin it on your noticeboard.

The bad news is that costs have risen substantially and we have decided on a smaller programme than last year to balance these costs. Coach hire is up by more than £100 per trip (fuel, tax, etc. and reduced

discount - current economic climate and tight margins), but Commandery Coaches still offer better value than other local firms (another local society has recently changed to them) and they have given us good and friendly service over the years..

We hope, though, you will consider the programme still good value. We have tried to 'add value' to the coach trips with a full day's programme with extra visits. The costs of these have thus at least doubled from last year. There is no away trip

this year, so the first day trip is a vintage bus and river-boat trip and we finish with a canal-boat trip (plus buffet lunch).

To give everyone a fair chance at booking, in the event of oversubscription priority will be given to members, and if necessary a ballot of applications received by 19th March. Thereafter places will be assigned on a first come, first served basis.

*Mike Hayzelden/John Beale*

MONTH/DATE	VENUE	TRANSPORT & COST	MEETING POINT
<b>APRIL</b>			
SUNDAY 29th	Wolverley Walk	Own transport, £2 on day	12:30 pm at Wolverley
<b>MAY</b>			
SATURDAY 12th	Vintage Midland Red bus trip from Wythall to Stratford and Kenilworth	Own transport to Wythall, £18	10am at Wythall
<b>JUNE</b>			
FRIDAY 8th	Visit to Buxton	By coach, £23	9am New Inn
WEDNESDAY 13th (Repeated on 16th August)	Ombersley Quarry	Own transport, car share from meeting point. £4	1:55pm at near Crown and Sandys, Ombersley
SUNDAY 24th	Droitwich Churches	Own Transport, £4	St Andrew's, Droitwich, 2pm
<b>JULY</b>			
SUNDAY 1st	Perrycroft, West Malvern	Own transport, £4	2pm at house, park at Gardiners Quarry.
TUESDAY 24th	Boughton Estate Tour including house and villages	Coach, £30	9:30am New Inn
<b>AUGUST</b>			
Friday 3rd	Hereford Walking Tour	£5 from Worcester.	Foregate Street Station 10:20am for 10:30 train, also from Droitwich and Malvern
Thursday 16th (Repeat of 13th June)	Ombersley Quarry	Own transport, car share from meeting point. £4	1:55pm at near Crown and Sandys, Ombersley
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>			
Saturday 22nd	Kennet & Avon Canal including Boat Trip and Lunch	£33	9am New Inn

# WLHF PROGRAMME

## Pullout Page 2

WIALHS is part of the Worcestershire Local History Forum (WLHF). Other member societies will welcome WIALHS members as guests, although a fee may be payable. I have included a selection of events that might interest members over the next few months. This is not a complete list and not all societies are represented. Please visit the WLHF website ([www.wlhf.org.uk](http://www.wlhf.org.uk)) for more information. A key to the society abbreviations appears on the next page, along with the usual meeting place and time, and contact tele-

DATE	SOCIETY	TITLE	SPEAKER
12 Mar	LHLHS	The Golden Age of British Glass - a Victorian splendour	Charles Hajdamach
20 Mar	FoWRO	Medieval Treasures of WRO: a half century of treasure hunting (at Worcester Woods Countryside Centre TBC)	Christopher Dyer
20 Mar	BSLHG	The Andover Workhouse Scandal	Andrew Harris
20 Mar	BMSGH/s	The English Civil War – Bewdley, Worcester and Kidderminster	Max Keen
26 Mar	WAS	Some Medieval Religious Women: Athelburga to Juliana - c750 -1538	Margaret Goodrich
27 Mar	RHHS	Restoration of the Perseus and Andromeda Fountain, Witley Court	Derek Clarke
29 Mar	VEHS	Folk Music and Songs of the Cotswolds	Gwilym Davies
30 Mar	FoMM	Anglo Zulu Wars 1879: Rorke's Drift and a local hero	Max Keen
3 Apr	HH&FS	Domestic Servants in the Nineteenth Century	Christine Seal
4 Apr	DHAS	AGM and The Dodderhill Project: trials and tribulations	Lyn Blewitt
4 Apr	MFHS	Wartime Worcester- Colwall Village Hall - note venue	Discover History
13 Apr	MCS	The Three Counties Showground	Nick Vincent
16 Apr	LHLHS	A Bishop and his Books - Richard Hurd's Library at Hartlebury Castle	Chris Penney
17 Apr	BSLHG	East Worcestershire Waterworks Company	Dave Wood and James Swann
18 Apr	WAS	The Berkeley Lecture: The Effigy of King John at Worcester	Stephen Church
24 Apr	FoWRO	AGM followed by "Old Pershore" at Worcester Woods Countryside Centre TBC)	Marion Freeman
26 Apr	VEHS	Victorian Victims and Villains	David J H Smith
27 Apr	FoMM	Stephen Ballard, a Colwall Engineer	Pamela Hurle
27 Apr	WHS	Yesteryear Folklore, Customs and Traditions	Colin Harris
1 May	HH&FS	History of Abberley Hall and Clock Tower	Jo Roche
2 May	DHAS	Bromsgrove Nailers	Malcolm Nixon
11 May	MCS	The History of the Beachley to Aust Ferry and the Rescue of the Severn Princess	Tim Ryan
17 May	CHS	The Working Life of a Worcester Potter	Malcolm Nixon
25 May	WHS	The Scarborough of the Midlands- Earlswood circa 1900	Valerie Tonks
5 Jun	HH&FS	The Canal Boatwomen	Mike Miles
8 Jun	MCS	James Brindley: the First Canal Engineer	Roy Murphy
19 Jun	BMSGH/s	Guided tour of Oldswinford Church and Churchyard - meet at Church 7pm	Roy Peacock

# WHLF KEY:

Page 3

ABBREVIATION	SOCIETY	USUAL MEETING PLACE	USUAL DATE AND TIME	CONTACT
BMSGH/s	Birmingham & Midland Society for Genealogy & Heraldry (Stourbridge Branch)	St Peter's Centre, Pedmore Lane, Stourbridge	3rd Tuesday of month at 7.30pm	01562 885472
BSLHG	Bromsgrove Society Local History Group	Methodist Centre, Stratford Road, Bromsgrove	3rd Tuesday of month at 7.45pm - Members £1.50-Visitors £2.00	01527 875225
CHS	Clent History Society	Parish Hall, Church Avenue, Clent	Meetings at 8pm	01562 885759
DHAS	Droitwich History & Archaeology Society.	Community Hall, Heritage Way, Droitwich	1st Wednesday of month at 7.30pm	01905620576
FoWRO	Friends of Worcestershire Record Office	Record Office, Spetchley Road, Worcester	Meetings at 7.30pm	
FoMM	Friends of Malvern Museum	Christchurch Hall, Avenue Road, Malvern	Meetings at 7.30pm	
HH&FS	Hagley Historical & Field Society	St Saviours Church Hall, Hagley	1st Tuesday of month at 8pm	01562 886549
LHLHS	Lickey Hills Local History Society	Trinity Centre (Lickey Parish Hall), Rose Hill, Lickey (opposite Holy Trinity Church)	2nd Monday of month at 7.45pm	0121 453 6320
MCS	Malvern Civic Society	Christ Church, Avenue Road, Malvern	2nd Friday of the month at 7.30pm	01684 562214
MFHS	Malvern Family History Society	The Sixth Form Centre Annexe, Chase School, Geraldine Close, off Geraldine Road, Malvern WR14 3NZ	1st Wednesday of month - 7.00-9.00pm	01684567994
RHHS	Romsley & Hunnington History Society	St Kenelm's Church Hall, Bromsgrove Road, Romsley	4th Tuesday of month at 7.30pm between September and May except December	01562 710295
VEHS	Vale of Evesham Historical Society	The Almonry Heritage Centre, Vine Street, Evesham	4th Thursday of month at 7.30pm -Meetings held between September and April only	01386 442705
WAS	Worcestershire Archaeological Society	St Georges RC Church Hall, Sansome Walk, Worcester	Meetings at 7.30pm and 2.15pm	01684 565190
WHS	Wythall History Society	Baptist Church Hall, Chapel Drive, Wythall	Last Friday in the month at 7.30pm except July, August and December	01527 585307



## WLHF 2012 Dayschool Announced

The date and venue for the 2012 WLHF Dayschool has now been agreed. The Day School is SATURDAY 29TH SEPTEMBER, still at Wilden Church. Welcome and coffee will at 9.30 am, with the programme starting at 10am.

This will be to raise funds for the match-funding of the repair of the valuable Victorian Willis organ. This is only a small church but is famous as it has exceptionally beautiful windows and is the only church in England to have all windows by William Morris. Alfred Baldwin, who owned the nearby iron works and paid for the building of the church, married one of the MacDonald sisters. Another sister, Georgiana married Edward Burne Jones, the PreRaphaelite painter.

The day will therefore be called WORKSHIP IN WINDOWS AND THE WILLIS ORGAN (in Wilden). The day will cover stained glass windows, organs and iron making including the Baldwin family, and the Pre-Raphaelites, all in Worcestershire.

Alfred Baldwin was the father of Stanley Baldwin, the three time prime minister, and his grandson, Earl Baldwin, hopes to be present to talk about his family. He also has some interesting artefacts for display.

The cost is £10 and church members will provide an excellent cold buffet for lunch for an additional £5. The Forum AGM will be held as usual during the lunch period. We hope to keep this to 15 minutes.

The church is only small but facilities are available in the school next door and there is also plenty of parking on the road outside. You need to bring a cushion as we shall be sitting on church benches. The programme of Speakers is yet to be agreed.

We are hoping to have a few 10/15 minute slots in the afternoon for members to tell us about their local organ or stained glass window. If you would like to take part, please let me know. Do help to make the day a success.

Please look at [www.wlhf.org.uk](http://www.wlhf.org.uk) for further development and booking details or call 01384 895248.

*From WLHF Website*

## WLHF 2012 Awards

At the 2012 AGM the nominations and winners of the 2012 Awards will be announced.

The awards are to thank all those Long-serving, Hard-working chairmen, secretaries etc. who are the back-bone of most societies.

The Awards will be judged by a committee taken from those Societies who have not entered anyone or any Society for an Award.

Nominations should be made to the Chairman (Cora Weaver, Malvern Museum, Priory Gatehouse, Abbey Road, Mal-

vern. WR14 3ES) in writing detailing in full the reasons for the nomination and a detailed description of the project. Two pages are usually sufficient.

APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE END OF JULY 2012

Rules:

There are two Categories of Awards

1. To an individual who has best promoted Worcestershire local history.
2. To a Society producing the outstanding project of the year in Worcestershire.

Whereas the award to an individual is open-ended, the project by a Society must be within the last three years and be completed.

The Society must be a fully paid-up member of the Forum and the individual must be a paid-up member or a member of a paid-up Society.

Society members can put forward their own Society.

Committee members can apply providing they are not on the adjudicating panel.

*From WLHF Website*

## South Wales and West of England Regional Industrial Archaeology Conference 2012

*There is just time for you to still book for this!*

Somerset Industrial Archaeological Society is celebrating their 40th year and extends a cordial invitation to anyone interested in Industrial Archaeology to attend the Conference on Saturday 21st April 2012 at the Kings of Wessex Academy, Cheddar, Somerset BS27 3AQ. The cost is £14 including lunch..

Talks confirmed include:

- \* Brunel's Great Eastern
- \* Robert Mushet of Coleford
- \* Louis' Legacy. A history of steam engine preservation on the Somerset Levels
- \* A Cornish Railway and its Industries
- \* A Century of Cleansing Winchester
- \* The Extractive Industries of Dartmoor

There will be a choice of visits at the end of the day to Westonzoyland Pumping

Station, Chapel Allerton Windmill, and a Cheddar Walkabout.

Booking is open until 31st MARCH. To request a copy of the booking form or for any questions regarding bookings please contact the SIAS Bookings Secretary, telephone 01935 420812.

General queries about the conference should be addressed to SIAS Secretary, Geoff Fitton. Telephone 01278 760869 or email [sias@geoffitton.plus.com](mailto:sias@geoffitton.plus.com)

# History of Droitwich Fire Brigade

*R M Peberdy*

Archaeologists tell us that the palatial Roman villa that once stood in Bays Meadow Droitwich, was destroyed by fire in the 3rd Century AD. In 1290 a large part of the town, including two churches and many houses, fell victim to what became known as 'The Great Fire of Droitwich'.

In 1909 the Town Mill was consumed in a conflagration which was recorded in photographs which were then sold as post-cards.

In the 1990s a spectacular fire severely damaged the top floor of one wing of Norbury House.

These high profile fires are very much the 'tip of the iceberg' and fires of all sizes must have been a constant, and probably frequent, problem in Droitwich throughout its history for, as well as the 'normal' fire risks associated with the age of open fire heating and candle-powered lighting, we also had the salt industry. The traveler Leland mentions that in the mid 15th century there were more than 300 'furnaces' in Droitwich - each 'furnace' being a fire (either wood or coal burning) which was kept alight for days on end under a large metal vat in which the famous Droitwich Brine was evaporated to make salt. These fires must have produced piles of hot cinders and ashes and huge quantities of sparks - all this in the middle of a town of closely packed wooden hovels which housed the poor who made the salt and the half-timbered and sometimes thatched houses of the richer population. A modern Health and Safety man would indeed have a field day producing a risk assessment for the town!

Until the late 19th century there was no organized system for fighting fires and anyone whose property caught light was 'on his own' when it came to extinguishing the flames and rescuing survivors! In 1707 an Act of Parliament had required every church to provide some basic fire-fighting equipment for use within their parish but, as is so often the case, as the

law was virtually unenforceable it was largely ignored. In the meantime the private sector had built up a network of fire-services via various Fire Insurance Companies. Their firemen however could only attend fires on premises insured by their own particular company. Such premises were marked by a wall mounted badge bearing the insignia of the company involved, some of which may still be seen, even in Droitwich. There is no evidence of any Insurance Company Brigade actually being stationed in the town though, but the Sun and Norwich Union both had fire engines in Worcester which, when sent for, could be on site at a fire in Droitwich within a matter of a few hours! Of course, expected response times were more leisurely in times gone by, as illustrated by a postcard from the 1900s which was posted in one of the outlying villages and addressed to the Droitwich Fire Brigade, requesting their attendance to deal with a barn which was on fire!

The first real local fire fighting initiative came from Droitwich Borough Council who, in the early 1800s, installed the town's first piped water supply with a steam powered pumping station in Newland Road, the water being drawn from a series of shallow wells in the vicinity (shallow to avoid the risk of contamination by brine). With the pumping station came water mains; with the water mains came fire-hydrants and with the hydrants came a fire brigade which was also run by the Borough Council. This volunteer fire-brigade at first kept its fire-engine and accompanying hose and ladder cart, opposite St Andrew's church on the open ground floor of the Town Hall (the arches of which have since been filled in), the horses that pulled the appliances being hired when needed from stabling nearby. The 'engine' itself was a hand-operated pump which was eventually replaced by a steam-powered machine in 1897. This was not always an improvement as sometimes, after arriving at a fire, the appliance had to wait in order to get enough steam pressure up to operate it and so the hand-pump

remained in use as well, only finally being disposed of in 1928 (when it was transferred to the Droitwich sewage farm to be used for pumping 'sludge'!).

Droitwich's first custom built fire station was opened in 1892 in Friar Street and remained in use until it was replaced by the present one during the town development and expansion during the 1970s. The earlier building initially housed the fire brigade on the ground floor, with the Droitwich Town Band having their instrument store and rehearsal room upstairs!

For many years fire services had been provided by parish, town and borough councils, often via committees with mixed responsibilities such as for street lighting and the local gasworks as well as the fire-brigade, but in 1928 The Fire Brigades Act of finally established Fire Authorities which had specific obligations with regard to fighting fires. In Droitwich the Fire Brigade consisted mainly of 'retained firemen' - men who were in other employment but who could be called upon to 'man the pumps' when needed. The new Fire Authorities had hardly had time become established however when the Second World War broke out bringing with it an emergency reorganization, with the AFS (Auxiliary Fire Service) at first augmenting the existing local brigades, and then the NFS (National Fire Service) completely replacing them. With the coming of the NFS, for the first time Droitwich had some established full-time firemen who lived in temporary accommodation consisting huts in the back garden of Priory House in Friar Street which was near to the fire station.

After the war, fire services were returned to a peacetime footing and came under the control of the County Councils.

A few years ago the future of Droitwich Fire Station was in doubt, but it now seems more assured as it has become a base for various specialized services.

*R M Peberdy, 2011*

## Book Reviews

**The Severn - Arley to Avonmouth - Through Time by Jan Dobrzynski**

Amberley Publishing, 2011—£14.99  
ISBN 978 1 4456 0009 3

This book provides a 96-page pictorial record of views taken from the river banks down to the Severn Estuary - a journey of some 100 miles. This is a river version of

the successful "then-and-now" genre that has been devoted to various railway branch-lines and townscapes. This book makes a logical progression down-river starting with chapters on Arley to Bewdley, Stourport-on-Severn, Worcester and finally, The Gloucestershire Severn. In particular, bridges viewed from various angles highlight the changes that have

occurred over the last century or so. Each page contains a pair of postcard-size images; in most cases a contemporary photograph taken from a similar angle is placed below an old photograph of the same scene. The caption between each pair of photos provides a very brief commentary on the contrasting views. The photographic reproduction is of high quality and, given

## Book Reviews (continued)

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their relatively small size, both the modern and historic photos are clear bright images. The text draws attention to a few special points of interest, but it is mainly left to the reader to pick out particular features including some that have survived the decades or disappeared or changed beyond recognition. This is an attractive coffee table volume, however, the paucity of descriptive detail may limit its educational value, for example the exact dates of each of the two views are not generally provided. However, I for one greatly enjoyed this pictorial record of the River Severn and I will certainly look out for its companion volume, the one dealing with the Severn's first hundred miles from its source in the Welsh Mountains down to Arley - the starting point for the present book.

*Hugh Field*

### **BLACK COUNTRY MURDERS by Don Cochrane**

AMBERLEY BOOKS 160 pages - £12.99  
ISBN 976-1-4456-0467-1

This is a rather strange book; it consists of the reports of 43 murder cases taken from the pages of local newspapers including Berrows Worcester Journal. The cases cover the 18th and 19th centuries.

The cases are mostly only a single page with no real details and in a case of poisoning no mention of what poison was used.

The murders are various and many were by desperate people who killed their child because they had no way of caring for them. In other cases, they would nowadays be charged with manslaughter or even judged not guilty for lack of real evidence.

The thought of living in those times is quite horrendous; there were 220 crimes for which offenders could be hanged, including burglary, horse stealing, forgery, rick burning, highway robbery assault and murder.

The book includes 32 illustrations. The cover is the Gaol in Castle Street Worcester where felons were publicly executed in front of the building.

### **DODDERHILL THROUGH THE AGES by Derek Hurst et al**

ISBN 978-0-9569637-0-3 Price £5

This book represents very good value as it is supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and is over 200 pages.

Dodderhill is a parish split by the M5 motorway and marked by the two transmitter masts at Wychbold. It is north of Droitwich and originally had rural roots. The Dodderhill Parish Survey Project has revealed over 10 years a fascinating history of a country parish which began with mention of a Saxon royal residence - no trace of which has been found to date.

The book is very readable and gives us a history of the parish from Roman times to the 20th Century. It is on sale at the Tourist Information Centre in Droitwich, Post Office in Wychbold and Worcester History Centre.

### **STEPHEN BALLARD 1804 - 1890 "ONE OF NATURE'S GENTLEMEN" by Pamela Hurle**

ASPECT Price £7.50  
ISBN 978-1-905795-63-5

This is a small, easily readable history of Stephen Ballard whose life spanned a period of unprecedented technological and social change in Britain and throughout the world.

Stephen Ballard was born in Ivy House at the top of Malvern Link common. (The House is on the left hand side and almost hidden by the trees) His early life sounds idyllic and he wandered around discovering all about plants animals and nature in general. His school days were not particularly happy but once he left school he blossomed. In 1825 he apprenticed himself to a Cheltenham Builder named Lucy, however his career came to an end in 1827 when Mr Lucy could not keep the business going.

His next employment was as Clerk to the Hereford and Gloucester Canal Company at a yearly salary of £60.00 plus rent and travelling expenses. Although he had no formal training as an engineer this did not handicap him in any way. The work gave him the opportunity to visit various civil engineering projects throughout the country. He was fortunate in meeting Thomas Brassey, already a famous railway engineer in 1847 - his salary was agreed at

£500.00 p.a. plus an interest in the profits of the Great Northern line.

Ballard had very wide interests and was also very inventive, building a machine to burn weeds and an icebreaking boat for canals. Ballard's home was the Winnings at Colwall and the railway tunnel was on his land. The railway transformed the village of Colwall and the viaduct at Ledbury was built with 31 arches and 5 million bricks which were supplied by Ballard's brother Robert, who had them dug and fired on the spot.

Ballard was very forward thinking, he did not believe in the death sentence, had a large porch built at the back of the house to distribute soup to poor people. He built the Workman's Institute in Colwall, and played an important role in the establishment of Malvern Hills Conservators.

It was not until 1854 that Ballard married, Maria Bird was half his age and their marriage lasted for over 36 years until his death in 1890.

If you wander around Colwall you will see the many buildings built by Ballard with characteristic very overhanging eaves and also the many lodges around the estate. Stephen and Maria Ballard are both buried close to the tunnel ventilation shaft; it is also the final resting place for several of their relations.

### **THE QUIET HERO—The story of C.W. Dyson Perrins by John L Handley**

ASPECT Price £5.95  
ISBN 978-1-905795-67-3

This is a small but excellent book on a local hero. We have so many places named after Dyson Perrins that we probably do not realise that one man was responsible for them all.

Charles Dyson Perrins was born at Claines Villa, Lansdowne on May 25, 1864 and lived until 1958, although he was originally considered a delicate child. The family moved to Davenham in Graham Road, Malvern in the late 1860's, which was enlarged by the famous Malvern Architect Edmund Wallace Elmslie.

The wealth of the family came from the great sauce factory of Lea and Perrins, which began in 1823 when two chemists, William Henry Perrins, Dyson's Grandfather and John Wheeley Lea formed a partnership.



## Book Reviews (continued)

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Dyson's Mother was a important influence on him as she was a great supporter of charities. She built a free convalescent home in Hornyold Road, Malvern and in Droitwich paid for the equipping and building of St. John's Brine Bath Hospital in St. Peter's Walk.

The sauce manufacturing moved from Broad Street to a purpose built factory in Midland Road in 1897 and is still made there today.

Dyson Collected early Worcester Porcelain and had great historical knowledge, he also collected medieval manuscripts. In 1891 he was elected to the Board of Directors of Worcester Porcelain - his collection of Worcester Porcelain was destined to form the basis of the World famous Worcester Porcelain Museum. In 1946 he decided to create a trust which would in perpetuity make available his own and the Company's collection under one roof as the Dyson Perrins Museum. (After his death, in 1964, his widow bought St. Peter's School for £30,000 to house the collection and paid a further £60,000 to equip the building.)

Dyson built the Perrins Hall at RGS in memory of his father who was a pupil there. He also built the science block and several other buildings. In Malvern he built and equipped the Hospital in Lansdowne Crescent, by pulling down eight houses which he owned. The excellent library in Graham Road was made possible by a grant by Andrew Carnegie and a further grant by Dyson. In 1918 Rosebank House and Gardens came on the market - he bought it for around £18,000 and presented it to Malvern UDC, as a pleasure garden and the house as an added facility.

The great generosity of Dyson Perrins continued throughout his life and included paying the workers at Worcester Porcelain during the great depression of the 1920's out of the profits of Lea and Perrins and even selling the Company to HP in the 1950's to continue to support the manufacture of porcelain.

This little book is really an eye opener into the life of a real local hero.

### **THE FOREST AND CHASE OF MALVERN** by Pamela Hurle

ISBN 978-1-86077-440-9

Cover price £17.99 but available much cheaper.

This is a well-written and concise history of the Malvern area enhanced by maps which have never been previously published. I learned some interesting facts - King John was responsible for the building of Hanley Castle and that originally the area was called Potters Hanley.

This is another history book that is easy to dip into - to read about the Water Cure, Turnpikes, Pannage and pigs place names. It also includes information on Stephen Ballard.

### **THE STORY OF WORCESTER** by Pat Hughes and Annette Leach

Logaston Press, 312 pp, over 200 illustrations, many in colour.

ISBN 978 1 906663 57 5 £15.00

*Review by Christine Silvester:*

This book gives us a story of the city and its inhabitants over many centuries and has been carefully researched by its authors over many years.

There other histories of Worcester, but this is the most recent and it very readable, covers the years 1300 - 1900 and is also well illustrated. The chapters include: Crime and Punishment in Georgian Worcester, Building Projects in 18th Century Worcester, 19thC Education, Public Health, Transport, buildings. There are also chapters on the Civil War and the restoration of 1660 -1700.

It is on sale in local bookshops - have a look at it.

*Now Mike Wall reviews the same book:*

"The Story of Worcester' is by two eminent local historians and has been thoroughly researched by Record Office and Shire Hall visits etc., A scholarly work indeed. They divide their history into rough time scales with the mediaeval period followed by a rough century-by century account of the city, the Civil War looms greatly in any account of Worcester's past and its Commonwealth aftermath. It is in this style that the centuries following are opened up for us. They do not shirk from their duty; the provision of adequate sewerage systems [there were several], prisons [what ghastly dens they were!], theatrical attractions, road widening and through-routes, education [so many schools of varying size and ability, now all gone], industry [the entrepreneurs,

headed by the Quakers], and transport [with canals and railways properly dealt with] all go to provide reading which is hard to put down. The last few chapters deal with the complexities of the city planning during the 20th century.

This book reminds me of Bill Gwilliam's Old Worcester People and Places, with different people. There were many times that names mentioned rang familiar to me due to research among the 200 or so monumental tablets in the old parish churches. Any quibbles? Gladly hardly any. I found their investigations of the historical remains within shops a bit confusing, being a non-Worcester resident. It would perhaps have been easier if a series of present-day photos with the known house numbers could have been included.

As a postscript they give a short history of John Noake whose publications over 50 years in the 19th century and his disagreements with the established clergy are always a mine of information. I have used him as well.

### **WORCESTER THEN & NOW** by Paul Harrison.

95 pp, hard back. 95 photographs, half in colour. Price £12.99.

ISBN 978 0 7524 6326 1

It is a strange coincidence that this book should appear about the same time as "The Story of Worcester". 'Worcester Then & Now' is really a series of old photographs with their up-to-date equivalents nearby. Short descriptions of both are included. The photographer [presumably Mr Harrison] is to be commended by cleverly lining up his camera at the exact spot as the old ones. The comparisons are indeed quite startling. I could have wished for perhaps somewhat longer descriptions of the old pictures especially of long shots. For example, a 1912 picture of the South Quay could have benefited from a more detailed account of the now-vanished buildings such as Hounds Lane School looming up beside the St Andrew's tower and in another instance two good long-shots of South Quay fail to mention the chimneys of Dent's Glove factory and the always prominent Courtenay's sauce works with its lower wide white gable. I can still remember the latter after over 60 years!

*Mike Wall.*

# The History of St. Cuthbert's Chapel

Christine Silvester

The Mother Church of St. John's - at Manor Farm, Lower Wick, Worcester

*The information is all taken, with grateful thanks, from the book written by Ruth Bennett. Compiled by Christine Silvester.*

## **SURVEY OF WICK BARN, MANOR FARM, LOWER WICK**

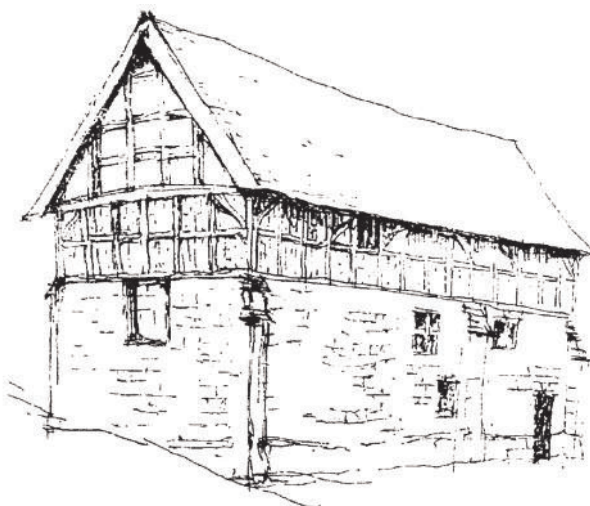
By Richard Harris, Advisor to Avoncroft Museum. 8 June 1980.

East and West Walls are probably intact remains of St. Cuthbert's South Wall: contains stone of three different periods. The Northern half contains 3 openings (2 windows and a door) each with a finely dressed stone head and a central keystone, in finely jointed ashlar masonry. One of the windows remains with frame and iron grilles intact - significant with City Jail use. The other window is empty and the door has been blocked and a new one opened next to it. The character of the stone heads and the surviving window frame would be consistent with a late 17th or early 18th century date for this section.

The Western half of this wall is of coursed and roughly squared rubble. The openings in it, for a stable and a hay loft are modern and there are no signs of earlier openings. The internal face of this wall is very rough, quite different from the square blocks forming the inside of the (original) West end wall.

The third area of masonry is in the South wall a short section in the middle of better preserved and slightly better built than the West end section, coursed and squared rubble. This area contains a window obviously of the same period as that in the Eastern half of the wall; this suggests that this small area of masonry pre-dates the rebuilding of the Eastern section. I am inclined, therefore to see this small central section as the oldest in the South wall, possibly part of the original Chapel. The Eastern half I assume is a rebuild of late 17th or early 18th Century and the Western half must also be a rebuild (because of the different quality of masonry inside and possibly because of the lack of any evidence for original window openings).

The timber framed upper barn is a very high quality piece of carpentry and originally formed an upper room about 56' long by 26' wide. The structure is in 6 bays: the 2 end bays being about 2' longer than the 4 central ones. The structure is symmetrical in design end to end, showing no sign of one end being of higher importance than the other. Access must have been by an internal staircase as there is no evidence of an external door in what can be seen of the North wall. The original floor had been almost completely destroyed, there is dear evidence of two five-light mullion windows opposite one another in the Western half of the building, it may be assumed that they were matched in the Eastern half. These windows would not have been glazed, but there is no evidence for an internal shutter.



**Chapel with 15th century timber framed upper barn and original door with upper windows inserted in the south wall. View from South West.**

The most unusual feature of the building is that there was originally a ceiling above the room, with joists tenoned into the tie beam. The joist mortices, however, are not level but raised towards the centre of the room, emphasising the camber of the beams. The ceiling would have been quite noticeably inclined, each side sloping up towards the centre, rendering the attic space above quite useless. To have a ceiling, as opposed to an attic floor, is highly unusual in a building of this character, but whether it was 'decorative' - to create a more impressive room, or functional - to give added protection, perhaps to material stored in the room - is impossible to say.

It is difficult to date timber framing from style alone, but I would suggest 1500 -1550 as a possible period for the construction of this range on top of the walls of St. Cuthbert's.

## **ST. CUTHBERT'S CHURCH 1165 AD**

The ancient remains of this early church for the inhabitants of Lower Wick may be found in the base of a mellow red sandstone barn in the old farmyard of Bennetts, Manor Farm.

The origins of the church are unknown. There may have been a preaching cross on this high ground above the River Severn and Teme flood plain en route from Worcester Monastery to Malvern Priory in the 12th Century.

St. Cuthbert was a popular Saint; he had been made the Bishop of Lindisfarne in 685 AD and head of a Monastery. He also travelled extensively to isolated villages to preach the Christian Gospel. His gentleness and serene personality gathered many converts. His power of prayer was responsible for many miracles of healing and crops growing out of season. He died in 687 AD.

## **ST. CUTHBERT'S CHURCH - IN ACTIVE USE FOR OVER 200 YEARS**

Reference - Victoria's History of the Counties VOL. 3

Offa, King of Mercia, having subdued the Teme Valley, granted this fertile strip of land called Upper and Lower Wick to Worcester Priory (Cathedral) going by the name of Bedwardine derived from the Saxon word 'breod' meaning bread and 'worthing' meaning fertile land - therefore yielding much food for the Monastery.

Wealth was harvested from the orchards and meadows, bees gave honey and cows gave milk, butter and cheese to the inhabitants of Bedwardine who worshipped in St. Cuthbert's Church. The women would make baskets and reed lights from the willows and rushes gathered from the river banks and probably sat on warm summer evenings in the shelter of the Church. They could watch travellers, traders, noble visitors or religious orders wending their way towards the Severn bridge and the ferry taking

# The History of St. Cuthbert's Chapel (Continued)

them to the Monastery in Worcester. It is possible that some took shelter in St. Cuthbert's at nightfall when the Worcester City gated would be closed. Worcester was prominent for many centuries being the only river crossing between Gloucester and Bridgnorth. (At that time the river was tidal). The Church of St. Cuthbert, Wick Episcopi had been granted by Fritheric to support the Monks of Worcester Priory according to their chartularly in the 12th. Century under the Mother Church of St. Helen's

## ST. CUTHBERT'S FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Reference - Victoria's History of the Counties VOL. 3

It seems that the religious arrangements for Worcester were organised through the Northern Church, St. Helen's, which had many dependent churches and chapelries which were called upon for tythes. Money from the churches on the city side financed the Bishop's Court of law and order before the days of the police, while those on the West of the river financed Worcester Monastery. Prior John de Wyke was always hard up owing to sudden demands from the Crown to support wars or finance hospitality at the Monastery. The Plantagenet King John (1199 -1216) knew Worcester well and chose to be buried here in between our two Saints, Wulstan and Oswald in the hope of giving himself a better chance of going to Heaven. Possibly King Edward II who was later murdered at Berkeley Castle in 1327 could have passed this way.

Reference: Nash's History of Worcestershire

We find records of how hard working country folk had to support and help the Monastery in kind and cash:

- \* To find one vat (36 gallons) of wine at least twice a year for Wyke Court (retreat for the Bishop).
- \* To thrash in Winter 24 sheaves of Winter wheat and 30 sheaves of another kind.
- \* To manure one strip, using own cart and manure. (This was before enclosures).
- \* To gather 4 gallons of blackberries. (Possibly for dyeing)

- \* To tow a barge with firewood along the Severn

- \* To give the Bishop protection.

Reference: Victoria History. Vol. 111 p. 509

Eventually the chapel in St. John's began to be more important than the Mother Church, possibly an increase in the population of the suburb and the duties of its vicar led to Bishop Gifford's suggestion in 1283 that his work was underpaid.

## BISHOP LYNN REQUESTED TO CLOSE THE CHURCH 1371

Reference: Nash's History of Worcester Vol 11 p. 311-2 and Vol111 p. 509.

Nearly a century later St. John's became far more populous and St. Cuthbert's was "half deserted and attended by very few". Bishop Lynn was not prepared to reduce his financial demands of £8 13s 4d per annum on this now small congregation, they requested him to hold an enquiry. This resulted in the official closing of the Church. Bishop Lynn ordered "every stone of the foundation to be taken away lest any part thereof should remain and be defiled by ruins". This was not done, for what remains is in very good condition which indicates that the roof was probably replaced by thatch and used for farm storage.

St. John's Church was enlarged at this time, with the addition of a Lady Chapel and other chapels (which are now the South Aisle). Into this part of the church was brought the image of St. Cuthbert from Lower Wick and it is believed some stained glass - one piece of which is thought to be the heraldic shield preserved inside one of the South Aisle windows - so something of St. Cuthbert's remains in St. John's.

## SCANTY RECORDS OF INTEREST IN THE 1400'S

Reference: O091 BA 2636 Box 176

No positive records can be found from this era after the ordered demolition of the Church except this scanty reference to his area which is of slight interest, if only for its quaint wording.

"Richard Smith on this day is giving to J. Hath from the new building one barn under his tenure and to R. Smith, farmer of the same place, from the new build-

ing one room".

## EASTER 1475 IN THE YEAR OF EDWARD IV'S REIGN

Reference: Companion into Worcester by Maxwell Fraser 1930

Some years later, Worcester was bathed in the reflective glory of having Julius Medici, who had been Bishop of Worcester until 1522, chosen as Pope under the title of Clement VII (and patron to Michaelangelo). Still later to cringe at his refusal to sanction the divorce of Henry VIII from Catherine (Arthur's widow) and all of the religious upheaval in England which followed his refusal.

## MASSIVE BARN OVER ST. CUTHBERT'S Circa 1500

Another suggestion is that the tenants of Netherwick Farm (Lower Wick) could have built it up with a timber framed barn, using the base of St. Cuthbert's thick stone walls. However, there is no date or reason yet found for when this barn was built. In the beginning of the 1500's Worcester was an important centre for wool and this upper barn would answer the purpose of selection and storing of fleeces on the wood floors above the cool stone of the old church. The reason for the decorative or functional selling is puzzling but would most certainly have aided storage for wool.

## WICK LANDS CHANGE HANDS 1558

With the dissolution of the Monasteries, Worcester Cathedral flourished under its new title and we come close to history again when Queen Elizabeth exchanged land with the Bishop of Worcester and Wick Episcopi became Crown Property. The Wick lands were presented to her Lord Chancellor, Bromley and there began an association with the Bromley family which lasted for nearly 200 years.

It is sad to think that Lord Bromley was called upon by Elizabeth I to become Judge of Mary, Queen of Scots. Placing the seal on the verdict weighed so heavily on him that he became ill under the strain and died two months after the execution of Mary. The land passed to his son. In this period John Wenbury was a tenant, he died in 1576. His son William had a son and 4 daughters but died in 1578, the tenancy then went to John Jones.



## AIA Tours

Members might like to know that Heritage of Industry Ltd., operate overseas tours for the AIA.



Beginning on 28th May the AIA Spring Tour this year is to the mid-West of the US to join members of the Society for Industrial Archaeology at their annual conference in Cincinnati and to explore the industrial history of the region. Before the conference they will be making site visits in Indiana. During the conference they will take part in the SIA tours in and around Cincinnati and afterwards make their way north through Ohio to Detroit. There they will be led by Dr Charles Hyde academic, writer and authority on the automotive industry to

learn more of the once mighty industrial town and how could they miss the Ford Museum?

From 10th September the AIA Autumn Tour will Roam Round the Ruhr, the home of North Germany's steel industry, led by Sue Constable. Based on local coal the whole valley became a conurbation of coal mines, coking plants, blast furnaces and steel works. To support this there was an extensive transport network including railways and canals and the trip will include aspects of all these features. On the list are the Zollverein Colliery (a World Heritage Site), the boat lifts at Henrichsburg on the old Dortmund-Ems-Kanal, the Hendrichs forge, with its



33 drop-hammers, producing millions of scissors, and knives; and the Villa Hugel, former residence of the Krupp family.

Heritage of Industry Ltd., also operate other tours such as:

Best foot forward,  
A City Safari to Northampton  
19th - 22nd April 2012  
Led by Sue Constable

Power & Pleasure  
A City Safari to Mainz & Wiesbaden  
10th - 13th May 2012  
Led by Sue Constable

Gone Fishing  
A City Safari to Fleetwood & Blackpool  
21st - 24th June 2012  
Led by Peter Forsyth

More details from:  
Heritage of Industry Ltd,  
Hunters Moon,  
Gorelands Lane,  
Chalfont St Giles,  
Bucks HP8 4HQ

[www.heritageofindustry.co.uk](http://www.heritageofindustry.co.uk)

Email: [info@heritageofindustry.co.uk](mailto:info@heritageofindustry.co.uk)  
Phone: +44 1494 873677

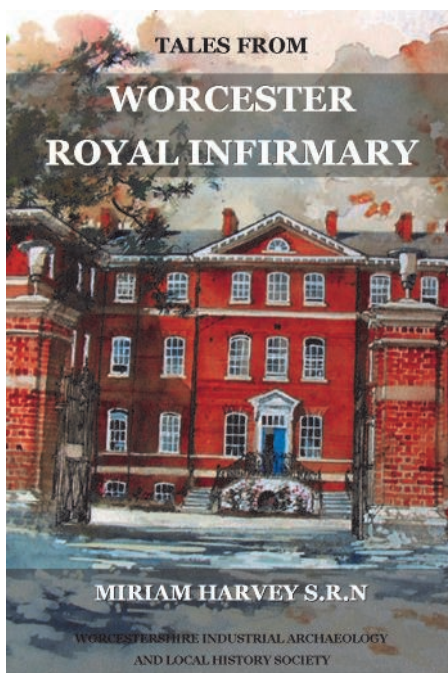
## Tales from Worcester Royal Infirmary by Miriam Harvey

WIALHS has decided to provide a service to members and local historians by becoming a publisher and assisting authors to get their books on local history and industrial archaeology into print.

Our first project has been to work with Miriam Harvey, who trained at Worcester Royal Infirmary between 1954 – 1957 and then spent the next forty years working in the operating theatre, specialising in Emergency Surgery.

This collection of stories and articles is mostly of 20th century characters and personal memories together with some of the more interesting tales of the beginnings of the old Infirmary and the major events concerning the Castle Street hospital.

The society visited this building in a sorry state after its closure as a hospital and saw the magnificent results of its restoration and adaptation by the Univer-



sity of Worcester.

"Tales from Worcester Royal Infirmary" is illustrated with historical photographs and will be just under 100 pages, with an attractive cover based on a painting by David Birtwhistle. It will be published sometime in the late Spring, probably to coincide with the AGM of the Nurses League in May. The cover price will be in the range of £10-12 but it is expected to have copies available for sale to WIALHS members at a substantial discount.

Please look out for further announcements, and do spread the word. If you wish to register interest to get an early copy please email our Secretary, David Attwood.

*John Beale*

# PICTORIAL

## INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY ON THE ISLE OF MAN—MIKE HAYDELLEN



Those of you who are joint members will have realised that WAS have increasingly been including industrial archaeology in their summer visits and in their holiday itinerary. Last autumn the away week was held in the Isle of Man. The Manx National Heritage service produce an excellent guide on “Industrial Archaeology of the Isle of Man”, which is the source of my facts.



**LAXEY MINE**

It is the Lady Isabella, the great water wheel that is the iconic image of the Isle of Man and is now run as a Manx museum. It was made locally by Gelling's Foundry in Douglas and was named after the wife of the governor at the opening ceremony in 1854. Mined by addits from medieval times, this shaft mine was begun in 1822 to extract the deep lead and zinc ores (plus a little silver usually found with lead ores). It became the most prolific in the British Isles during the C19th, but without coal on the island, all the extracted ore had to be shipped to England for smelting. This lack of coal to power steam pumps, led to solutions such as this giant water wheel to pump water out of the



mine. It uses an intricate run of rocker rods back up to the mine shaft and catchment ponds in the hills above for its power source. The mine latterly had mini mine steam engines, Ant & Bee to replace ponies. I must say the views from the top were stunning if a little breezy!



### THE MER:

The Manx Electric Railway was our transport back from Ramsey after visiting Laxey. This 3' gauge system dates from 1893 and the Snaefell section from 1895



and they remain in fairly original form. Our power car dated from 1899 built for the Laxey to Ramsey extension of 1898, the open trailer of 1894 all by G. F. Milnes & Co. We certainly felt its age as with a very gusty headwind the windows rattled so much we had to shout to be heard at times.

The views over the cliff edges were also somewhat unnerving at times. The power is still 550v DC, though the original power station ceased generating in 1934. Power now comes from the Manx Electricity Board. Originally the company had provided power to hotels, theatres and some private houses and in 1911 after installing ac generators in 1903; they powered the Douglas promenade lights. In 1901 the MER sold off the horse trams along Douglas promenade (from 1876 & still operating) and Douglas' short lived cable hill tram (from pier head) to the Manx Government. The MER was transferred to Manx government in 1957.





# PICTORIAL

## INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ISLE OF MAN (CONTINUED...)

### THE ISLE OF MAN RAILWAY:



The railways began in 1873 to Peel, then Port Erin in 1874 (the only train line now left!). The northern line (Manx Northern Railways) to Ramsey opened in 1879, but all merged as the Isle of Man Railway in 1905. Due to falling tourist revenues the Manx government nationalised all the public transport services, Douglas Bus Services, the Isle of Man Road Services and the railways in 1976 joining the government run Manx Electric Railway and horse trams .

Much of the railway services have been lost to cost cutting exercises and very little of the Peel and Ramsey infrastructure



remains. Much of the Douglas Station area has been redeveloped, excepting the station building and engine sheds .

This brings me to the enigma and puzzle for you. On another day we ventured to Balladoole, just off the Douglas-Port Erin road and close to the railway. In the farm were these striking cast iron columns supporting a shed - ex railway or relating to the item below?



Not only this but a huge riveted wrought iron plated pressure vessel, lay alongside. It seems too long for anything to do with the railway. Could it be a Lancashire boiler?

What might be a clue is the lane past the farm leads down to one of the largest stone quarry in the IoM, thence a few hundred yards to a small dock where the quar-



ried stone was transported around the island.

I am sure the editor will collate sensible suggestions for a future edition!

Finally another piece of cast iron; this a testament to the courteous nature of Manx public servants, in this Victorian notice retained on the post box at the quay in Peel!

The notice reads:

"THE POSTMASTER GENERAL OF PEEL BEGS TO INFORM THE GOOD INHABITANTS OF THIS FAIR CITY THAT COLLECTIONS FROM THIS BOX ARE MADE MONDAY TO SATURDAY, 7.30AM AND 6.30PM. VICTORIA REGINA"

Mike Hayzelden

