

Issue 50: April 2017

# Newsletter



*The Cross , Worcester by John Mason*

**WORCESTERSHIRE  
INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY  
& LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

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## NOTICES

**The SPRING DINNER** will be held on 12th May 2017 at the Worcester Golf and Country Club, Boughton Park, Bransford Road, Worcester WR2 4EZ, 6:30 for 7pm. The three-course meal with tea/coffee and mints afterwards will cost £17. You should have received a booking form with menu, but if in doubt and to check availability, please contact Christine Silvester on 01905 354679

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

We would like to welcome the following new members:

- Tony and Trish Mann
- David and Carole Warren
- Sheila Saunders.

Valery Nicholson sadly died in February, we send our condolences to her family and friends.

The following long-standing members have moved away from the area and resigned their membership:

- Aileen Firminger,
- John Stafford
- David Williams

We wish them well in their new homes.

*Sue McCurdy*

## NEW PATRON



We are delighted to welcome Lord Faulkner of Worcester as a Patron of our Society

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Sadly WIALHS lost several long-standing members who passed away during the last year, including Max Sinclair who was a Patron and a founding member of the Society.

Debbie Morris resigned from the committee during the year for family reasons. However, Mike Ellison, accepted the invitation to be co-opted onto the committee as a representative of the South West Worcestershire Archaeological Group (SWAG). It is hoped that further links between WIALHS and SWAG can be developed over the coming months.

The Committee is also delighted that Lord Faulkner of Worcester has accepted our invitation to become a Patron of

the Society thus joining Henry Sandon OBE in this role.

Finally, HJF attended a preliminary meeting earlier in February of a group who are keen to find a more appropriate use for Queen Elizabeth House. The meeting was chaired by Phil Douce; Chairman of the Worcester Civic Society. He explained that this is one of the oldest houses in central Worcester but is currently used only as a small office and for theatre storage with no public access. The group plan to seek a more appropriate use for this Council-owned property and it is hoped that WIALHS will continue to support this seeming worthwhile new initiative.

*Hugh Field, March 2017*

### COMMITTEE MOVES

David Sharman has retired as Treasurer of the Society after 19 years! During that time he carried out his duties efficiently with typical good humour and common sense. David is taking a break from committee activities but we hope to see him again soon in some other role! John Beale was elected Treasurer at the AGM so this leaves the post of Vice Chairman vacant. There is also a vacancy for another committee member.

Mike Ellison was elected to committee following a period of co-option. Mike is

an active member of South Worcestershire Archaeology Group (SWAG) and will be exploring ways of co-operation between SWAG and WIALHS to mutual benefit.

The committee is delighted to welcome Eileen Porteous who was co-opted following the AGM to the role of Press Secretary.

If any other member would like offer their services, please let the Chairman know. We could do with one or two more active members with good ideas or useful skills!

All other roles stay as they were, as detailed on the back page.

## SUMMER PROGRAMME DATES 2017

The Summer Programme and booking forms will be distributed with this newsletter, but for ease of reference, here is the calendar of events:

**Sunday 14 May am:** Walk, Abberley Hill to Quarry

**Friday 19 May am and pm (two groups):**

Worcester Cathedral – upper areas, roof spaces & ‘leads’, with Chris Guy

**Saturday 3 June day:** Coach trip to Forest of Dean Railway, and Lydney Harbour

**Monday 5 June am:** Walk, Belbroughton local history, with Julian Hunt

**Sunday 11 June day:**

Organised by SWAG with WIALHS invited. Coach trip to Caerleon & Caerwent. Details and cost TBC. (Contact Mike Ellison [wmellison@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:wmellison@tiscali.co.uk))

**Wednesday 14 June pm:**

Tour around Abberley Hall and Clock Tower, with Jo Roche

**Tuesday 11th July 1pm: (Not WIALHS)**

City Art Gallery and Museum, Worcester talk “Worcester Trade & Industries” - contact the Museum for information

**Friday 14 July am:** Berkley Almshouses, Worcester [Final Visit!]

**Saturday 22 July day:**

Coach trip to Stroud Valley textile mills with local mill guides (repeat visit).

**Tuesday 1 August pm:** Bewdley church with Heather Flack

**Thursday 10 August pm:** Follow-up tour inside further Angel Place buildings

**Friday 11 August pm:** Tour of Angel Place and local area [Final visit!]

**Tuesday 15 August day:**

Coach trip to Leicester, Gas Museum & Knitting Museum, with local guide

**Please see the booklet sent with this newsletter and booking form (apart from SWAG visit). Any queries please telephone Mike Hayzelden on 01905 456439**

## NEWSLETTER ANNIVERSARY

This edition of the *Newsletter* is special in three ways:

(1) 2017 marks the 25th anniversary of the first multipage, illustrated edition produced by Mike Wall. This was issue No. 2 in 1992, the front cover of which is shown here. Roger Tapping has extracted a couple of articles from that edition which may be of interest; these are on the following pages. Mike Wall did an excellent job – he will be sadly missed. Glynn Thomas carried on this good work for many years. More recently I revamped the format to take advantage of modern desktop publishing techniques. It is worth remembering that my predecessors struggled with typewritten copy and unreliable photocopiers so my job is relatively easy!

(2) Since Issue 2 in 1992, the excellent drawings and paintings of our own John Mason have illustrated the front cover, for which we are immensely grateful. Generally, these have taken as their inspiration places that we have visited or heard about, or that have been topical to the Society's work.

To celebrate John Mason's contribution, the front cover of this edition reproduces with greater clarity the drawing that appeared later in 1992, on Issue 3. This is appropriate as we have recently heard



a talk on Worcester Trams.

(3) The first edition was produced in 1991 as a single sheet (reproduced on the next page for your interest). We have now reached the milestone of Issue Number 50.

*John Beale*

## CREDITS

Thank you to Michael McCurdy and Roger Tapping for chasing and se-

lecting content for this newsletter, and John Mason for permission to reproduce his drawing on the cover.

## NEWSLETTER ISSUE 1 (1991)

WORCESTERSHIRE INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY & LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY.

NEWSLETTER No 1

AUGUST 1991

Now that our Society is affiliated to the A.I.A. it was felt appropriate that we should follow our sister societies and produce an occasional newsletter.

Here is our first attempt. Hopefully it will be the first of many and future editions will carry reports of visits, lectures and work undertaken by members. Of necessity newsletters rely heavily on input from members, so you have been warned.

20th A G M January 11th, 1991.

The following officers and committee members were elected for 1991:

Chairman	Mr D Barton
Vice-Chairmen	Mrs C Hemming
	Mr M J Wall
Secretary	Mrs M Keogh
Treasurer	Mr F Brown
Winter Programme Sec:	Mr B Keogh
Summer Programme Sec:	Mr R Tapping
Committee Members	Mr R Fiddie
	Mr I Hayes
	Mrs J Wheatley

### Accommodation Problems

The Secretary now has 99 members possibly over 100 by the time this newsletter is issued. On occasions our venue for winter meetings is hardly adequate, both as regards capacity and car-parking facilities. If we continue to grow it will be necessary to find a bigger hall, preferably near Worcester. If any members have bright ideas in this respect, please contact the Secretary.

### Lost!

About 5 years ago Mike Wall circulated a copy of Braithwaite's Anniversary Catalogue to members of the Committee - it never completed the circuit. Mike feels that whoever borrowed it has had time to read it, and he would welcome it back.

### City of Worcester, Record of Industrial Sites.

Worcester City Council is attempting to record all industrial sites within the city. To this end a series of record sheets have been produced and any members interested are asked to participate in the survey. Sheets are available from Brian Keech, who is also co-ordinating our part of the project so that possible duplication of effort is reduced.

### Skittles Match.

Preliminary steps have been taken towards holding another skittles evening, probably on a Thursday or Friday in late October. Possible adversaries are members of Staffordshire Industrial Archaeological Society. Anyone interested?

## Worcester Tramway Systems 1883-1928

Winter Programme Talk by Lt. Cdr. A Thomas, March 13th 1992.

(Newsletter Number 2, 1992)

By the mid-1800's horse drawn tramways had been introduced in Newcastle and Manchester; then the arrival of an 'elevated' system in Birkenhead by 1860 coincided with a technical development of the steel girder, first used in the construction of HMS Warrior at about that time and the feature being used as a rail for tramways. In America the introduction of the 'Streetcar' as tramways were known employed the same feature.

By 1870 Parliament passed acts to regulate passenger tramways such as requiring a flag-carrier walking in front of the vehicle, restricting the use of the guide rails projecting above the surface so that it had to be grooved and not flanged and the requirement that stone sets be laid a minimum of 18" outside the tracks. If systems were introduced by a private company, they could be compulsorily purchased by a public authority or re-negotiated every 10 years thereafter. Experiments with other means of motive power and the introduction of steam proved effective in contrast with horsepower, but since almost all other road transport was horse-drawn, the 'horse lobby' made every effort to restrict its use. The Bristol System was due for acquisition by the Corporation but this was frustrated by the outbreak of the 1914-18 War, and the system remained private

until the 1930's.

By 1896 the Light Railway Act introduced as legislation first in France utilised a narrow gauge track, retained in Europe but not preferred by Great Britain and Spain who stayed with a wide-gauge system. In 1919 the first Minister of Transport modified this to permit any gauge.

Cheltenham & District Light Railway employed a system that extended beyond the town and proposed even as far as Stroud. Gloucester employed a different gauge forestalling a practical concept. Another advanced system was the Stourbridge & Kinver Light Railway which, because it crossed a trunk road, employed and introduced traffic lights near the Stewpony public house in 1901. By now the public amenity of a tramcar was hedged in by statute, the horse-drawn bus was slow and cumbersome and the tramcar could carry heavier loads. The horse-drawn tram often needed assistance over hills and as journeys extended so the introduction of stages to exchange horses became necessary (i.e. the Elephant & Castle in London.) By now Birmingham and the Black Country had introduced steam units but because of legislation these had to be totally enclosed in a box construction to avoid frightening the horses! They were moreover very uncomfortable for upper-deck passengers who would be smothered in steam and cinders! Other solutions to these problems were compresses air in France and Petrol-Electric in Hastings.



## Worcester Tramway Systems 1883-1928 (Contd.)

To avoid pollution, Wolverhampton introduced trolley buses in 1896.

By 1879 a tramway system was being considered for Worcester and in 1881-83 a 3' gauge with double-decker cars open at each end and with two staircases. One 'Terminus' was at St John's, Bull Ring towards the 'Portobello' and another on the Malvern Road through to Rainbow Hill, with parking places at The Cross, High Street, Cathedral and Bath Road. By 1911 the population was 40,000. Even so there was no urban development beyond Shrub Hill. The horse-drawn tram was slow even for this area.

Electric tramcars were introduced in the UK having been successfully developed in the US using overhead wires, (batteries being too heavy) with some towns preferring a buried third rail to pick up the power using a shoe. There were problems with this last method principally from arcing (sparking) causing further aggravation from the horses. When Worcester changed to the electric tramcar in 1903-04 they adopted equipment made by the Brush Electric Co. The company was known as the Worcester Traction and Light Car Co. being eventually owned by the Midland Red. The 3' gauge cars were dark green and primrose yellow and proved a very efficient and popular transport. The 17 tramcars could handle 1,000,000 passengers per year and the fare was 1d up to 1914 and only 11/2d. thereafter. In common with other cities, the trams had only a short wheelbase. This meant

that at speed, they tended to rock alarmingly.

To travel from Barbourne to St John's required a car change, and most of these were open-topped with very basic seating. The lower deck, termed 'inside', had wooden slat seats facing each other; upstairs, termed 'outside' has sliding seats. The driver had two operating positions, one at each end and at the terminus the conductor had to disconnect the overhead pick-up arm and transfer it to the other end so as to 'trail' on the return journey because the tram could not turn round.

Trams could be hired for special occasions or private parties and they could also offer a commercial transport system around the city, distributing newspapers, parcels etc. this facility was also used by shops who sometimes acted as agents for private individuals.

By 1930 great changes occurred by the introduction of the motorbus. Southampton did not scrap its trams but re-directed the routes with modernised tramcars so that they traversed circular routes. Many forward-looking cities introduced trams with mechanical improvements, better seating etc. But Worcester was not one of these.

The trolley bus always required an island at the end of the route in order to turn round and return without removing its trailing overhead pick-up arms. Because it was on rubber tyres it had to employ two overhead wires (power



## Worcester Tramway Systems 1883-1928 (Contd.)

supply and earth return.) This is unnecessary in a tramcar with steel wheels and rails acting as the return. The expansion of the use of the trolleybus may have been restricted by the start of the 1939-45 War with the risk of disruption of the overhead power-lines due to air raids.

1937 saw a further development in the introduction of the diesel-engine bus and it is interesting that a remnant of the old tram company equipment in the form of overhead wire support stand-

ards still exist. Some can still be seen supporting street lighting in Malvern Road.

Latterly new tram systems are being introduced in the UK with London Docklands Light Railway and a new system adopted by Manchester using high speed cars with mechanical innovations overcoming the limitations of speed of earlier generations.

*Stan Wyatt (Transcribed by R Tapping)*

## VISITS TO DIGLIS LOCKS (1991)

About 45 members visited Diglis Locks at 6.00 pm on Thursday October 3rd when both locks had been emptied for the first time in 150 years in order to carry out repairs.

It was explained that between the bottom of the locks there was a central tunnel or culvert with branches at the end leading to the separate locks. These branches were closed by paddles, two for each lock to control the flow of water. An underwater examination had taken place about four years ago by divers, but a recent examination disclosed that immediate repairs were necessary in the brickwork where water had removed mortar and dislodged some of the bricks.

October was the best time for this work due to lack of boats and low level of the river. At the same time maintenance could be carried out on the lock

gates and lock walls. All that we could see on this visit were the empty locks.

British Waterways made the whole lock area available for public inspection on October 26/27th and I decided to make a further visit. Although the underground culverts were a feature of the display, I had insufficient time to visit them. At least at the exit point there was a vertical ladder in a manhole perhaps 40' deep, but a safety harness was provided.

On the road alongside the docks a spick and span 'G' reg. H&WCC fire engine with a telescopic ladder gave a display by extending its four ladders over the locks to a height of about 50' as a fireman or member of the press took photos from the platform. Nearby was a BW caravan with several displays of photographs, history of the locks and description of work to be carried out.

## VISITS TO DIGLIS LOCKS 1991 (Contd.)

There was a temporary bridge laid across the first lock, the gates of which were open but the lock ends sealed by



Diglis Lock Drained (later in 2011)

*John Beale*

drop planks and supporting steel girders. Access to the lock itself was (by means of an easy staircase of scaffolding and planking to a dry walkway with guardrails. A useful addition was the provision of 'notices' giving dimensions, weights etc. Woodwork had been replaced in some places, pivots had been renewed as had the coats of tar. To the layman, the brickwork appeared to be in surprisingly good condition for its age - made to last! One of the old wooden

paddles, about 7' x 5' X 1' thick was on display, now replaced by those of steel.

The further lock had by this time been filled with water after repairs and the odd boat passed through. Access to the lock-keeper's cottage area was by the walkway on the lock gate itself. Tied up against the lock entrance was a dredger whose buckets were occasionally set in motion although only lifting water. There was free access below to see the galley, bunks, storeroom and engine room where two oil fired parallel boilers raised steam for the engine to drive the buckets - quite noisy. The maker's plate showed the year 1934. There was a dumb barge with a caterpillar-tracked excavator mounted on the top.

By the slipway into the river near the timber yard, a diver gave a display by diving under the dredger to reappear in the channel to the locks where he would surface and wave to the crowd. His breathing and chat could be heard ashore where an operator attended to his air and telephone lines. I understand that these divers were freelance, working for the lock repair contractors.

Two workshops could be visited. In one, a member of the contracting firm gave a running commentary with a colour TV screen. Some cameras had been hand held and others remotely controlled.

To the viewers, it then became apparent how much brickwork had become dislodged in the two culverts where the flow of water at the rate of 30,000 galls/

## VISITS TO DIGLIS LOCKS 1991 (Contd.)

min. had washed out the mortar. Remedial work involved new brickwork in places, and repointing joints. At intervals, holes had been drilled through several courses of brickwork so that a quick setting type of cement could be forced at high pressure to fill any unseen voids. Lastly, a skim of special adhesive was applied to the face of all the brickwork (as when plastering a wall) to provide a watertight film and a perfectly smooth surface to assist the flow of water. It was said that even if one brick was slightly out of line, the constant flow of water would start to work against it.

A large frame of old photographs showed barges queueing up for the locks in their heyday, the river in flood, a barge stuck under Worcester Bridge etc. The equipment of the workshops consisted of several gantry hoists, a blacksmith's hearth (still warm), a 30" circular

saw, planing machine, router or gouger, workbenches and loose tools including a fine array of augers of various sizes. Outside was the timber stock, mainly of pieces about 12" square and up to 30' long. Behind the workshops, there was access to the weir.

Overall, British Waterways had put much thought and effort into their open days and in my opinion, the results could not have been bettered; they far exceeded one's expectation.

The success could be gauged by the large number of visitors, every one of whom I feel 'would not have missed it for the world'. Had Roger Tapping installed a turnstile by the first lock gate and charged his usual £1, he would have taken £1000's.

*Frank Brown (Transcribed by R Tapping)*

### Events at the Hive that may interest members:

**Thurs, 18 May, 06 July 2017 10am–12pm :**

**Map Art Workshops** These workshops offer a chance to explore maps in the library archive and share ideas on making your own using embroidery, textiles, printing, acrylics, collage, or simply drawing. For more information and to book contact Rosie by emailing [mapartworcs@gmail.com](mailto:mapartworcs@gmail.com) or phoning 07789 968945.

**Wed, 03 May 2 - 4pm :**

**Looking for People in the Archives** - This workshop will look at how you can search for people within the archives using the various indexes and catalogues both online and here in The Hive. Tickets £6.00, contact the Hive.

## WINTER PROGRAMME REPORTS

### **The Story of Jet Flight—Part 2, 1945 onwards—John Mason**

Friday 16th September 2016

John's article on "The Story of Jet Flight" that was printed in the previous issue of the Newsletter, covers the material presented in another excellent talk by John.

### **Stanbrook Abbey—Pamela Hurle**

Friday 14th October 2016

Pamela Hurle, has recently written a book on Stanbrook Abbey, which had been converted into an Hotel, it has now been sold to a property developer.

The nuns who were English, established a house in Cambrai, France nearly four hundred years ago, in 1623, when Catholics were not popular in England. They were all from wealthy families and settled quietly in a fairly derelict building that they renovated, forming a Benedictine Community. There was also a group of English and Welsh monks who set up a monastery in nearby Douai.

The nuns remained in France until the 1790's when the French revolution made their escape to England essential. They moved to several places in England, finally settling at Salford Hall in Abbots Salford in Warwickshire, where the last of the Cambrai nuns died in 1830.

Stanbrook Hall in Callow End was put up for sale in 1835. A little subterfuge

was practiced whereby Dom Bernard Short of Little Malvern posed as a country gentleman and bought the Hall on behalf of the Nuns. The buildings needed some alterations and extension and the community could not move in for two years, but they started working the grounds. Including, re-interring the relics of their departed sisters from Cambrai and Salford Hall.

The alterations were completed and the first mass was celebrated Sunday 15 July 1838. The present buildings we know and recognize are the work of Edwards Welby Pugin, who, like his father, died an early death.

For some time the nuns ran a school at the Abbey and there was a choir of fifty professed sisters as well as lay sisters and 25 pupils. They were renowned for the perfection of chant.

Stanbrook Abbey is probably best known for its publications; a press was set up in 1876 and continued until the late 20th Century when digital methods of printing overtook the labour-intensive letterpress methods used by the nuns. The Abbey attracted nuns who were artistic and very capable, some were able to sculpt the tombs in the chapel and they seemed to always have had musicians to play the organ.

The Abbess Joanna Jamieson decided that the Abbey should be sold as the numbers had dwindled to a quarter of the number that had been in 1920. In 2009 the remaining nuns left Stanbrook for their new home in Wass, Yorkshire.

*Christine Silvester*

## **Abberley Hall and Clock Tower—Jo Roche**

Friday 18th November 2016

Jo Roche gave us a very interesting history of the site for the last 1,000 years.

The house has changed hands very many times, sometimes because the deceased did not have descendants to inherit the estate. The many owners changed and adapted the house over the centuries until at the beginning of the 20th Century it had become a rather magnificent mansion with wonderful furnishings and decoration.

The garden had been landscaped to give views of the surrounding countryside and provide many walks for the residents to appreciate.

The house was sold in WW2 and a school from London moved in. We were amazed that the house was bought fully furnished, and although it has housed young boys far over 70 years, it still has the feel of a Country House, not an institution.

Many of you will have visited the house and possibly climbed the Tower that can be seen for many miles distant.

Jo has done a great deal of research on the subject and I hope that she eventually writes a history of the site.

*Christine Silvester*

## **“Wizard Prangs” - Mike Jackson**

8th December 2016

Mike is writing a book on WW2 Royal

Air Force flying, and needed an audience to gauge the interest in the subject. His talk was about the first chapter in the book. There were many points that I had not really given much thought to—one was that before we had RADAR it was almost impossible to fly with any accuracy in the dark. It seemed more like navigating a ship, but more difficult because astral navigation would be harder with the limited vision. The Germans had a "beam" system that helped their pilots navigate more accurately and we, eventually had RADAR.

One point I remember was that we dropped 350,000 tons of bombs and killed 350,000 Germans. Perhaps that means that we managed to bomb Military targets and with limited loss of life.

I hope that Mike is encouraged to continue with his research and hope to hear more from him on the subject in the future.

*Christine Silvester*

## **Worcester Trams and Liberalism -**

**Peter Goggs**

Friday 6 January 2017

The talk was, as the heading says, about Worcester Trams and Liberalism. But mainly it was about Dickie Fairbairn, who was a Worcester Liberal and philanthropist who always had the good of people of Worcester in his mind.

The original tramway depot was in St. John's where the Co-op building is now. It was a horse drawn tram and started in 1861 over several routes: from the Portobello in Bransford Road to the

Vine Inn in Ombersley Road, the second from the Cross to Shrub Hill Station. The company had 6 horse-drawn Cars and employed 19 men.

In 1889 the Tramway Trust Company sold out and the City of Worcester took over as the Worcester Tramway Company, which went into liquidation in 1892. Successor Worcester Tramways were the most successful operator and in 1894 appointed R.R.Fairbairn as manager. He was keen to improve the company and introduced more comfortable vehicles with pulled by two horses normally, with a third horse needed to get the cars up the hill at the Bull Ring . The service was extended by horse bus to Kempsey, Ombersley, Callow End and Powick Asylum. By 1899, when the Company ceased to operate, trams covered 1,900 miles and carried 10,000 passengers, each week.

At the beginning of the 20th Century there were moves to electrify the tram system. Eventually permission was given to form the Worcester Electric Tramway Company. After building chaos that was named the 'siege of Worcester' - laying down new lines, ripping up old lines and installing overhead wires - the new service opened on 6 February 1904. The routes were extended and It was estimated that the service carried 3,000,000 passengers a year. The Tramway system ceased operation in May 1928 upon which the "Midland Red" bus company began its bus services in Worcester.

Dickie Fairbairn was a Worcester Councillor, the Mayor and, briefly, our MP.

*Christine Silvester*

## **Grandad's Army (the VTC Volunteer Training Corps) —Malcolm Atkin**

Friday 17th February 2017

Most people are aware of the Second World War Home Guard but few realise that a similar body formed in 1914 and survived in part until 1921. This was important in its own right and also how it helped shape attitudes to the Second World War reincarnation.

The Volunteer Training Corps (VTC) grew out of a spontaneous response to the outbreak of war by those who were unable to serve but wanted to 'do their bit'. As in the Second World War, it therefore comprised men too young or too old to join up, or those working in essential industries (interpreted very liberally in the early years of the war). It also represented the final expression of the traditional attitude to warfare which was that fighting foreign wars was the task of professional soldiers whilst the of civilian volunteers was to defend 'hearth and home', whilst taking care of one's family and business interests. As such, it is an important reminder that the modern vision of eager young men rushing to join up in 1914-15 is a fallacy and a product of both government propaganda and newspaper jingoism. By 1916 only a minority of eligible men had volunteered to serve, necessitating the introduction of conscription.

The government were torn between seeing the value of the new VTC as a training body and a reserve to guard against the possibility of invasion, and fearing that it offered a means of being patriotic without serving overseas. Their somewhat grudging attitude to

the VTC is seen in its insistence that the men bought not only their own uniforms - but also their own weapons and ammunition! It was only fully accepted from 1916 when the shortage of manpower meant that (as in WW2) the VTC increasingly had to take over guard duties and even the infant anti-aircraft defences from the army. Like its WW2 successor, men of the Worcestershire VTC even served on the East Coast on coastal defence duties in 1918.

Although most units were disbanded in 1918/19 some men were retained until 1921 as an insurance against social revolt at the end of the war. Membership of the VTC was a male preserve but there were strong links to the Women's Volunteer Reserve (WVR), which was especially strong in the Midlands. This militant body, who demanded the right to bear arms, was equally uncomfortable to both the government and 10 many other women's groups of period. As with the VTC, the WVR has been almost completely written out of the popular accounts of the First World War.

Malcolm Atkin is currently making a special study of the Worcestershire VTC, together with Mick Wilks. Malcolm's ground-breaking book on the planning for a British resistance in WW2 - *Fighting Nazi Occupation: British Resistance 1939-45* (Pen and Sword, 2015) will be followed-up in 2017 by a book on the innovative sabotage section of SIS (M16) during 1938-40 entitled *D for Destruction: Section D of SIS, the Forerunner of SOE*.

*Malcolm Atkin*

## **An illustrated talk on her visit to the 100th Anniversary of the Battle of the Somme - Caragh Merrick**

Friday 17 March 2017

Caragh illustrated her talk with photographs of the ceremony and included photographs of the Royal Family and the moving sights in the surrounding area. It is difficult to really understand the absolute carnage in the situation and just how the mainly very young men actually coped. Most probably I suppose by never mentioning it again after they reached 'Blighty'. Caragh had researched a Great Uncle, who at the start of the war was in South Africa. He returned to Ireland immediately and enlisted — he survived the war and managed to return to South Africa for the rest of this life.

The talk was very moving and we almost felt reluctant to clap as we all felt so moved both by the talk and by our deeper thoughts.

*Christine Silvester*

## **Underground Austin—Neil Wedgbury**

Friday 28th April 2017

This talk was not presented by the time of going to press, but promises to be an interesting account of what went on below the Austin factory during WWII. For a report, see the next edition of the *Newsletter*.

(ed.)



## BOOK REVIEW

### **Man of Iron: Thomas Telford and the Building of Britain**

Julian Glover

Published by Bloomsbury  
Publication Date: 26/01/2017  
ISBN: 9781408837467  
Price: RRP £25

This book was brought to my attention by an article in the BBC History Magazine (Feb 2017 issue). Would that the history classes I endured in the mid 1940's at High School were of the same interest as these articles! The huge scale of Telford's work and journeying is mind blowing. That the author manages to retrieve so much from archival sources and present it in a readable manner deserves praise. Although the book cover states it is the BBC Radio book of the week, I am not sure it would generate the same interest that reading it oneself creates. It is a pick up and put down book - ideal during the TV adverts!

The coming of the railways and the genius of Brunel tends, perhaps, to overshadow Telford's contribution to the "building of Britain", but although the canal age declined (and never reached the full commercial value hoped for), we now see the canals, bridges and road network in a more sympathetic light as

they opened up the Highlands of Scotland and other areas of the UK to industry and travel.

I was surprised to read that he had a part in the planning and construction of the Göta Canal in Sweden. In 2004 I travelled by high-speed rail from Stockholm to Gothenburg but saw little of the countryside due to the speed and the fact that many miles were through forest

- perhaps I should have gone the long way round by canal!

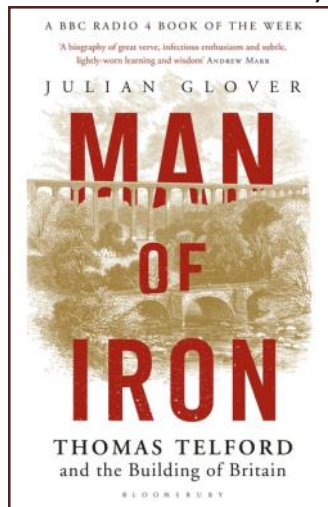
Because he was unmarried, was always in the move by horse drawn carriage, little is known about his personal life except through his numerous letters, which, somehow, the postal service of the day managed to deliver the replies to, wherever he was at the time. Letters to and from his long loved local friend, An-

drew Little of Westerkirk, Eskdale, and through his autobiography published in 1838 - which apparently did not sell well - do give some insight into the man.

I would have liked to know more about William Hazledine, The Shropshire iron founder who cast much of Telford's required ironwork, but you can't have everything in a book of such scope.

Although his London house no longer stands, his "monuments" are scattered throughout the British Isles and are a fitting tribute to his genius.

Betty Wright

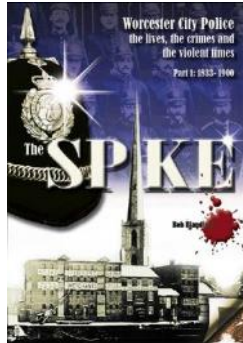


## OTHER RECENT BOOKS (publishers' synopses)

### **The Spike: Worcester City Police, The lives, the crimes, the violent times**

Part 1 1833-  
1900

Bob Blandford



The Whole Picture Publishing Company  
Publication Date: 05/11/2016  
ISBN: 9780992741822  
Price: £18.99

Describing 120 murders, profiles of 250 criminals, persistent drunks and good-time girls, a new book has been described as the most colourful – and controversial – history of the city ever written. It contains hundreds of never-before-seen archive photographs and a profile of every known officer, from the Watchmen days to the dawn of the 20th century. Part two, covering the years up to the amalgamation with three other forces to form West Mercia Police in October 1967, is expected to be published in 2017/18.

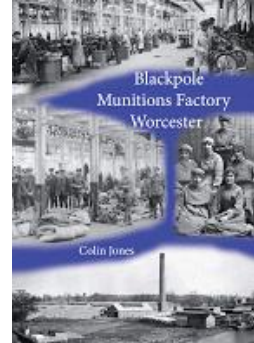
*Coming soon from Logaston Press:*

**In the Munitions: Women at War in Herefordshire,**  
Edited by Bill Laws

**The History of Rotherwas Munitions Factory, Hereford**  
John Edmonds

### **Blackpole Muni- tions Factory, Worcester**

Colin Jones



Logaston Press  
Publication Date: 20/2/2017  
ISBN: 9781910839133  
Price: £10

Blackpole Munitions Factory – or Government Cartridge Factory No. 3 – was built between August 1916 and February 1917. Mothballed after the War, the main building was used as a barracks by a specially raised defence force at a time of potential unrest in 1921. The site was then acquired by Cadbury's to make wooden chocolate boxes and packing cases. In WWII the government took it over again as Small Arms Ammunition Factory No. 5 before Later, the site was once again used by Cadbury's then Hygena Kitchens, before it became a diversified trading estate.

This is more than a story of a factory site and its products – it is also of the people who worked making munitions and who maintained the buildings. Unfortunately little information survives for those who worked here during the First World War, but for the Second World War records and interviews with some of the workers provide a feel of factory life and conditions, of the social life out-

side work and of conditions in the specially built Malvern Hall Hostel that provided accommodation for many workers. For some workers it was quite a wrench from home life now many miles away,

for others, once they had settled in, it gave a sense of freedom from the strictures of their earlier life.

## DEVIZES IA CONFERENCE 2016

The Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society's Industrial Archaeology Conference, 2016, was held at Devizes Town Hall on Saturday 29 October. Such is the popularity of the WANHS conferences that they have outgrown their previous venue and relocated to the Town Hall in Devizes. This was a happy choice as the building itself is historically significant and the hall was comfortably full.

The programme comprised 5 lectures linked by the history of road transport. The scene was set by an authoritative account of the Archaeology of Britain's Roads from their pre-Roman origins by Richard K Morris. This dovetailed nicely with the coming of Turnpikes and Stagecoaches documented by John Chandler.

After a lunch break, Mike Stone dealt with Macknes - wagon and car repairers of Chippenham then a fascinating account of Scout Motors of Salisbury by Jim Watkinson. This company (not to be confused with BSA Scout) flourished briefly early in the 20th Century starting with bicycles, then motorboat, motorcycle and car engines. The venture was started in 1902 by Joseph Dean with the brothers, William and Albert Burden who were clockmakers of Salisbury. The company was wound up in 1921 and surviving "Scout" cars are now vanish-

ingly rare - we were shown photos of the two known cars that are extant. Jim appealed for information, documents or photos concerning the company and any of their vehicles so, if you have some please get in touch with him via the Wiltshire Society.

This very interesting and informative day was rounded off with Motor car manufacture in Swindon by Tim Bryan taking us on a journey right up to date. Swindon is a town quintessentially associated with the GWR and railway engineering. So we were surprised to learn that motor manufacturing innovators such as Harry Morgan trained as apprentices at the Swindon railway workshops. But, on reflection it is logical that this centre of engineering excellence should be a melting pot that produced some important developments in road transport too.

So ended an extremely successful day, which was an enjoyable journey of discovery from the very beginnings of our roads up to the some of the latest developments in car manufacture in Wiltshire. We then had a very short walk to our hotel for dinner and repose - fortunately no further road transport required till our return to Worcester tomorrow!

*Hugh Field*

## **WINTER PROGRAMME 2017/18**

### **ADVANCE INFORMATION**

Christine is well on the way to completing the programme for the next Winter Programme, so you might be interested in what she has already lined up and to pencil the dates in your diaries:

#### **15th September 2017**

Ship Building in the Lower Wye Valley, by Dr J N Frith (the date this finished may surprise you!)

#### **20th October 2017**

The Severn Rail Disaster, by Paul Barnett

#### **17th November 2017**

The History of Urban Gardens, Allotments and Allotment Gardens by Rob Hedge

#### **15th December 2017**

Industrial Archaeology of Shrub Hill Station, by Mike Napthan. Mulled wine and mince pies.

#### **12th January 2018**

To be confirmed

#### **16th February 2018**

To be confirmed

Dates in March and April are not finalised, but will include the AGM in March 2018.

*All events at the RGS Worcester, 7:30pm.*

Worcestershire Local History Forum

## Eminent Victorians in Worcestershire

Day School — Saturday 18 November 2017

9.30am to 4.15pm

Eden Centre, Grovewood Road, off Townsend Way, Malvern



*Charles Hastings*



*Rowland Hill*



*John Corbett*

### **Principal speakers**

**Dr John Harcup OBE**

**Diana Clutterbuck**

**Alan Godfrey**

Sir Charles Hastings — Medical Man of the Moment

The Worcestershire life and times of Prebendary  
Richard Kilvert and his family

Rowland Hill — teacher, inventor, social reformer and  
generous benefactor

### **Short talks**

**Prof Roger Ebbatson**

**Cora Weaver**

**John Hodges**

**Dr Richard Groom**

Cambridge Apostles in Malvern — the water-cure  
visits of Arthur Hallam and Alfred Tennyson

Benjamin Williams Leader — painter of the  
Worcestershire landscape

John Corbett — Worcestershire salt king and  
open-handed philanthropist

Albert Grant MP — classic carpetbagger in a carpet  
town

Tickets £7.50, pre-booked lunch available £6

*To book a place, contact :*

Ann Bartlett, Laureston, 15 Pickersleigh Road, Malvern WR14 2RP

Telephone: 01684 561510; e-mail: [bookings@malverncivicsociety.org.uk](mailto:bookings@malverncivicsociety.org.uk)

# Speculative Building in 19th Century Worcester

**David Attwood**

*A modern suburb is a place which is neither one thing or the other; it has neither the advantages of the town nor the open freedom of the country, but manages to combine in nice equality of proportion the disadvantages of both.'*

*Architect. 1876.*

## **Building Estates: Plans, Development. Builders, Speculative Builders.**

Table A shows, parish-by-parish, that approximately 3,203 dwellings (as these were only proposals and not necessarily all passed) were built during the period covered by the indexed Worcester City Planning Applications 1865-1901.

PARISH	APPLICATIONS	HOUSES	VILLAS	COTTAGES	TOTAL
CLAINES	457	1472	30	117	1622
ST. PETER	219	524	20	80	627
ST. JOHN	182	396	4	53	453
ST. MARTIN	80	361	0	20	385
ST. NICHOLAS	12	18	1	6	25
ST. CLEMENT	9	15	0	7	22
BLOCKHOUSE	9	29	0	5	34
HALLOW	6	20	0	0	20
ST. HELEN	5	8	0	0	8
ALL SAINTS	3	3	0	0	3
ST. ANDREW	2	1	0	2	3
ST. SWITHIN	1	1	0	0	1
ST. ALBAN	0	0	0	0	0
ST. MICHAEL	0	0	0	0	0
PRECINCTS	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>985</b>	<b>2848</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>3203</b>

TABLE A

As can be observed, Claines experienced by far the most expansion, which is to be expected due to the ribbon development along the Turnpike Road to Birmingham and Kidderminster, and the relative ease of building and location of industry. St. Martin on the other hand, though more industrialised, spread along London Road, but was constrained partly by the canal and railway and the hills towards Ronkswood. St. Peter's early development was in the Sidbury area and along London Road and only later in the century up the Bath Road. St. John's was for a long time almost like another village, and the tolls earlier in the century on Worcester Bridge would have deterred many from settling across the River. Thus the early estates were built for the wealthier citizens moving out to the more healthy suburbs. The inner city parishes saw only fifteen new buildings in this time, possibly rebuilt on existing sites.

An early entrepreneur was John Knapp, who bought eighteen acres of freehold land at Lark Hill, off the London Road in 1818, with the intention of development. He mortgaged the property to William Parker for £3000 to finance his scheme. By 1823 he had begun to sell off building plots numbered 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 and houses erected. He unfortunately died in September 1823 and his plans never came to fruition, 'William Parker took over the administration of the property but the development took a different line.'

The data in Table B indicates that Applications to build either one or two houses were by far the most popular; a total of 907 or under a third of all housing was being built by single individuals, either for their own use, or for rent and investment. The larger blocks of housing further down the table indicate that there were individuals, either regular builders or speculators, creating and building streets of dwellings for subsequent sale, as indeed the names appearing on the Planning Applica-

No. Dwellings	Applications	Houses	Villas	Cottages	Total
1	313	291	11	10	313
2	297	521	24	49	594
3	84	222	0	21	252
4	114	428	4	24	456
5	31	145	0	10	155
6	47	234	0	48	282
7	17	105	0	14	119
8	22	128	16	32	176
9	9	72	0	9	81
10	13	110	0	20	130
11	4	22	0	22	44
12	11	120	0	12	132
13	2	26	0	0	26
14	5	70	0	0	70
15	1	15	0	0	15
16	4	64	0	0	64
18	2	36	0	0	36
19	1	0	0	19	19
20	1	20	0	0	20
22	1	22	0	0	22
23	1	23	0	0	23
28	1	28	0	0	28
30	1	30	0	0	30
31	1	31	0	0	31
38	1	38	0	0	38
47	1	47	0	0	47
	985	2848	55	290	3203

TABLE B



tions show. The largest number, 47 houses were built by Walter Aston in Vincent Road in 1892, followed by George Wood, builder, of 38 in Vauxhall Street in 1901.

Unfortunately it is not possible to analyse the motives and financial dealings of these and many other builders involved in the process of house building in Worcester, as no documentary evidence has as yet been deposited.

The only insight we do have is offered by the financial package put together by John Stallard, solicitor, when John Rouse, a Stone Mason of Astwood Road, found himself unable to meet his commitments in 1882, and was summonsed by Taylor & Low Brothers Co. Canada Wharf, Bristol on 16 Sep 1882 for £9. 8. 11d., also by Union Bank of Birmingham on 21 Aug 1882 for £19. 0. 0d and 27 Sep 1882 for the sum of £18. 2. 9d. Stallard, his Solicitors came to an arrangement with his creditors. Doughty notes:

*'The instability of small building firms has been noted by all commentators on the industry. Lightly capitalised, and able to sustain themselves by repairs or subcontracting to a larger concern, nearly all small firms were only temporary participants in house-building.'*

The following is a Draft Copy of Stallard's Circular to Creditors on 28 Sep. 1882. Alteration of text in parenthesis:

Sir,

Mr John Rouse of Lowesmoor in this City, Stone Mason, finding himself unable to meet his engagements has placed his affairs in our hands.

We have with the assistance of his three principle creditors residing here viz.: Mr. H T Bourne of the firm Bourne & Grove, Mr. D H Barker and Mr. John Wilesmith, of the firm J & T Wilesmith, made an estimate of his liabilities and assets. *[see Table C below]*

He owes the unsecured Creditors about £1100 and he has property consisting principally of Stock in Trade and the Equity of Redemption in several Houses estimated (as regards the Stock in trade at Cost price) to be worth the same amount.

It is, however, difficult at the present time to find purchasers for House property in this neighbourhood at its full value and it is considered that the Stock in Trade if offered for Sale would have to sold at a great sacrifice and under (any circumstances) there must be a considerable expense attendant on the realisation of the Estate.

Under these circumstances we are at liberty to say that the three gentlemen we have named consider that if the Creditors (can) are (be)

guaranteed a dividend of 10/- in the £ payable before the end of the present year (which can be done) and Mr. Rouse will undertake to pay a further sum on the 30th June and the 31st December 1883 it will be better for the Creditors than having the Estate wound up under proceedings for Liquidation.

We shall be obliged by your informing us by the 3rd October the amount of your claim against Mr. Rouse and stating whether you are willing to accept the proposed dividends (by the 7th/3rd October)

We may add that in the event of any of the Creditors dissenting there will be no alternative but for Mr. Rouse to file a petition.

We remain

Your obedient servant

John Stallard & Sons.

Reply from : Griffiths & Davis, Slate & Marble Works, 46 & 47 Redcliffe Street, Bristol. Dated September 29th 1882, to Messrs John Stallard & Son, 3 Pierpoint Street. Worcester:

Dear Sir,

We beg to enclose you J Rouse's A/C. I suppose there is no other alternative than to accept your proposal viz.: 10s. in the pound guaranteed, and Mr. Rouse undertakes to pay  $\frac{3}{4}$  in two instalments, on the 30th June and 31st December 1883. We accept this on the understanding all other Creditors do the same.

Yours faithfully

Griffith & Davis.

John Rouse, with the help of Stallard's, surmounted his difficulties and went on to build a further 93 houses, 6 villas and 8 cottages in various parts of the City. Previous to this he had built 26 houses mainly in Bromyard Road and Blakefield Walk, St. John's.

Biographical details of Worcester builders are very sketchy. In addition to the professional builders listed in the trades directories there were the smaller building speculators. A feature of most of the speculative builders and owners is that they practised property speculation as a side-line to their other business. Dyos describes their role thus:

*'At one end of the scale there were men who were principally financiers but who, for the sake of convenience or in order to keep control in a delicate situation, had men in their employment or on call who were capable of running up "frontages" and creating the improved ground rents' (the agricultural value of the land enhanced by housing development)*

<b>Rainbow Hill.</b>		<b>Mortgages</b>	<b>Rents</b>	<b>Surplus</b>	<b>Rates paid by</b>
Five Houses & Gardens	Mrs FINCH	£1300}	£100		Landlord
	BERWICK & Co.	£315 }			
House & Garden James DAVIS	Misses STABLE	£100	£16.		Tenant
Two Houses & Gardens Land purchased from ELT	Worcester Building Society	£333	£28.12	£190	Landlord
Two Houses & Gardens Land purchased from POLLARD	Rev. H J KNIGHT	£300	£28.12		Landlord
<b>Ombersley Road.</b>		<b>Mortgages</b>	<b>Rents</b>	<b>Surplus</b>	<b>Rates paid by</b>
Two Houses & Gardens, one has never been let.	Worcester Building Society	£500	£37	£150	Landlord
Two Houses & Gardens Not let.	W. H. SMITH	£410	£38		Landlord
<b>Bromyard Road.</b>		<b>Mortgages</b>	<b>Rents</b>	<b>Surplus</b>	<b>Rates paid by</b>
Four Houses & Gardens	Mr Joseph LEWIS	£800	£53	£100	Tenant
	Messrs STALLARD	£300			
Five Houses & Gardens	Trustees of ?	£500	£72.12	£100	Landlord
	Messrs STALLARD	£200			
Four Houses & Gardens	Misses WOODWARD	£400	£49.8		Landlord
Four Houses & Gardens	Misses WOODWARD	£400	£49.8		Landlord
Four Houses & Gardens	Misses WOODWARD	£400	£52		Landlord
Four Houses (in course of construction.)				£500	

TABLE C—Stallard's inventory of John Rouse's assets in a list of Particulars of Property.

*which were the marketable products of building enterprise on the property market. Sometimes such a builder could manage his affairs so well that, by getting credit from the timber-merchant and brick maker, . . . and by mortgaging his houses floor-by-floor or pair-*

*by-pair or terrace-by-terrace to a building society, a money-lending solicitor or even to a bank, he needed virtually no fixed capital at all but could discharge all his obligations by finding a buyer for his houses in the nick of time and transferring the mortgage to his client.'*

As an example, William Aston was proprietor of the Steam Saw Mills in James Street, Blockhouse, and also a timber dealer, wood turner, packing case maker and general haulier. He proposed to build over a period of eleven years a total of 70 houses, mostly in the Claines area.

The last column of Table D1 lists the professional architects employed to design the houses, where they are known. Of the small selection of the early Plans that have

720	Spring Lane	Proposed Nine Houses	19 Apr 1881	St Martin	9	
1071	Astwood Road	Proposed Four Houses	16 Mar 1886	Claines	4	
1170	Astwood Road	Proposed Four Houses	11 Apr 1887	Claines	4	A H Parker
1205	Laslett Street	Proposed Two Houses (3)	05 Sep 1887	Claines	2	F. Hughes
1208	Astwood Road	Proposed 3 Houses & Shop	16 Sep 1887	Claines	3	P. Seckham
1219	Astwood Road	Proposed Bakehouse	03 Nov 1887	Claines	0	F. Hughes
1234	Gillam Street	Proposed Four Houses	09 Jan 1888	Claines	4	F. Hughes
1290	Gillam Street	Proposed 20 Houses	30 Jun 1888	Claines	20	F. Hughes
1305	Wellington Street	Proposed Stable	25 Aug 1888	St Peter	0	F. Hughes
1500	Cavendish Street	Proposed 4 Houses	22 Sep 1890	St Peter	4	
1539	Stanley Road	Proposed Sixteen Houses	03 Mar 1891	St Martin	16	
1649	Cecil Road	Proposed Four Houses	07 Mar 1892	St Martin	4	

TABLE D1

been individually checked, Frederick Hughes was the most prolific, being involved in 32 Planning Applications and designing a total of 171 houses. The next most popular was the firm of Yeates and Jones with 105 houses designed, followed by P. H. Seckham with 53 and A Hill Parker with a total of 43.

Many of the small builders drew their own Plans, as did many of the people who built just one or two houses for their own use, these are very basic and crude in comparison. Many of the early Plans are on brown tracing paper which has turned very brittle with age, and tends to crumble when touched. Later Plans are on linen

paper which is much more durable. A few of the professional firms were also involved in improvements or designing new factories and business premises. Solicitors also played an important part in the purchase of land for subsequent development, they had an advantage over the layman with their inside knowledge of the property market. John Stallard and Frederick Corbett are two names that feature prominently in this respect.

### The Development of Hamilton Road, Derby Road Building Estate:

Robert Bach of Great Park Street, was a Glove Manufacturer and building speculator involved in the creation of this Building Estate in St. Peter adjacent to the Canal. He built Hamilton Road between 1881-2, and was among the seven owners who erected 86 houses in Hamilton Road and the adjacent roads of Derby and Prince Rupert Roads over the period 1881-1886. On 21st September 1882, Robert Bach deposited with the Worcester City Banking Co. Lt. the Title Deeds relating to the conveyance of three pieces of land situate in St. Peter's. There are a series of Royal Fire and Life Insurance Policies in The Hive covering the years 1885-86 which throw some light on the building of this Estate. One Policy dated 27th August 1884 with a premium of £1 17s. 6d. giving £15,000 cover for the period between 12th August and 25th March 1885 for:

*'the building of seven private dwelling houses and out offices communicating situate Hamilton Road. All Brick or Stone built and Slated or Tiled and at present in course of erection. Joiners and other artificers allowed to work during the currency of this policy, but it is warranted that the woodwork be not prepared but only fitted and finished therein.'*

Henry Morgan of Richmond Road, Wylds Lane was named as the builder, though his name does not appear in the current Trade Directories, as does the name of Joseph Compton who built seven houses in 1882. Henry Morgan, who probably contracted the work out, appears as building on his own account, erecting eighteen houses over the period, see Table M. There is an Indenture dated 24th June 1886 between Robert Bach and the Worcester City and County Banking Co. Ltd. for the;

*'Mortgage of the Equity of Redemption in 51 Messuages or Dwelling houses, gardens and land situate in Derby Road, Hamilton Road and Park Street to secure balance of Banking Account. Sum of £2,700 plus £810 interest.'*

He had entered into an mortgage agreement the previous day with The Worcester Permanent Mutual Co-Operative Benefit Building Society to raise £4,500 on the above property. A Memo, Table D2 below, dated 15th January 1887, Christmas Quarter 1886. Robert Bach of Park Street, Glove Manufacturer, as Owner and

TABLE D2

12	Houses and Offices situate West side of Hamilton Road.	Sum Assured: £1,560.	i.e. £130
7	Houses and Offices situate East side of Hamilton Road.	Sum Assured: £840.	i.e. £120
12	Houses and Offices situate Derby Road.	Sum Assured: £1,800.	i.e. £150
7	Houses and Offices situate West side of Prince Rupert Road.	Sum Assured: £910.	i.e. £130
13	Houses and Offices situate East side of Prince Rupert Road.	Sum Assured: £1,690.	i.e. £130
51	Total Houses	Total £6,800	Av. £133

Worcester Permanent Mutual Co-Operative Benefit Building Society as Mortgagees.

Robert Bach died 20th January 1888, and his wife Sarah, four months after on 19th May 1888. The following Table E below lists all the owners or builders of the 85 houses out of approximately 95 built on this Estate. The first column indicates the Application number.

The anomaly of houses being built in Derby Road in 1881, when Robert Bach put in Planning permission for a new road in 1885, could possibly be explained by houses being previously erected on the building line of the planned road. The 1886 O.S. Map shows the whole central area of the Estate, bounded by the Canal, Great Park Street, Derby Road and Hamilton Road, as undeveloped, nor was Prince Rupert Road yet constructed. The occupations listed in Littlebury's Directory of 1885 are mainly of Class III, as defined by Armstrong, being engine fitter, engine drivers, gilder, china potter, commercial clerk, china dipper, shoemakers, plasterers, carpenters etc.

### The Sebright Estates.

The decision by the Sebright's to sell off their Estates in Worcester brought a large tract of Land south of London Road onto the open market which developers and speculators were quick to acquire. The Battenhall Estate was auctioned at the Star Hotel on Saturday 13th September 1884. Frederick Corbett, a solicitor, was the major purchaser, buying 11 out of 20 Lots for a total outlay of £13,000. In 1885 the firm of Walton and Lea of London were writing to John Stallard, solicitors;

*We have sold the whole of Sir John Sebright's Worcestershire Estates, with the exception of the Manor of Battenhall; and for which we have this morning three applications and as we are naturally anxious to clear out if possible, we have declined to put it in price to anyone; our desire being to sell it to the highest offer we receive, without further delay if it is such an offer as we can advise our clients to accept.*

717	Wylds Lane	Bach, Robert	New & Hamilton Roads	19 Apr 1881	1881	0
763	Derby Road	Hall, Henry	2 Houses	23 Nov 1881	1881	2
764	Hamilton Road	Powell, William	2 Houses	23 Nov 1881	1881	2
767	Wylde & Hamilton Roads	Morgan, Henry	1 House	23 Jan 1882	1882	1
772	Hamilton Road	Powell, William	1 House	21 Feb 1882	1882	1
778	Derby Road	Osborne, John	1 House	21 Mar 1882	1882	1
789	Derby Road	Osborne, John	1 House	29 Apr 1882	1882	1
798	Hamilton Rd & Derby Rd	Morgan, Henry	5 Houses	24 Apr 1882	1882	5
799	Derby Road	Morgan, Henry	4 Houses	16 May 1882	1882	4
819	Hamilton Road	Bach, Robert	Extension. Of Hamilton Rd	14 Aug 1882	1882	0
820	Hamilton Road	Bach, Robert	6 Cottages	20 Jul 1882	1882	6
821	Hamilton Road	Powell, William	2 Cottages	14 Aug 1882	1882	2
827	Derby Road	Morgan, Henry	4 Houses	07 Oct 1882	1882	4
828	Hamilton Road	Bach, Robert	6 Cottages	07 Oct 1882	1882	6
830	Hamilton Rd & Wyldes Lane	Compton, Joseph	7 Houses	07 Nov 1882	1882	7
836	Hamilton Road	Morgan, Henry	4 Houses	16 Nov 1882	1882	4
929	Hamilton Road & Derby Rd	Bach, Robert	12 Houses	27 Mar 1884	1884	12
973	Derby Road	Bach, Robert	New Road: Derby Rd	13 Jan 1885	1885	0
976	Derby Rd & Prnc Rupert Rd	Bach, Robert	14 Houses	26 Jan 1885	1885	14
1000	Derby Road	Spencer, Thomas	1 House	22 Jun 1885	1886	1
1008	Derby Road	Spencer, Thomas	Stable & Shed	22 Jun 1885	1886	0
1057	Prince Rupert Road	Bach, Robert	13 Houses	12 Feb 1886	1886	13
	Total Houses Built					86

TABLE E

The first appearance in the Planning Applications of the Sebright Avenue Building Estate is on 7th October 1885 when the Worcester Land and Investment Co. applied to construct Sebright Avenue and a sewer. Henry Morgan re-submitted an



earlier Application of 'Proposed Plan of Sebright Building Estate' which included Battenhall Road and Camp Hill Road, on 6th March 1886, but this too was not approved, though subsequent Applications still refer to 'The Sebright Building Estate', so it is possible that the Plan was eventually acted upon. A total of 31 houses were built in Sebright Avenue over the period 1885 to 1896, and are shown on the 1902 O.S. Map, with the rest of the Estate still undeveloped. Mrs. Butcher's study of Battenhall Road documents the development of building from five villas in 1864, to fifty nine in houses in 1938. Sir John Sebright requested his principle tenant, Peter Foxwell to improve Battenhall Lane, then a rural walk, with a construction of a new road in 1864

*'and the raised land at the end of the present lane, from which beautiful views are obtainable, will in the course of time be offered for the erection of a crescent of houses, which will command a fine prospect of hill and dale, with the Malvern and the range of hills in the distance.'* (Worcester Herald. 14th. January 1865.)

In the 1860s, Thomas Cook a retired Grocer, (21 Cross to Fern Bank), Edward Webb Haircloth manufacturer, (8 Copenhagen Street to Greenfield) and William Spriggs clothier and outfitter, (30 Broad Street to Battenhall Mount) were trades people, among others, who had removed to Battenhall Road from the city to enjoy the delights of suburbia.

The Victorian house is still very popular today, for as Caroline McGhie writes;

*The Victorian house is to the property market what roast beef and Yorkshire pudding are to the English table. Solid, comforting, exuding respectability and family togetherness. It is also one of the great success stories of the 20th century.*  
(Caroline McGhie , Telegraph)

The houses built in Worcester varied from the opulent villas, still to be seen commanding the heights with views to the Malvern's, the principle being that 'urban hills confer high social status', which were built in Battenhall, Greenhill, London Road and Lansdowne Crescent, the now conservation area of York Place, to the humble two up and two down cottages elsewhere in the suburbs.

**Notes:** Full references were provided with this article but some omitted for clarity. Please contact David Attwood for details.

This article is an edited extract of Chapter Three taken from the *Growth of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Worcester* a Dissertation submitted as part requirement for the B.A. (Hons) degree validated by Coventry University in the field of History at Worcester College of Higher Education, (now University of Worcester), April 1997, by David A Attwood. BA Hons.

## MALTESE ENSIGN—MEMBER QUESTION

Below is a short note from Chris, the second skipper on our River Severn boat trip last summer. It seems that during the trip he was approached by one of our members who asked him what our “red flag” was for. This is the result of his research.

“As we left Tewkesbury and turned round, I stood on the stern looking down the River Avon for boats coming up and getting in the way. A lady sitting down got up and asked me what our “Red Flag” was for? I explained all about our “Red Ensign”. Whereupon she said they had a similar “Ensign” at home but it had a white cross in the middle. Apparently it had been in family for generations but nobody knew what it was? Did I know what it was? I said no but it sounded like a “Colonial

Ensign” but I had no idea from which country.

When I got home I did a bit of research and found it to be a 19th century Maltese Ensign (see picture, right). If you could put a few lines and photo in your newsletter, as I have no idea who she was, she will be able to tell the family.

Many thanks, Chris”

*Len Holder*

Note: The Red Ensign or “Red Duster” (also pictured left) is the civil ensign of the United Kingdom. It is one of the British ensigns, and it is used either plain, or defaced with a badge or other emblem. It is the flag flown by British Merchant ships since 1707. (ed.)



United Kingdom (Red Ensign)



British Malta State Ensign (1814 -1875)

## 48th REGIONAL IA CONFERENCE FOR SOUTH WALES & WEST OF ENGLAND

This years conference is taking place on Saturday 29th April (so its too late by the time you read this!) hosted by Oxford House Industrial History Society at the Llanhilleth Miners Institute. The

program looks interesting, and we look forward to a report in the next edition of the *Newsletter* from members attending on behalf of this Society. (ed.)



# WIA&LHS ROLES

2017/2018

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