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Front Cover: Wenlock Priory, South Side of the Chapter House
           (J. C. Anderson, *Shropshire: its Early History and Antiquities*, 1874)

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From Minster to Priory: St. Milburga's, Wenlock

By ROSE LAGRAM-TAYLOR

Abstract: This paper is in two parts, the first concentrating on the size, wealth, and status of Wenlock. The focus is upon the debate about Earl Leofric's possible re-foundation, in order to establish the nature of the religious house at the arrival of the Cluniacs, the extent to which the Cluniacs altered St. Milburga's, and a study of its landed estates through analysis of Domesday Book evidence. The second part relates more specifically to the treatment of St. Milburga by the Cluniacs through consideration of Goscelin's *Life of St. Milburga* and *Milburga's Testament*, followed by reflection on *The Translation of St. Milburga*. The most important aspect of this part is investigating the level of acceptance and utilisation of the Anglo-Saxon saintly cult by the Cluniacs. Ultimately, change was certainly experienced at Wenlock, but the level of disruption is questionable.

Introduction

'The Earl filled it with Cluniac monks and now lovely shoots of virtue strain towards the sky'.[1]

The ruinous St. Milburga's Priory in Much Wenlock, Shropshire, attracts little attention from medieval scholars today, overshadowed by its own Dissolution history and by the more prestigious of Earl Roger of Montgomery's foundations, Shrewsbury Abbey. Yet a study of this unassuming site at Wenlock offers much to the student of Norman Conquest England, including key questions regarding the level of change and continuity within religious sites throughout England following the Conquest. What was the impact on religious life at Wenlock after 1066? How were the estates of St. Milburga treated, and why did land values decrease? What was the Norman attitude towards Anglo-Saxon saints such as St. Milburga? To what extent does the experience of Wenlock Priory correspond with national patterns?

A brief history

A double monastery under an abbess was first established at Wenlock before 690, founded by Merewald, king of the Magonsæte as a dependent house of St. Botolph's Monastery, Icheanog.[2] Milburga, daughter of Merewald, became Abbess shortly after the foundation. Under her rule Wenlock flourished, receiving benefactions from her brothers Merchelm and Milfred and holding lands across Shropshire, Herefordshire and Wales.[3] In 901, a charter issued by Ælthelred and Æthelfled refers to Wenlock as a minster, and suggests that, whilst the community was still mixed, it was under a male 'senior'.[4] Little is known of Wenlock until Earl Leofric of Mercia is recorded by John of Worcester and William of Malmesbury as either endowing or re-founding the site, then presided over by a residential community of secular canons.[5] After the Conquest, Earl Roger of Montgomery re-established Wenlock as a Cluniac Priory, dependent on La Charité-sur-Loire *c.*1078–1083, following the establishment of the first Cluniac house in England at Lewes in *c.*1077–1078. A *Life of St. Milburga* was commissioned from Goscelin of St. Bertin by the Wenlock community, and in 1101 an alleged discovery of St. Milburga's remains prompted the writing of the *Miracula Inventiones Beate Mylburge Virginis*, attributed to Odo, Cardinal Bishop of Ostia. The community slowly developed and by *c.*1169–1170 it was large enough to establish its own daughter house in Paisley, and small dependent houses at Dudley, St Helen's and Church Preen. The Cluniac Visitation of

1

c.1275–1276 records 40 monks and 3 lay brethren being present at Wenlock, a considerable increase from the initial handful when it was founded.[6] It received independence from La Charité by papal bull in 1494 and remained a religious establishment until the Dissolution in 1536.

Historiography and sources

There is no specific study on Wenlock Priory's experience of the Norman Conquest. Rose Graham and Marjorie Chibnall both recount a general history of the Priory from its early Anglo-Saxon foundation through to its later Cluniac one, and A. J. M. Edwards and P. A. Hayward focus upon Odo of Ostia's account of the translation of St. Milburga.

Whilst a rich variety of sources is available, it is disappointing that Orderic Vitalis does not mention anything about Wenlock, despite his local upbringing, and it is also disappointing that no pre-Conquest charters in relation to Earl Leofric's minster, or any form of document from Wenlock itself such as a cartulary, exist. However, this simply invites closer analysis of the sources in existence. Particular attention will be given to John of Worcester, William of Malmesbury, Domesday Book, *St. Milburga's Testament*, Goscelin's *Life of St. Milburga* and the *Miracula Inventionis*, although it is regrettable that no English translation exists of Goscelin's *Life*, limiting analysis and causing reliance on the summaries of others. Engagement with these sources constitutes the backbone of this study.

1: The Foundations of Wenlock Priory

Leofric's refoundation?

The question whether the 11th century foundation on the site of the 7th century Anglo-Saxon monastery represents a re-foundation by Leofric, Earl of Mercia, or the building of a new church by Roger, Earl of Montgomery, for his Cluniac monks has sparked significant academic debate. Whilst archaeological reports by D. H. S. Cranage in 1901 and Humphrey Woods's 1981–6 excavation suggest in favour of Earl Roger, the 1962–3 excavations by D. C. Jackson and E. Fletcher interpret the findings as revealing a re-foundation of St. Milburga's original monastery by Earl Leofric.[7] Marjorie Chibnall and H. P. R Finberg are adamant that no such re-foundation was carried out by Earl Leofric, whereas R. W. Eyton and Rose Graham attest in favour of such a re-foundation.[8] This confusion arises from the documentary evidence, particularly the inconsistent accounts of William of Malmesbury and John of Worcester. Chibnall and Finberg both propose that Malmesbury misinterpreted John of Worcester and that this has consequently led many historians into error.[9] However, using Malmesbury, the archaeological evidence, and Domesday Book gives greater plausibility to Earl Leofric being the re-founder of Wenlock through his building a minster church on the site. This would have made St. Milburga's on the eve of conquest a prestigious site with little cause for adaptation when Earl Roger placed Cluniac monks from La Charité-Sur-Loire there. It also points to a significant level of continuity from the original 7th century foundation through to the Cluniac establishment after the Norman Conquest.

The documentary evidence

John of Worcester in his annals for 1057 reports Earl Leofric's death and records how he 'enriched with precious ornaments the monasteries of Leominster and Wenlock'.[10] Whilst showing that a monastery at Wenlock was endowed by Leofric, there is no mention of his re-building it. John of Worcester's account of Coventry as being built by Leofric further suggests that Wenlock was merely a recipient of gifts and not re-foundation.[11] However, William of Malmesbury in his *Gesta Regum Anglorum* contradicts this stating: 'Leofric, with his wife Godgifu, was a lavish supporter of God's service and founded many monasteries, Coventry, St. Mary's Stow, Wenlock, Leominster and others, giving to the rest ornaments and estates'.[12] This is feasibly a misinterpretation of John of Worcester because of clear similarities: John of Worcester distinguishing Leominster and Wenlock as being endowed in comparison with Coventry's complete foundation, William of Malmesbury including them all as being founded by Earl Leofric. However, Malmesbury, delineating other monasteries as being endowed only with gifts, suggests that he had a greater knowledge of the foundations and endowments which Earl Leofric made. He does not merely confuse enriching of monasteries with their foundation, but he makes a clear distinction between the religious institutions which were enriched and those which were founded.

Which of these two differing accounts is the more believable? Although John of Worcester arguably had greater knowledge of Salopian based events because he lived nearer, William of Malmesbury can be regarded as being one of the finest historians of his time. While John of Worcester primarily used the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles as

his source, Malmesbury placed considerable importance on conducting research and he travelled extensively to acquire his sources.[13] It is likely that he travelled to Worcester, but this does not necessarily mean that he used only John of Worcester as a source when writing about Earl Leofric and his Mercian religious establishments. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle refers only to the death of Leofric and his burial in Coventry, suggesting that other sources must have been available for John of Worcester to be aware of Earl Leofric's foundations and endowments to religious houses.[14] The numerous references within Malmesbury's works to his use of various sources ('some however say', 'widely reported', 'differences of opinion') and his attempt at 'refuting falsehood, setting forth the truth' give reason for putting more trust in his version of events.[15] It therefore seems arguable that William of Malmesbury did not misinterpret John of Worcester, but collated assorted sources which gave him cause to believe that the various monasteries, including Wenlock, were founded, rather than simply endowed, by Earl Leofric.

However, cause for doubting William of Malmesbury arises from an apparent contradiction within his *Gesta Pontificum Anglorum*, describing Earl Roger's Cluniac establishment at Wenlock as 'quite abandoned when the earl filled it with Cluniac monks'.[16] Why would Wenlock be abandoned if a minster had recently been built? Sarah Foot asserts that this gives greater reason to trust John of Worcester, since it appears that Earl Leofric did not re-found Wenlock. Similarly Jackson and Fletcher, despite their excavations seeming to suggest that Earl Leofric did build a minster on the 7th century site, discredit all evidence from William of Malmesbury because of this contradictory statement.[17] However, there appears little reason to discredit Malmesbury completely. Stating that Wenlock was deserted could refer to Earl Leofric's minster becoming dilapidated and thus deserted by *c*.1078–1083, when the Cluniac monks arrived. This is sufficient time for such change, especially considering the disruption caused within Shropshire because of rebellions against the Normans by Eadric the Wild and Gruffydd ap Llewelyn throughout the region. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle 'D' text records how losses were suffered in Hereford when Eadric and the Welsh rose in rebellion in 1067.[18] There is likely to have been a similar outcome in Shropshire during the rebellions of 1069–1070 when Shrewsbury Castle was attacked. As Wenlock is only 18km. from Shrewsbury, it is plausible that reverberations would have been felt, either resulting in some level of destruction, or giving cause for the canons to desert it. However with no documentary evidence attesting to high levels of destruction within Wenlock it is possible that it was not deeply affected by the Salopian uprisings.

Another explanation may lie in a more careful reading of the William of Malmesbury extract referring to the Cluniac arrival. Before the statement on the deserted nature of Wenlock, Malmesbury describes the presence of an ancient nunnery, where St. Milburga lived and was buried. He then tells of its being abandoned and that the incoming Cluniacs did not know the location of St. Milburga's tomb.[19] It is possible that as Wenlock was originally founded as a double monastery, Malmesbury was referring to the nuns' church being abandoned rather than the continuing male church. This is reinforced by the accounts of St. Milburga's translation recorded by Malmesbury and *Miracula Inventiones*, both describing the re-building of the church where St. Milburga's relics were subsequently discovered, suggesting that only this site was dilapidated and thus deserted.[20] It is surprising that Malmesbury makes no mention of the community of secular clerks occupying Leofric's minster, but this oversight does not necessarily mean that his references about Wenlock should be discredited with respect to his accounting for Earl Leofric founding a new minster at the site.

Moreover, what is evident from both John of Worcester and William of Malmesbury is that Earl Leofric had great interest in monastic patronage across Mercia. Stephen Baxter suggests this as being a survival strategy, enabling the Leofwine family to create networks of allegiance. It is particularly significant that sites along the Welsh border such as Leominster, Chester and Wenlock were all subject to Earl Leofric's patronage, suggesting that he purposely wanted to build strongholds in vulnerable areas where he lacked a strong landed base. It is noteworthy that his choice of sites constituted centres of saintly cults stemming from King Merewald's family.[21] As a newcomer to Mercia on his appointment as Earl, it makes sense to conclude that Earl Leofric would choose the location of St. Milburga's monastery to re-found a minster, rather than simply endow the pre-existing establishment, in order to portray a greater show of strength in a possibly troublesome region. The account given by William of Malmesbury regarding Leofric therefore corresponds with this conjecture, suggesting that his description of the foundations is the more accurate.

The archaeological evidence

The original excavations at Wenlock by D. H. S. Cranage in 1901 had the initial aim of finding St. Milburga's 7th century church and Earl Leofric's minster. His report demonstrates that he easily found Milburga's church, but he was unable to locate the minster.[22] Finding good foundations of a central apse with smaller apses north and south, alongside the unusual feature of a wall cutting across the central apse, was interpreted by Cranage as showing the east end of the church begun by Earl Roger *c*.1080.[23] Little explanation is given as to why this interpretation was reached, although it can be inferred that the finding of a Norman chapter house and an 11th century transept determined this conclusion. Later technological and methodological advancements in archaeology, however, mean that little reliance can be placed upon Cranage's conclusions.

The most recent excavations of 1981–6, conducted by Humphrey Woods, surprisingly reach the same conclusion as Cranage, although Woods's significant find was the existence of Roman foundations under the 7th century ones, demonstrating an even longer period of religious continuity on the site. His main argument against a church founded by Earl Leofric is the lack of Anglo-Saxon sculpture found during excavations. The discovery of two sections of a chancel arch, dated as early post-Conquest, was taken to suggest a church being constructed by Earl Roger.[24] However, this seems an insignificant basis on which to discount the possibility of a pre-Conquest foundation. Whilst Woods was able to make use of radio-carbon to date the chancel arch, he describes it as being only 68% accurate.[25] Additionally, burials dating from the latter Anglo-Saxon period (reliability of radio-carbon dating accepted) being discovered supports there being a prestigious religious community present in the pre-Conquest era. Woods supposes that this only shows a religious community residing within the older foundation, but it is more suggestive of the presence of a newly established minster. According to Richard Morris, 'to qualify for burial within a church or minster, one had to be a person of rank...whose burial fees were worth having'.[26] A newly founded minster would surely have resulted in higher status burials, as it is unlikely that an old 7th century church would have constituted a desirable burial place for persons of rank. Woods's conclusion, highlighting that out of six trenches only one was 'at a sufficient depth to draw blood', implies that only a small proportion of the site was fully excavated and as such no firm conclusions can be drawn.[27]

The findings of the 1962–3 excavations seem more conclusive, despite consisting only of trial digs, with trenches having to be backfilled each day to limit disturbance to visitors.[28] The discovery of slender walls, barely four feet thick, make compelling evidence in favour of a late Anglo-Saxon building rather than an early Norman one, as the common characteristic of Norman architecture was thick walls. Moreover, Fletcher and Jackson indicate that their discovery of the western end of the north aisle wall in line with the outer wall of the northern apse suggests a rectangular planned church without the lateral transeptal extensions common to Norman design.[29] The site therefore corresponds more with late Anglo-Saxon design rather than with Norman and thus suggests that Earl Leofric was responsible for the building of the church.

This conclusion corresponds with Jane Croom's topographical analysis of medieval Wenlock. Croom describes how during the 11th century a cigar shaped market street, lined with regular burgage plots, was laid out to the south-west of the ecclesiastical centre. She deduces that early through roads were diverted into town in the early to mid 11th century, suggesting that the development of the market street was the cause of this.[30] As there was no community at Wenlock before it became an ecclesiastical centre it seems likely that as the religious house developed, the town emerged. Therefore, Earl Leofric's building a new minster would have provided a reason for greater town development and it would be reasonable to believe that the market street was created at a similar period as the minster's construction.

The Domesday Book evidence

There has been a lack of attention given to Domesday evidence about the founder of the 11th century site at Wenlock Priory. This oversight is significant, as the entry for Wenlock in Domesday Book provides reasons for seeing this foundation as Earl Leofric's minster. Wenlock's value is given as £15 in 1066, demonstrating its relatively high level of wealth before the Conquest.[31] A higher valued estate seems more appropriate for a recently built minster rather than for an ancient, early Anglo-Saxon one. Even more significant is that the entry states that four of Wenlock's twenty hides 'were exempt from tax in King Canute's time'.[32] It is probable that this favour bestowed upon Wenlock was due to its prestigious nature. It is arguable that this could suggest that Leofric gained the exemption for Wenlock at the time of the building of his new minster. This indicates that Wenlock would have been re-founded sometime between the late 1020s when Leofric was appointed Earl of Mercia by Cnut and 1035 when Cnut died. This is an earlier date than was previously assumed. Most scholars suppose that the re-foundation occurred within Edward the Confessor's reign before Earl Leofric's death in 1057. Before the archaeological excavations, Cranage stated that there was little reason why the re-foundation of Wenlock should not date from the 1050s given that King Edward was building Westminster and Harold Godwine was building his quire at Waltham.[33] However, there is no documentary evidence to date Earl Leofric's minster and nothing to suggest that it could not have been built during the earlier period of Cnut's reign. It would certainly explain why such royal favour was bestowed on an otherwise small and ancient community at Wenlock.

Accepting that Earl Leofric did re-found Wenlock and did build a prestigious minster on the site of the previous 7th century monastery, it can also be accepted that on the eve of the Conquest Wenlock was a well endowed and fully functioning religious establishment. When Earl Roger brought over the Cluniac monks little work was needed on the main church, and the site merely changed in status, from minster to priory. Continuity must have been experienced with little disruption to the wider community. It is interesting to note that Lewes (1077–8) and Bermondsey (1089), two other post-Conquest Cluniac foundations, were both founded on pre-existing Anglo-Saxon sites. Norman desire for continuity with the Anglo-Saxon past came from wanting to promote and legitimise their presence. It would appear that Wenlock conformed to this general nationwide pattern through the utilisation of the pre-Conquest establishment.

The Arrival of the Cluniacs

The establishment of Wenlock Priory

Domesday Book records that 'in Patton Hundred Earl Roger has made St. Milburga's Church into an Abbey'.[34] Whilst the Domesday Inquisitors evidently mistakenly termed the new Cluniac foundation an 'abbey' as opposed to a 'priory', given its subjection to La Charité-Sur-Loire, it can certainly be dated as before 1086. Its re-founding as the Cluniac house must fall between 1078 and 1083, as Lewes, the first Cluniac establishment in England, was founded by William de Warenne in *c*.1077–1078, and Wenlock pre-dated the foundation of Shrewsbury Abbey in 1083.

As has already been indicated, the Cluniacs re-used the minster built by Leofric as their own church. It is notable that Shropshire born Orderic Vitalis is silent regarding any activity at Wenlock, especially in the light of his in-depth description of the founding of Shrewsbury Abbey. Orderic states 'Roger...began to build a new abbey in honour of St. Peter, chief of the apostles, at the east gate of his own town of Shrewsbury'.[35] This implies that Earl Roger did not build a new priory church for the Cluniacs at Wenlock, as Orderic evidently viewed the building of a monastery within Shropshire a significant project to document. Furthermore, as Lewes received only three monks from Cluny, it is unlikely that Wenlock received many more from La Charité-Sur-Loire.[36] It is doubtful that a new church would have been built for such small numbers.

Earl Roger

Earl Roger is recorded by Orderic as giving gifts to churches in Normandy and France, including Cluny.[37] A charter dated 1087×1094 confirms a grant made by Roger to the Abbot of Cluny, and, according to an inscription from 1738 in the sacristy at Cluny, Roger built the refectory there.[38] This evidence implies that Earl Roger had a particularly close affiliation to Cluny and makes it unsurprising that he chose to establish a Cluniac Priory in England.

Earl Roger was clearly a generous benefactor to religious institutions. The *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum* records several charters of William I confirming grants made by Earl Roger to cross-Channel monasteries including St. Stephen's Abbey in Caen in 1077 and 1079, St. Evroul-en-Rouche in 1081 and the Abbey of Troarn in 1079–82.[39] Brian Golding comments on the generosity of William de Warenne to other religious communities such as Rouen.[40] Earl Roger likewise appears to follow this trend of giving grants, whereby newly acquired wealth from England was bestowed upon French and Norman monasteries.

Golding also refers to Warenne being known to the Ely monks as a despoiler through his usurping their estates.[41] Whilst Earl Roger has not been termed as such, the Domesday Book provides evidence of his re-granting Stoke St. Milborough, and the resulting opinion; 'the church held Stoke. Earl Roger gave it to his chaplains, but the Church ought to have it'.[42] Although Finberg highlights the fanciful view that these 'chaplains' were the last survivors of the Anglo-Saxon community, pensioned off at the Priory's expense, it is likely that they were Earl Roger's personal chaplains, brought over from Normandy, hence the use of the possessive pronoun 'his'.[43] The willingness to re-grant land and change the tenurial fabric of the area further demonstrates similarity between Earl Roger and King William and suggests a shared pattern of behaviour by the Normans.

The Cluniac 'family' and the founding charter

The extent of the Cluniac 'family' in England was limited in William I's reign to Lewes and Wenlock. Although it might be expected that there was a connection between Lewes and Wenlock, no evidence exists to support this. It also seems that, despite having the constitutional ties with the founding houses in France, a relatively independent status was enjoyed by English Cluniac Priories.

Foundation charters show the main form of subordination to the French 'mother house', namely the annual payment made in exchange for being a dependent house. Wenlock's founding charter states that Earl Roger 'grants St. Milburga's church to the foreign house of La Charité, to which in token of subjection the monks of Wenlock are to pay an annual rent of 100*s*'.[44] Despite Earl Roger's own grants to Cluny there is no other evidence to suggest a strong connection between Wenlock and La Charité. It is probable that the relationship between the French 'mother house' and the English 'daughter house' was limited because of Abbot Hugh of Cluny. His caution about the distance between England and France, and the impact which this would have on the level of Cluny's control, created a reluctance to send Cluniac monks to England.[45] Sending only three monks to Lewes, and refusing William the Conqueror's offer to pay 100 marks to every Cluniac monk sent to England to assist in church reform, demonstrate his unwillingness to form close bonds with England.[46] This is probably why La Charité became Wenlock's 'mother house' rather than Cluny, albeit with only a loose relationship.

The original charter subjecting Wenlock to La Charité is only known from a late transcript in the Gough MSS held in the Bodleian Library and transcribed in R. W. Eaton's *Antiquities of Shropshire*.[47] The charter states that it was made 'with the consent of William II', which is surprising since the Cluniac Priory at Wenlock was

founded in William I's reign. Eyton supposed that as the transcript is in facsimile the transcriber must have had the original from which to copy, but he suggested that it probably contained errors because of the ancient hand in which the original was written.[48] However, he did not question why this founding charter dated from about ten years after Wenlock Priory's establishment.[49] As it is likely that this extant version contains inaccuracies and misinterpretations, the transcriber may have mistakenly referred to William II rather than William I. Although the charter is therefore unreliable, it can be used to show Wenlock's subjection to La Charité and the agreement on a yearly payment, thus definitely placing Wenlock within the context of the wider 'Cluniac family' even if through limited connections.

How much did religious life at Wenlock change?
Wenlock was transformed from an Anglo-Saxon Minster serving a large *parochia* staffed by a collection of secular clerks to a Priory of Cluniac monks. Religious life was greatly transformed. Wenlock illustrates the wider changes occurring across the country following the Conquest, with the fragmentation of Anglo-Saxon minsters' *parochiae* because of tenurial reorganisation alongside Gregorian reform.[50] Rather than collegiate establishments staffed by groups of priests providing for a large area, a basic shift occurred, resulting in smaller parishes staffed by one priest. Wenlock's change in status to Priory therefore correlates with the general disintegration of minsters and also corresponds with Cluny's promotion of religious reform within monasteries, placing greater importance on liturgical office and prayer.[51] Cluny had already influenced the reform of Norman monasteries such as Jumièges and Mont St. Michel, so it is unsurprising that Cluniac monasticism would also impact on reforms within England, especially considering that Pope Gregory VII was himself a Cluniac.

In relation to Wenlock, an essential consideration is what happened to the pre-existing community of secular clerks. Accepting that Wenlock was never deserted it can be assumed that this Anglo-Saxon community was present at the arrival of the Cluniacs, especially as Domesday Book records that 'the Church itself held and holds' implying continuity between the two communities.[52] If only a handful of Cluniac monks were sent from La Charité, it seems sensible to suggest that the clergy remained at Wenlock, if only to maintain its upkeep. It cannot be assumed they were simply dismissed. Inference of this can be made from Domesday's recording of Stoke St. Milborough. The Domesday Commissioners evidently had some interest in St. Milburga's because of their opinion that Earl Roger should not have re-distributed this land.[53] As the Cluniac monks were newly arrived to Wenlock, it seems surprising that they would hold such interest in retaining this estate. Therefore it is more likely their view represents that of a surviving Anglo-Saxon community, who did not wish to see their ancient estate granted to Norman chaplains. In speculating about the continuation of the Anglo-Saxon community at St. Milburga's, these inferences from Domesday Book suggest that it is not implausible that the pre-Cluniac canons remained. Thus Wenlock's religious life altered drastically, but not necessarily to the detriment of the pre-existing community there.

'What St. Milburga's holds'

Land held pre and post-Conquest
Domesday Book records suggest a high degree of continuity in the lands held by St. Milburga's between 1066 and 1086. In 1066 it was assessed at holding fourteen estates. By 1086 only Stoke St. Milborough and Eardington had been re-granted by Earl Roger.[54] These two estates must have been retained by Wenlock immediately after the Conquest as Roger became Earl only in 1071, following the fall of Edwin, meaning that there was little initial impact on its land holding. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that Domesday also records the preservation of many of St. Milburga's 7th and 8th century estates, implying a considerable amount of continuity since the original foundation.

The *Testament of St. Milburga*, as incorporated into Goscelin's hagiography, documents the lands acquired by Milburga during her years as Abbess. The integration of five charters within this document illustrates the estates held.[55] Although its incorporation into a post-Conquest text arouses suspicions, three original and existing charters being assimilated within the *Testament* give greater credibility to its accuracy. These charters attest to Abbot Leatherdale of Icheanog granting Wimnicas to Milburga *c*.675×690, Milburga's brothers Merchelm and Mildred bestowing land around Clee, the River Corfe, Kenecleag and Chielmers *c*.674×704, and Milburga herself purchasing land at Magdalee *c*.727×736.[56] The *Testament* also accounts for land held in Penda's Wrye and Lingden.[57] W. F. Mumford highlights the identification problem of these early Anglo-Saxon place names, but it is generally agreed that 'Wimnicas' refers to Wenlock and 'Magdalee' to Madeley.[58] Moreover, the land around Clee Hill is assumed to be Cleestanton and Stoke St. Milborough, with Shipton and Bourton being the area around the River Corfe.[59] Mumford suggests that Chielmers refers to Deuxhill as these are neighbouring estates.[60] However, it is more probable that the Chelmarsh estate is the equivalent of the earlier Chielmers. It is notable that this estate is recorded by Domesday as belonging to Earl Edwin 'in the time of King Edward', making it probable that the

estate was re-granted to the Leofwine family when Leofric founded his minster at Wenlock, to gain a landed base alongside his ecclesiastical one.[61] Whilst St. Milburga's did not retain the Welsh Penda's Wrye, the Herefordshire Lingden or Chelmiers, it otherwise appears to have maintained its holding over the other estates through to 1086, which is remarkable, given the level of disruption which must have been experienced between the 8th and 12th century, from Viking attacks, Welsh raids and the Conquest itself. It adds credulity to a continued, uninterrupted usage of the monastic site up to the arrival of the Cluniacs, as otherwise it seems unlikely that St. Milburga's would have successfully retained any of its 7th or 8th century estates.

Fiscal assessment

Although Domesday Book provides evidence that the majority of the land held by St. Milburga's in 1066 was still held in 1086, it does show a change in its fiscal assessment. Most estates decreased in value. The estate at Wenlock decreased in value from £15 to £13 by 1086.[62] Only three estates enjoyed an increase in value from 1066: Deuxhill valued at £0.5 in 1066 and £1 in 1086, Shipton at £1.5 in 1066 and £1.6 in 1086, Sutton at £0.6 in 1066 and £0.8 in 1086.[63] These increases demonstrate that only small changes in value were experienced. Far more striking are the total values. The total value of St. Milburga's estates in 1066 was £49.40. In 1086 this fell to £26.50. Whilst this figure may be deemed low, partly because of the loss of two estates, even by including the 1086 values for the re-distributed lands, the total would still be only £37, demonstrating that a considerable decrease in value was experienced across the estates held.

The 1086 assessment probably demonstrates a gradual regaining of value following a more significant initial decrease. Since Shipton, Deuxhill and Sutton all increased in value, it is probable that they recuperated and exceeded their original value at a faster pace than the other estates. The decrease in value can be accounted for by Welsh incursions before and after 1066 and also as the result of the 1069–70 rebellions led by Eadric the Wild (hence references to 'it was waste when he acquired it' in records across Shropshire).[64] Destruction across the country is doubtlessly also the result of Norman reaction to rebellious behaviour. Records stating 'value before 1066...; later waste; now...' signifies the likelihood of this waste being caused within the context of the rebellions but the gradual regaining of value following them.[65] As R. T. Rowley has calculated, 43 vills across Shropshire were 'waste' in 1066, 121 after 1066, and 45 in 1086, highlighting this gradual recovery.[66] St. Milburga's lands have no reference to 'waste', and as the minster continued to function the level of destruction must have been limited. Nevertheless, it is still likely that the decreased values represent some disruption caused by incursions. As V. A. Saunders writes, the most significant feature of Domesday values for Shropshire is the frequent decrease in value which occurred around 1066 and the subsequent recovery by 1086.[67] St. Milburga's therefore fits within this countywide pattern.

The arable capacity documented through the number of ploughs also signifies some level of detrimental impact on the land held by St. Milburga's. Seven estates were acknowledged as having greater arable capacity than was being utilised in demesne land, shown through the number of ploughs listed. For example, Madeley is recorded as having 'in Lordship 2 ploughs; 6 villagers and 4 smallholders with 4 ploughs. 4 slaves; a further 6 ploughs would be possible there'.[68] Through recording the number of ploughs, the capability of the hidated land to pay the tax accessed upon it is revealed. The capacity for greater numbers of ploughs implies that the arable land was under-stocked. This deficit suggests that over-taxation was occurring. The tax exemptions enjoyed by several of St. Milburga's estates can therefore be viewed in this context. The most plausible explanation of why this privilege was granted was that it was to increase yields of the taxable land, thus implying that beneficial hidation was occurring. Although, since Wenlock was recorded as receiving its tax exemptions from Cnut, it is likely that the six other estates with tax exemptions received them simultaneously, with the probable motivation being to bestow privileges on Earl Leofric's newly re-founded minster.[69] As St. Milburga's and Montgomery are the only places listed as having tax exemptions within or near Shropshire, this reasoning seems probable, given that numerous estates countywide had capacity for more ploughs, but yet did not benefit from exemptions.

If beneficial hidation was introduced by Cnut for St. Milburga's estates, its still being in place in 1086 is noteworthy. Because of the deficit in arable capacity, perhaps Earl Roger sought to maintain the tax exemptions in order to assist in improving the yield of estates. The unfulfilled capacity, probably caused by incursions and rebellions across Shropshire, both before and after the Conquest, would have resulted in the decreased value of land. As Earl within Shropshire, and founder of St. Milburga's Cluniac Priory, Roger would have had an interest in increasing the value of the land to at least its 1066 amounts in order for greater returns to be made in the long run. Therefore, whilst the Conquest might have initially had a detrimental effect on St. Milburga's estates, this was arguably only a short term impact.

The Church in Domesday

Domesday Book is renowned for inconsistency when recording churches. This raises the question of whether it correctly records all the holdings of St. Milburga's. It is probable that some inaccuracy exists, given the high use

of round numbers and the tendency to enter values to the nearest 5 or 10 within St. Milburga's entries. However, St. Milburga's is treated as a landholder by the Domesday Commissioners, being given a separate entry, rather than referred to under the lands held by Roger. This is somewhat unusual, given that it is not listed as a tenant-in-chief.[70] It is notable that other churches within Shropshire are recorded likewise, and striking that all constitute old Shrewsbury minsters. Blair writes that it is widely accepted that the majority of Domesday Book churches are records of minsters.[71] It is therefore likely that the Shropshire Commissioners purposely documented this group of churches apart from other landowners, deeming them 'superior' churches of the county with their own taxable assets, thus suggesting possible greater accuracy in their recording. It is no coincidence that a similar pattern is noticeable within neighbouring counties to Shropshire, suggesting that this methodology was specific to the West Mercian based circuit. That the majority of other counties did not record churches as landowners in this way highlights the wide variety of techniques used when the commissioners gathered their data, and illustrates the problems which arise when one tries to compare differing areas of the country. This is evident when trying to compare Wenlock with Lewes as there is no clear distinction about what lands are held by churches in the Sussex folios. There is no mention of the Cluniac Priory being established at Lewes and the only references to land belonging to the Priory record the monks acting as sub-tenants to William de Warenne in the vills of Iford and Falmer.[72] Thus St. Milburga's seems fairly rare in having its lands so accounted in this way, and it suggests that the Shropshire Commissioners had greater interest in documenting 'superior' churches as landowners in their own right.

2: The Cult of St. Milburga

The 'Life' and 'Testament' of St. Milburga

'These Englishmen among whom we are living have set up for themselves certain saints who they revere. But sometimes when I turn over in my mind their own accounts of who they were, I cannot help having doubts about the quality of their sanctity'.[73]

These are the words reportedly written to Anselm from Lanfranc, according to Eadmer. They illustrate the standard attitude of the Normans after their arrival in 1066 towards Anglo-Saxon saints. The proliferation of hagiographies of Anglo-Saxon saints commissioned by the Normans themselves demonstrates that this initial attitude did not prevail. Anglo-Saxon saints could be utilised to harmonise relations between the English and the Normans and to provide continuity with the pre-Conquest period. Religious establishments could gain higher status through association with a particular saint and therefore receive more generous grants and endowments from the secular community. Inspiration for post-Conquest hagiographies must have been the realisation of the usefulness of accepting Anglo-Saxon saints, together with awareness that in order to utilise them successfully their fully documented and effectively publicised history was required.[74] It is within this setting that Goscelin's *Life of St. Milburga* must be viewed.

Life of St. Milburga

The commissioning of Goscelin's *Life* by the Cluniac monks is significant, despite its lack of English translation. A summary of its contents in A. J. M. Edwards's thesis on Odo of Ostia's *Miracula Inventiones* gives some understanding of what it contains. After giving a genealogy of Milburga's family, Goscelin recounts her childhood and the foundation of the monastery, includes the *Testament of St. Milburga* and ends with homiletic material praising Milburga's saintly qualities and describing the miracles attributed to her. The climax of the work is Milburga's death. Goscelin expresses her eager expectation of it and her final words to the community at Wenlock, exhorting them to keep peace and preserve the lands of the monastery.[75] It conforms to the usual hagiographic style of praising saintly virtues and as such can be viewed as a tool for creating interest and participation in the cult of St. Milburga.

The Testament

The *Testament* purports to be an autobiographical statement by Milburga giving an account of the various lands held by her church. Finberg believes that Goscelin transcribed this supposedly early 9th century document word for word, but this seems unlikely.[76] Although the *Testament* incorporates three known authentic charters, it is probable that some interpolation existed, hence Wenlock's ('Wimnicas') holding 97 hides in comparison with the far smaller figure of 20 hides as recorded in Domesday Book.[77] This seems a drastic reduction. Nevertheless, it is plausible that the information conveyed within the *Testament* is largely correct in terms of the estates Milburga held, as it is unlikely that the whole document is fabricated, despite the many occasions and motives for such a fabrication between the early 8th century and the post-Conquest years. Not only are authentic charters used, but that only a handful of estates was being claimed makes it improbable that the document is fabricated, as

surely more estates would otherwise have been claimed. Therefore, the best explanation for the appearance of the *Testament* within Goscelin's *Life* is that Goscelin himself created the narrative around pre-existing charters, either for stylistic reasons or, more likely, to give greater credibility to the contemporary Cluniac Priory by demonstrating continuity in the lands held since its original founding in the 7th and 8th centuries.

Dating

The dating of the *Life* has proved to be controversial. P. A. Hayward, Edwards and Finberg all advocate post-1101, following the *Miracula Inventiones*, because Goscelin refers to the parchment indicating the location of St. Milburga's tomb, knowledge presumed available only after her translation.[78] Believing this is to take *Miracula Inventiones* at face value and trust its dating of events. As caution arises because of the uncertainty of its authorship, together with the fact that William of Malmesbury's account of the translation makes no mention of this locating document, nor gives any clues as to dating, then it cannot be presumed that this discovery immediately pre-dates the translation. The parchment could have been discovered at an earlier period, and therefore Goscelin might have known about it before the *Miracula Inventiones* was written. Goscelin is likely to have known that Milburga's remains were buried at Wenlock, given that this information is recorded in lists of Anglo-Saxon resting places, such as one known list dating from *c*.1031.[79] Ascribing the *Life* to the later dating therefore has little foundation.

It is more probable that an earlier dating is correct. Goscelin wrote the majority of his hagiographies in his exile period between 1078 when he left Sherbourne Abbey (following the death of his patron, Bishop Herman, who had initially encouraged him to come to England from Belgium *c*.1058) and 1091 when he arrived at Canterbury. Goscelin would have been occupied at Canterbury until at least 1099, writing numerous hagiographies for the Canterbury saints following the grand rebuilding programme there.[80] He was about 64 years of age once this project was completed, which makes it improbable that he would have begun travelling around the country again seeking commissions, as he had done during his 'exile', especially as he had settled at Canterbury. The most likely dating is therefore before 1091.

The inclusion of the *Testament* means that the *Life* should be viewed in the context of Domesday England. The most convincing reason for incorporating original charters into a hagiography commissioned by a set of recently introduced Cluniac monks was doubtless either to provide a sense of legitimacy over the lands they now held, or to show to the Domesday Commissioners their claim to the estates listed within the *Testament*. This would explain the continued existence of these lands after the Conquest, when the majority of England witnessed the re-distribution of Anglo-Saxon estates. The Cluniac monks, being able to prove their claim to the pre-Conquest lands listed as belonging to St. Milburga's, would thus have emphasised a sense of continuity with the Anglo-Saxon past and would surely have stregthened their position amongst the local community. Not only would the Cluniac Priory be viewed as upholding the dedication to St. Milburga, but also they would be seen as maintaining the historically valued estates belonging to the site. The quotation from the *Testament*, 'If any one, be he King or bishop or personage of any rank whatsoever, shall attempt to gainsay these donations and make bold to infringe, in whole or part, this gift consecrated to God, let him be accursed at the coming of the Lord', is particularly poignant when it is read with the Domesday context in mind.[81] Therefore whilst exact dating is impossible, it seems plausible that Goscelin's *Life* dates from *c*.1086.

Edwards concludes that it is ill advised to endow Goscelin's *Life of St. Milburga* with any considerable historic value.[82] However, whilst an in-depth discussion of Goscelin's *Life* is not possible because of a lack of translation, the placing of the *Life* within the post-Conquest context in which it was written gives it substantial historic value, especially in considering the Norman treatment of Anglo-Saxon saints. The Wenlock monks' commissioning of such a highly esteemed hagiographer to write the *Life* demonstrates their desire for legitimacy and continuity with the Anglo-Saxon past, a pattern apparent across the country. Bearing in mind that Anglo-Saxon saints could become rallying points for the English in their uprisings, as occurred in Ely and Durham with St. Etheldreda and St. Cuthbert respectively, it is unsurprising that the Cluniacs wished to harness the cult of St. Milburga to their own cause, especially because of the unsettled conditions within Shropshire. What is written in the *Life* may not be deemed of fundamental importance, but its very existence is what makes it such a significant text.

The 'Translation' of St. Milburga

The account

Miracula Inventiones informs the reader that 'in the year of our Lord eleven hundred and one...the Lord revealed by miracles the resting place of his virgin Mylburga'.[83] The account, as a retrospective report, describes the events leading up to the discovery, the translation itself and the subsequent miracles which occurred. It is evident the author was not an eye witness, hence the repeated use of 'they' as opposed to 'we'. That he states 'before I came

to Wenlock and had examined the evidence' implies that not only had he travelled to hear about the translation, but he had come in order to investigate the claims that St. Milburga's body had been discovered and the veracity of the miracles associated with it.[84] The author gives asides such as 'this wooden box I have seen myself and handled' and 'such was the girl I saw', alluding to the fact that whilst he was not an eye-witness, he had arrived fairly soon after the event and was dedicated to making a thorough investigation.[85]

The author
The attribution to Odo, Cardinal Bishop of Ostia, is highly dubious. It is very unlikely that such an eminent figure would have travelled to Wenlock simply to inspect an alleged translation of a saint. Although there was a Cardinal Bishop Odo of Ostia, whose career corresponds with the dating of the translation, with no other documentary evidence such a visit seems doubtful. This is especially the case as William of Malmesbury who gives an account of the translation makes no mention of a high ranking figure visiting the site.[86] It is probable that this authorship was fabricated in order to give greater weight to the account.

It is more likely that the author was a Cluniac, given the inclusion of statements such as 'our venerable father Hugh, Abbot of Cluny' and 'a member of our congregation', which identifies him with the order.[87] This gives reason to suppose that the investigation was a visitation made within the context of the Cluniac family. As Wenlock was dependent on La Charité it seems unsurprising that the 'mother house' would investigate the claims made by the 'daughter house' in order to verify them.

It is also probable that whilst the author was a Cluniac 'visitor', it was the Wenlock community which commissioned the account to be written, given its detailed and laudatory nature. The author argues relentlessly for authenticity in what was recorded, constantly reiterating that he is speaking the truth and has little reason to lie: 'Let no man judge that I am arranging anything in this narration by lying'.[88] The incessant declarations about the 'truthful foundations' of the account generate suspicion, giving the impression, perhaps unwarranted, that the author has something to hide.[89] Doubts are raised about the likelihood of such events occurring, at least in the period to which they are ascribed. Remembering that the Cluniac Priory had been established for twenty years, the time lapse between the foundation and the translation is surprising and perhaps occurred at an earlier date than that given in the *Miracula Inventiones*. It therefore seems probable that the Wenlock community commissioned the account specifically in *c*.1101 when they sought greater legitimacy.

The context
A. J. M. Edwards describes the style and attitude of the text as truthful and persuasive, but yet it seems more applicable to view it as a highly manipulative text.[90] The cleverness of the rhetoric makes it impossible to tell fiction from fact. It is possible that some unknown relics were found, but that the Cluniac monks wished to portray them as St. Milburga's. Throughout the account are references to 'the Lord revealed', 'the Lord who desired that His beloved should be brought into the light', 'our loving Lord wished her virtues to be made manifest', which imply that the Cluniacs wanted to claim divine approval for their presence at Wenlock by suggesting that the remains of the saint were revealed to them by God.[91] It is in this regard that the context of 1101 is so significant.

Following the accession of Henry I in 1101, Roger of Montgomery's son, Robert of Bellême, to whom the earldom passed in 1094, actively opposed Henry I by supporting Duke Robert of Normandy's cause. In 1102 Earl Robert's lands were confiscated and Henry I made moves to claim them himself. Orderic Vitalis records that 'the stern king, however, remembered all his wrongs and resolved to hunt him down with a huge army and grant no quarter until he surrendered unconditionally...the king confiscated Robert's whole honour and the estates of the vassals who had stood by him.'[92] These events would motivate Wenlock to protect its own lands by re-affirming their legitimacy, especially as Shrewsbury Abbey's cartulary depicts its struggle to retain its rights and lands in the aftermath of Robert's fall.[93] In this context, it is possible that the monks of Wenlock contrived the invention of St. Milburga's relics in order to appear to have divine favour. It is for this reason that the fabrication of authorship presumably occurred, giving the appearance of having both godly and papal support in order for the Cluniacs to deter Henry from confiscating their lands. Since Wenlock's estates were retained, and William of Malmesbury gave a summarised account of the finding of the relics, it appears that the Cluniacs were successful, and they received national recognition of their cause, as the result of a re-affirmation of St. Milburga's cult, thanks to the supposed miracles attributed to her remains.

Thus *Miracula Inventiones* cannot be taken as a factual text, documenting true events. In order to understand it, it must be firmly placed within the context of the beginning of the 12th century. It is a significant example of how the Normans were able to manipulate Anglo-Saxon cults to their own cause. Wenlock followed in a typical hagiographical fashion of looking for divine support in the midst of crises after the fall of earthly protection and sought to maintain its claims on land through the eyes of the 'State'.[94] This manipulation of the cult of St. Milburga shows how Anglo-Saxon saintly cults were ultimately used to legitimise the colonisation of a pre-Conquest religious establishment.

Conclusion

Wenlock was never 'disturbed by the venomous attacks of envious men' as feared by St. Milburga.[95] It may have experienced significant alterations, but the Norman Conquest did not bring about destruction or despoliation. The well-established minster built by Earl Leofric survived to be utilised by the Cluniacs, and the Domesday evidence demonstrates the retention of the majority of its lands not only between 1066 and 1086, but from the 7th and 8th centuries through to the 11th century.

Ultimately both Earl Roger and the Cluniacs conform to the wider pattern of Norman England: Earl Roger through his founding of an English monastery and endowing Norman religious institutions, the Cluniacs in utilising the cult of an Anglo-Saxon saint to their advantage. Despite Earl Roger not being at the Battle of Hastings it is likely that he followed in similar footsteps to the Norman aristocrats who were. Bishop Ermenfrid of Sion in 1070 gave a model tariff of penances for those involved in the Conquest, stating 'anyone who does not know the number of those he wounded or killed must, at the discretion of his bishop, do penance for one day in each week for the remainder of his life; or if can, let him redeem his sin by a perpetual alms, either by building a monastery or endowing a church'.[96] Given the proliferation of Norman built monasteries and churches in England it is probable that most Normans opted for the latter. Earl Roger, on coming to England, merely embraced this pattern of religious endowment.

The Cluniacs in adopting the cult of St. Milburga successfully legitimised their presence to the local Anglo-Saxon community and to the wider 'State', ensuring their survival and their retention of landed wealth. In all likelihood, the Norman Conquest and the introduction of the Cluniac Priory at Wenlock was to Wenlock's advantage. Religious reform was already occurring as initiated by Pope Gregory VII and the old Anglo-Saxon minsters were becoming redundant in a move towards smaller parishes. Therefore, St. Milburga's would have been subject to change regardless of the Conquest, albeit at a slower pace. The Cluniac foundation ensured that Wenlock remained a prestigious and well endowed site, and despite some initial loss of value it ultimately benefited from the events of the latter half of the 11th century.

In 1535, St. Milburga's was still a practising religious community. *Valor Ecclesiasticus* records it to have had a total net value of £434 1*s*. 2*d*., with eight of its total fourteen estates being those recorded in Domesday Book.[97] St. Milburga's therefore shows considerable resilience from its very foundation at the end of the 7th century through to its dissolution in the mid 16th century. Its ability to maintain its existence, despite being located within a highly turbulent region, is testament to its capacity to adapt and change according to events.

Notes

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3   *Ibid*., no. 428.
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A Study of 'Radman Villages' Recorded in Domesday Book in Western Shropshire

By MARY ATKIN

Abstract: This is a study of villages across three hundreds of western Shropshire, recorded in Domesday Book in 1086, which included one or more radmen (riding men) among their inhabitants. The word 'radman' is of Anglo-Saxon derivation, and so presumably was the nature of his service. They are almost entirely recorded in the counties of the Welsh Border, and apart from recording their existence Domesday Book offers no further information. It seemed possible that their distribution and the nature of the villages which they inhabited might provide them with a context.

Introduction

As a historical geographer recently arrived in Shropshire, I wished to know something of the area's early history, and was intrigued to know more of those peasant Anglo-Saxons called 'radmen' (riding men), who were recorded in Domesday Book in 1086, and found almost exclusively on the turbulent Welsh Borders. Large numbers of these Anglo-Saxon riding men were now working for the Normans more than twenty years after the Conquest. What role did Anglo-Saxon radmen fill that made Norman overlords want to retain them? I plotted on my Ordnance Survey maps the settlements where radmen were recorded, and I was sufficiently interested to explore further. Since they 'disappeared' from the records soon after their mention in Domesday Book, I decided to look at the villages where they were recorded, to provide some context for them.

My study area has been confined to 'radman villages' in two of the western hundreds of Shropshire south of the Severn, i.e. the Domesday Hundreds of Rhiwset, and Wittery, and the adjacent (western) part of Condover Hundred; I have also included the village of Fitz in Baschurch Hundred. This restriction of numbers made feasible field examination of at least some of the 30 villages where radmen were recorded. That these were areas very vulnerable to attack by Welsh raiders is indicated by the numbers of villages recorded in Domesday Book as 'wasted', some so seriously that they never recovered, and even their sites were forgotten. A characteristic of the area was the tiny size of so many of the settlements; many Domesday settlements had fewer than five peasants (each man being defined by Darby as a 'head of household').[1] Many settlements comprised no more than two or three households, comparable with our modern 'a couple of family farms'. Even capital manors, mostly held by the Earl, rarely top 30 households. This might have been the result of the infertility of soils, or the constant disruption through raiding over many generations, or to one appalling attack. Eastern Hundreds also suffered 'wasting', but this was more a consequence of William I's punitive attack on the rebellious English Earls of Northumbria and Mercia in the confused politics of the early years of his reign.

Professor F. M.Stenton[2] traced Anglo-Saxon radmen back to what he called an 'estate management treatise' of eleventh century date, and described their duties: the radman was to ride as escort to his lord, and meet and escort visiting strangers to him; he was to carry, guard and escort his lord's goods, guard his lord's stables, and go on errands far and near. He held some land of his lord, as the villeins, cottars and smallholders did, but unlike them he did not have to work on his lord's land for most of the week. His labour on his lord's land was confined only to hay-time and harvest, presumably to free him for his radmen duties. In status he was rated just above the villeins, and he might even have villeins of his own to work for him.

Those humble Anglo-Saxons called radmen were recorded in Domesday Book, usually in ones, twos or threes. Scattered through many of the villages of the Welsh Border, they occur almost nowhere else in the rest of England,
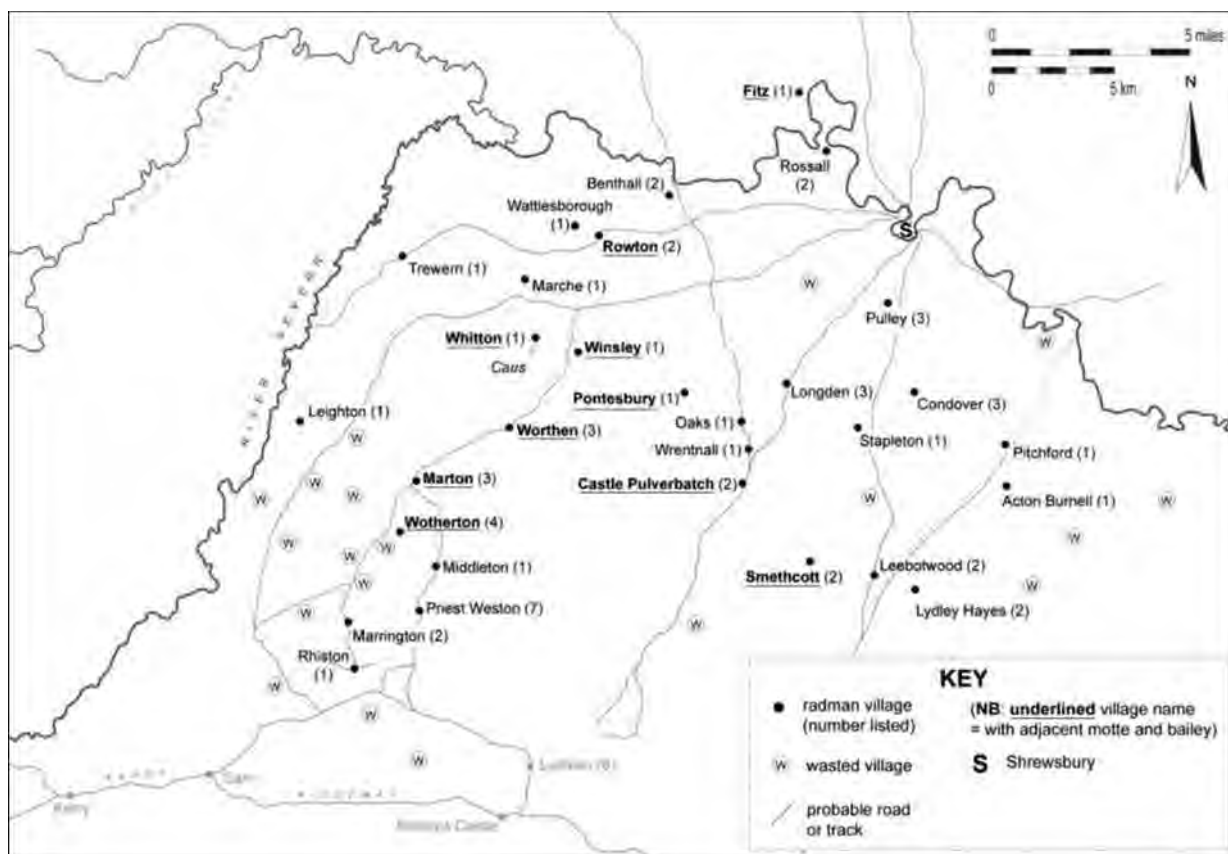
15

Plate 1 Distribution map of 'radman villages' in central Shropshire.

and after 1086 they are scarcely heard of again. In Shropshire there were 178 radmen,[3] far more than in any other of the six principal counties with radmen. Since turbulence was characteristic of the area at any time in the medieval period, it has seemed to many historians that the Normans might have seen a role in the defences of the area for these Anglo-Saxon peasants who could ride. Having a relatively low status the radmen were probably provided with local ponies rather than horses. Local ponies would be more sure-footed and better adapted to the nature of the terrain, and less expensive to maintain.

Little of Wittery and Rhiwset Hundreds was then open country, where large-scale battles might be fought. In the northern part, though relatively low-lying, little was flat; most of the southern part of the area, the upland today called 'The Shropshire Hills', was varied in geology and relief and ranged to over 1500 feet (500 metres). Much of it was essentially thinly-populated guerrilla country, a land of woodlands and denser forest patches, interspersed with heathlands, marshes and deep boggy hollows and ponds, developed on a landscape of low rocky knolls and high ridges, deep gorges and winding shallow valleys. Much of it was terrain perfect for staging unexpected assaults, and at those the Welsh were adept. Remfry describes just such circumstances where a lesser problem could blow up into unexpected warfare on a larger scale in such terrain:[4] '...In August (1228) the knights and sergeants of Montgomery Castle...set forth...to clear a wood...on account of Welsh robbers who in those places killed and robbed travellers continually. They intended to make the path wide and safe. [The Welsh learning of it]...arrived in brutal strength...[forcing them back on the castle, on the retreat to which many were killed]...and the Welsh surrounded the castle and made a siege'. It is clear from Remfry's account of the despatches that the king (Henry III, young and inexperienced) had made inadequate provision for the army he had called together. Consequently the soldiers were living from the land, and scavenging across the Welsh countryside, '...in the course of which many soldiers were killed and a nobleman was captured and cast into a Welsh prison to await payment of a stiff ransom. The campaign was an expensive failure'. In just such terrain the Normans might well have thought that locally-based radmen could perform a valuable role in clearing and patrolling roads and tracks.

Dr. Sean Davies[5] has made a detailed study of Welsh fighting men and their strategies and tactics in the Anglo-Saxon, Norman and later periods, and asserts that a Welsh lord's household was, like the Norman lord's, a military elite (the *teulu*) of noblemen and their sons, who trained for battle on horseback and on foot. For most attacks their main aim was booty, listed as 'victuals, clothing, arms, armour, horses, cattle, slaves, and hostages, and precious

objects', which is why they tended to concentrate raids on lower and more fertile areas, where booty might be richer and cattle fatter.[6]

Their usual strategies were 'surprise' and 'ravaging, evasion and ambush', rather than a full army assault. While both Anglo-Saxon and Norman lords were wont to regard these strategies with scorn, they too were wary of full scale attacks, which were regarded as too unpredictable. The Welsh could, and did, mount full scale assaults, and they had their successes, notably under Gruffydd ap Llywelyn, whose successful attack in 1039 on a large Anglo-Saxon force at the Severn ford of Rhyd y Groes, (thought to be near Buttington) even impressed his enemies, and a later occasion saw Gruffydd's large scale attack on Herefordshire and the sacking of Hereford in 1055. Gruffydd died in 1063, but in 1069 rebellious English Earls and the rebel, Edric the Wild, joined forces under King Bleddyn of Powys and sacked and burnt Shrewsbury, although they failed to take the Castle itself.

Welsh attacks were often made by relatively small groups of men intent on 'surprise' (often in the early morning), rapid destruction of houses and life ('ravaging'), and a quick withdrawal with as much booty, especially cattle, as could be handled. 'Evasion' suggested that the route back with their plunder should be different from the outward route, and by leaving small groups to mount 'ambushes' on the pursuing enemy, the main group, driving animals, were given more time to reach their own borders. Such attacks did not require heavy or expensive weapons armour and horses; light throwing-lances, spears, knives, axes and flame were often sufficiently effective. Ravaging included the destruction of the enemy's economic base, and Davies adds 'there was no feeling of shame attached by either side to waging war on the enemy's peasants and their land'.[7] By killing peasants the enemy's economic base was weakened, and therefore killing, maiming, or selling them into slavery, firing their homes and crops, and stealing their cattle was more important than fighting the enemy's soldiery. The peasantry's role was to gather as much food and tools, and as many animals, as possible, and escape to the forest, or the hills. Peasants were of greater value to their lord as providers of his food than as his soldiery.

In this manner for more than half a millennium the Britons (Welsh) had been defending themselves against the encroaching Anglo-Saxons (English) by battles, skirmishes and raids. The natural defence line of the river Severn gave some respite from attack to both sides. In winter it maintained so heavy a flow that crossing it was difficult and dangerous, and even today bridges are infrequent. In summer however the Severn's rare fords could become crossable, although not many had a firm footing because of the heavy amount of alluvium that the river carries, and even in summer a sudden storm in the hills of Wales could send an unexpected spate down the river to catch the unwary. A more permanent dividing line was the great earthwork known as Offa's Dyke (in fact, several dykes of various dates in 8th century) reaching from the mouth of the Severn to that of the Dee. Whether the Dyke was a negotiated frontier, as Stenton thought, or a 'control line', as Frank Noble suggested, it favoured the English rather than the Welsh in being positioned east of the Severn and, by the nature of its construction, in limiting easy passages of cattle-for-trade to specific gaps.[8]

The survival of radmen for more than 20 years after the Norman Conquest suggests that the Normans saw a role for their local knowledge as scouts and messengers. There is, however, little in the Shropshire Domesday account of 1086 to suggest that radmen had risen in status greatly since the Normans arrived; they are still listed as 'villeins, smallholders, ploughmen, riders', although the order is occasionally reversed, but not with apparent significance. There is only one 'radchenistre' (at one time translated, evidently unacceptably today, as rad-knight) in the whole county, at Stanton Lacy, Culvestone Hundred, held by Roger de Lacy, but this is unsurprising since his barony was centred in Herefordshire, where all riders were recorded as 'radchenistres'. They are recorded there, as in Shropshire, in the company of 'villeins, smallholders and ploughmen'. No radman appears to have been important enough to be named in Domesday Book, but one might speculate about the status under the Normans of several examples of 'free men' or (perhaps) their sons still in charge of some villages such as Marche or Marrington in the list of 'holdings of various tenants under the Earl'.[9]

There seems to be no way of knowing whether a 'radman village' was always a 'radman village'. Under Anglo-Saxon control the service of being a radman in return for having land to cultivate probably did originally pass, by custom, from father to son, but this might not have been true under the Normans. Nevertheless it is well to remember that 'a radman' might represent an extended family, possibly of three generations. A son would certainly learn the nature of his father's work and become familiar with the terrain he patrolled, as soon as he could run beside his father's mount, and would eventually take over the service in his place (or in another radman holding).

That the distribution of 'radman villages' shows linear forms is unsurprising, as riders were clearly likely to use roads and tracks and, indeed, create them by their own usage. In the Norman period most such tracks, apart from Roman roads, cannot be proven, but a map produced in 1932 by the Ordnance Survey, entitled 'South Wales and the Borders in the XIVth century' shows a limited number of routeways, and confirms their association with many of the 'radman villages'. I was, however, surprised by the close-spacing of 'radman villages', especially in Rhiwset and Wittery Hundreds, where they are often little more than three or four miles apart. This was clearly too close to warrant them being places for changing a tired horse for a fresh one. This sort of distribution is more comparable

to stations for men patrolling the line of a Roman Wall or a frontier. So did each radman, now organised under the Sheriff, patrol his own lengths of track and report any suspicious activity at the next station, or even send off post-haste for soldiery? Did he also, as Remfry's story suggests, have responsibility, like those sergeants, for ensuring clear lines of visibility along the tracks and roads of his beat, by trimming back overhanging vegetation?

As I marked the 'radman villages' on my O.S. maps I realised that several had a motte and bailey castle nearby. These earthworks were introduced by the Normans to Britain, and there were more in Shropshire than in any other county, the majority on the western side of the county. They were often sited at natural view-points and were relatively quick and cheap to construct, using local labour. A deep circular ditch was dug, the earth from which provided the material for the central mound, which could then be topped with sturdy wooden fencing or a wooden tower on its summit. Later the wooden tower might be replaced by a stone tower, less vulnerable to burning. The adjacent bailey enclosed a larger area with a lower earth bank and an outer ditch, to accommodate horses or extra men. The very useful study made by P. and A. Duckers in *Castles of Shropshire*[10] included several motte-and-bailey castles, and they noted the visibility from some of them, as well as their height and their diameter at the summit. Most of the smaller ones would be capped only with timber beams and were not intended to withstand a large assault, but they could have made useful look-out points for radmen, and as mustering points for a few men-at-arms, comparable with the concrete 'pill-boxes' in tactical positions along main roads during the 1939–45 war. Some churches might also have provided valuable look-out sites. Identifying these with any certainty however, depends on surviving masonry of credible date, or even rarer records.

It is significant that most of the villages where radmen were recorded in 1086 were, like most of the stone castles, held of the Earl of Shrewsbury by his Sheriff, Reginald Balliol. The Sheriff's many roles included maintenance of law and order in the county, a role which certainly included keeping the roads open and safe. Some radman villages were held by other powerful lords, and especially the two Corbet brothers (later Marcher lords) who became important in the politics of the area. Eight 'radman villages', among which there were 15 radmen, were sub-let to men with English names (Domesday Book, chapter 4.27), some of whom were known to the previous Earl (Hugh), and had presumably gained the Normans' trust. Notable among these was Alward, son of the free man Almund. Alward had responsibility for the radman villages of Rowton (2 radmen), Benthall (1 radman) and four radmen at Wotherton which his father had probably held before him. (Domesday Book, chapter 4.27; numbers 18, 20 and 21.)

The distribution of 'radman villages' across hundreds is very variable. The westernmost parts of Rhiwset and Wittery Hundreds were seriously wasted, and much had passed to Welsh control, but their eastern areas, and most of Condover Hundred, were less damaged. 'Radman villages' here were rarely more than two or three miles apart and many had more than one radman, perhaps through consolidating losses. In Rhiwset Hundred, although only two villages are named as having passed into Welsh control, a considerable number of settlements, un-named in Domesday Book had become part of the Welsh commote of Gorddwr, and, although ultimately part of the Corbet March, they were lost to England. In Wittery Hundred 17 settlements had passed into Welsh control, and nine more settlements had been wasted, including the caput, Chirbury, but some were beginning to recover. The difference between these two hundreds was therefore more apparent than real. Condover Hundred, being further east, had suffered less, and only six villages were recorded as wasted.

The Welsh are known to have followed lowland routes in their raiding, and these routes may be inferred by the distribution of all **wasted villages (W)** in the vicinity shown on the map. Below in my text are listed '**radman villages**' with their tally of radmen **(1R, 2R...)**; the reference for each 'radman village' in the text of the Phillimore '*Domesday Book. Shropshire*'; followed by its O.S grid reference, and from the O.S also those 'radman villages' with a **motte and bailey castle, *m*** (the village name is underlined on the map), which offer some indication of where Welsh raids might have been anticipated. We cannot be sure when mottes and baileys came into being in Shropshire, but since a small one could be constructed in a few days with a relatively small local work force (and the value of it to themselves would be apparent to the labourers) they may well date from very soon after the Normans arrived. Those with stone structures, by which mottes were converted into castles, are more likely to date to later than 1100.

'Radman villages' in Wittery Hundred

One of the raiding routes frequently used by the Welsh was to enter Shropshire from Newtown on the Severn, up the tributary from Abermule and, by way of Sarn (SO20 90), to attack the settlements in the wide valley of the Caepitra (tributary to the Camlad). This offered the option of raids on the valley-side settlements of Rinlow hundred in the upper Camlad, such as Weston Madoc, Hopton, Mellington, Aston and Lower Edenhope all of which had been wasted. Another choice was to follow the prehistoric Kerry Ridgeway to strike eastward, avoiding Lydham, held by the Earl; or southward, though this was soon to be made a less attractive choice as (the) Bishop

(of Hereford)'s Castle was currently being built on the Ridgeway itself, to reinforce Lydbury North, which had been wasted of almost three quarters of its hides/productive land.

Leighton [1R. 4.4,22] (SJ24 06) Leighton Hall and the village a mile to the north, (*c*.2km.) lie above the flood plain of the Severn on the lower west-facing slopes of the Long Mountain, with the line of Offa's Dyke immediately above them. Leighton became part of the Corbet Welshry of Upper Gorddwr. Only 3 households were recorded there (those of 2 ploughmen with one plough on the demesne and 1 radman. There was woodland 2 leagues long. (Darby (p.178). uses a figure of one and a half miles to a league.) The most likely site of the woodland in Leighton is along that steep western slope above the settlement(s); 200 pigs could be fattened. Leighton was valued at 5 shillings in both 1066 and 1086.

Two small 'radman villages' on the east side of the Camlad lowland had survived the raiding:

Rhiston [1R. 4.27,24] (SO25 95) was a settlement with one radman, who had 3 slaves and a plough, and 2 more villein households working one plough, and neighbouring woodland, which could support 30 pigs. By 1086 the value of the settlement was starting to accrue. It was held like neighbouring Church Stoke by a man called Alward, but there is no proof that it was not another man with the same name as Alward, son of Almund, a trusted English free man who held several villages under the Earl.

Marrington [2R. 4.5,15] (SO27 96) was held by the younger of the two Corbet brothers. The present Hall stands on the road between Chirbury and Church Stoke on a low hill rising above the level of the land to the west, and must have been unassailable on the east as it is on the edge of the narrow Camlad gorge which was cut almost 100 feet (30 metres) deep by fluvio-glacial meltwater at the end of the Ice Ages. The two radmen and 3 more villagers had 2 ploughs between them and woodland for fattening pigs.

Lying in the hills which rise to the east of the Camlad gorge is an area that is distinguished by its geology and its prehistoric significance, and, perhaps for the same reasons, significant to its medieval inhabitants too. No fewer than three prehistoric stone circles within 6 miles lie close to a track which leaves the west–east Clee–Clun trackway (a continuity of the Kerry Ridgeway, and regarded by the archaeologist Dr. L. Chitty as a major trading route in the Neolithic period) near the Hoarstone Circle in the marshy valley of the upper Camlad near Simon's Castle motte-and-bailey (SO27 93).[11] Trevor Rowley describes this circle as having more, but smaller and somewhat overgrown, stones than the better-known Mitchell's Fold Circle some three miles further north. Beyond Mitchell's Fold the track continues over Stapeley Hill to pass yet a third stone circle (SJ32 99), also called Hoarstone (SO 324 998) on the Cassini Old Series Map 137, 1832/3.

Rearing abruptly above this trackway are three distinctive hills, Todleth, Roundton, with a hillfort, and Corndon Hill, the highest at 513 metres (*c*.1100 feet) with prehistoric quarries of picrite, which was further fashioned at the nearby Neolithic and Bronze Age stone-axe factory near Hyssington, 2 miles to the south-east, and traded as far away as Wiltshire. Lying along this track are two settlements of medieval significance, Old Church Stoke, lying immediately below Roundton, and once a daughter chapel of the minster church at Chirbury, and **Priest Weston** below Corndon Hill and immediately adjacent to Mitchell Fold stone circle, and with no fewer than seven radmen. Barely a mile away at **Middleton** (in Chirbury parish) there was yet another radman.

Could such a grouping of ridge track and highly significant ritual sites account for the large number of radmen retained here by the Normans, perhaps seeing the sites as a focus for rebellion? Or did it merely imply that the track and others near it were heavily used, perhaps because quarrying of the area's rocks and minerals (lead and silver) was active in 1086? Or were these radmen retrieved from wasted lands further west? It is very likely that medieval men (including Normans) might regard the stone circles, perhaps no longer with awe, but surely with respect, and that people might hold periodic gatherings there.

Middleton Hall [1R. 4.5,13. 4.27,22.] (SO29 99) This was a village of which a small part had been held by the rebellious Edric the Wild, who in 1065 with Mercian, Welsh and Irish-Norse allies failed to take Shrewsbury Castle, but succeeded in burning the town. (Rowley 106). In addition to the radman, there were three villagers with only half a plough. The other half of the village was held of the Earl by a free man who had 1 plough, and there was a small demesne worked by 2 slaves.

Priest Weston [7R. 4.5,14.] (SO29 97) Before the Conquest 6 thanes held this village as 6 manors. They were freemen and held one virgate each (which is little more than a peasant holding). L. H. Noble asserts that these same men were still holding the settlement in 1086, and that is certainly the implication of the entry in Domesday Book, 'the value of two of the freemen's land was 10*s*. but (the land) of the others was waste'. There is reason here to consider whether these particular radmen were the Anglo-Saxon thanes of King Harold's day.

The most direct way into Wittery Hundred for the Welsh was along their own section of the Severn and, at the point where it turns north-east, to cross it at Rhyd Whyman (the ford of the horsemen) and work their way through the low hills around Forden, where devastated villages like Hem and Ackley were recorded. Both these were described as having 'hays' which were probably hedged pastures, or open glades in the woods, perhaps for cattle; and nearby Edderton's woodland was recorded as able to fatten 200 pigs, all very tempting to raiders. The number of **wasted** settlements in the open valley of the Severn here – Dudston, Mellington, Trelystan, Pen y lan, Hockleton, Forden, Walcot, even Chirbury itself, the caput of the hundred – indicates the high level of raiding dating back before 1066. Some of these settlements, which had been passed from the Earl into the Sheriff's hold, were beginning to make some recovery by 1086.

To the east of these low hills, where the wide valley of the tributary Aylesford narrows, were two 'radman villages', **Marton,** by its mere on the north side, and **Wotherton**, high above on the south side, were each provided with a motte and bailey castle, and 3 and 4 radmen respectively. They were evidently effective defences, for eastward into the Rea valley there is little damage recorded. These two villages guarded the gateway by way of the Rea valley through varyingly fertile terrain to the Hundred of Condover and to Shrewsbury itself, and both were held (even under the Normans) by members of an apparently Anglo-Saxon family, who had also held them before the Conquest.

Wotherton [4R, *m*, 4.27,21] (SJ28 00) with four radmen. The motte stood high on a spur on the south side at a point where the wide valley of the Aylesford Brook narrows. It had excellent views along the valley. It was a substantial village (for the area) with eleven households (including the radmen) and a priest and a mill producing corn, and with 12 ploughs to work its 14 ploughlands. It was held by Alward, the son of Almund who had held it of the Earl before the Conquest.

Marton [3R,*m*, 3f.2] (SJ28 02) with 3 radmen, was also held by an Alward as a sub tenant of St. Chad's church in Shrewsbury. (This might be the same Alward, son of Almund, but the evidence is lacking). The village stood on the north side of the narrows, facing across to Wotherton, less than a mile away. Here then was a family, presumably Anglo-Saxon, well known and trusted by the new Norman authorities, for the father and son held the village of Amaston in Rhiwset Hundred between them, and Alward held three more villages there himself.

Worthen [3R, *m*, 4.4,20] (SJ32 04), was an important and large 'radman village' with 3 radmen, and 300 feet above, on the eastern slopes of the Long Mountain, was a large prehistoric hillfort at Caus (probably held by the Welsh in 1086). Worthen lies further along this wide lowland and stands on a spur jutting out into the valley, giving the village a good view in both directions. This was a 'composite manor',[12] so the Domesday population figures may have included some or all of the 13 dependent settlements, at least one of which, Trelystan, lying further west, had long been waste. There were probably 22 households in the village and a demesne worked by 3 slaves. There were also 4 men with Norman names (men-at-arms) who held almost half of the land of the manor, and had 17 villagers as well as demesne of their own. The prehistoric hillfort of Caus was later recovered by the Corbet family, and became the capital manor of their Marcher Lordship, with a massive motte and bailey and a "new town" built within the structures of the hillfort.

'Radman villages' in Rhiwset Hundred

The first three 'radman villages' described below are in the southern part of Rhiwset Hundred, and were probably more vulnerable to Welsh attack through Wittery Hundred by way of the Camlad valley. At the time of the Domesday survey they had not been wasted and probably remained safe. Later they were held by the Corbets.

Pontesbury [1R. *m*. 4.4,12] (SJ39 06) lies further down the Rea valley on the side opposite to Worthen and backed by the sharp rise of Pontesford Hill. An archaeological dig in the 1960s uncovered the platform and massive stone foundations of a tower and pottery of late 12th century date. In 1086 the settlement had 16 villagers including the radman, and a mill, and a small demesne worked by 7 slaves. In this area Pontesbury was one of the larger villages.

Whitton [1R, 4.4,19] (SJ33 08) with one radman, was also held by the Corbets. It was on higher ground than Worthen, and quite close to, but higher than, Caus. This is identified by Thorn and Thorn as Whitton Grange, a substantial farm today.

Winsley [1R,*m*? 4.4,5] (SJ35 07) Winsley Hall was also a Corbet holding. It had one radman. The hall stands just north of a ridge which abruptly narrows a tributary of the Rea Brook, making it a feasible site for an ambush. It is not listed by the Duckers as having a motte and bailey, but a Google Air photograph shows marks which suggest that there may have been a small motte and bailey in the grounds of the park in which the Hall now stands.

If the Welsh, emerging from their own section of the Severn valley, deferred their crossing of the river by following it northwards towards Buttington, they could reach into Rhiwset Hundred by way of a track shown on the map published in 1932 by the O. S. and titled 'South Wales and the Welsh Border in the XIVth century'.[13] This track climbed from near Buttington by way of Hope and Heldre (neither of which is named in Domesday Book because they had been ceded to the Welsh), close to the northern slopes of the Long Mountain. This track is not shown as reaching **Trewern** at that time. Present-day Trewern stands high above the pass leading to the interior part of Rhiwset Hundred, and with the steep rise of the Breidden Hills close behind it appears difficult to attack. Nevertheless Domesday Book records that it had been seriously wasted before 1066, probably after Gruffydd ap Llywelyn won a major battle in 1037 against an Anglo-Saxon army at Rhyd y Groes (a ford across the Severn thought to be near Buttington), which established his importance and his military ability with both Welsh and English.[14] It is now thought that **Trewern** was originally named 'Alretone' (meaning 'among the alders'). Since these are trees which are normally found on low wet ground, it is arguable that a low-lying, vulnerable village (Alretone) after wasting, might have been shifted to a higher and safer site, and given a new name, 'Trewern'. The wasting had left Trewern with barely a quarter of its potential ploughteams in action. Clearly this was due either to a shortage of men (through slaughter or slavery), or a shortage of oxen (through plunder), or a shortage of both. Nevertheless Trewern had made a partial recovery.

Trewern [W. 1R. 5 men-at-arms, 4.1,8] (SJ28 11) By 1086 it was held by the Earl and had recovered sufficiently to have 24 villagers and a radman, and (for defence) 5 men-at-arms. There was lord's demesne here too, though with only 5 villeins and 1 ploughteam, but augmented by a freeman with 3 ploughteams and a workforce of Welshmen who were willing to pay rent for the privilege. The Earl's five men-at-arms had demesne of their own and 6½ ploughteams between them, and the radman would, like the village peasants, have land to cultivate. In the village itself there were 2 more Welshmen, 6 ploughmen and 2 villeins. (Trewern and the land around it eventually became part of the commote-sized 'Welshry' called Gorddwr attached to the Corbet family's Marcher Lordship.)

The track, which started from Buttington, through the south part of the pass, is not unlike the present route of the A458 to Shrewsbury, and passes around to the north of the Long Mountain to reach Wollaston (with a Norman ring-work as well as a motte and bailey castle, as had its neighbour, Bretchel). That Wollaston had no radman despite its significant position is surprising and suggests that in one or more attacks the two villages were overwhelmed by large numbers and the wasting was drastic. It was still wasted in 1086. **Rowton** lies further east along this track, standing on a low gap through a wooded ridge. Like the nearby settlements of **Marche** and **Wattlesborough** it was a 'radman village'. Marche lies a little south of the track and had escaped damage, but Rowton, lying on the track, and Wattlesborough, slightly north of it, had been wasted despite their radmen. Wattlesborough was a village which had been held by Edric the Wild, an Anglo-Saxon who with Welsh allies rebelled in the early years of the Conquest, and the wasting might have been part of King William's punitive northern harrying in 1069.

Rowton [W, *m*, 2R, 4.27,18] (SJ36 12). In 1086 Rowton was held directly under the Earl, by Alward, the son of Almund, (both of whom have already been mentioned) and had 2 radmen and no further population. It was the most westerly 'radman village' on this track, and before 1066 four thanes held it as 4 manors. By 1086 'they were waste and still are somewhat'. It may have served its purpose in alerting places further east to the dangers, for there appears to be less damage (or greater recovery) in that direction.

Marche [1R. 4.5,10] (SJ33 10) This part of Marche, assessed at 2 hides, was held by the younger Corbet, who later succeeded to his brother's holding, and it became attached to the Marcher Lordship of Caus. In 1086 there was a small demesne, but the village seems to have had only 2 households, one of which was the radman's. The other part of the settlement (a lost hamlet called 'Perendon'), held by the elder Corbet [**4.4,17**], had been held by 3 named thanes in 1066, but their land amounted to only 3 virgates altogether. Both sections of the village had reduced in value by 1086, and despite escaping wasting, had perhaps, lost men or oxen, or both. It was claimed that there was sufficient land to support 4 more ploughs, but the population reported could not have made use of them.

Wattlesborough [W. 1R. 4.4,16] (SJ35 12) The settlement had been wasted before 1066, possibly in the same incursion which damaged Trewern, but by 1086 it was recovering. There was a small demesne with 3 ploughmen,

and the 3 villagers and the radman shared 5 oxen. At some later time a square Norman stone keep was built here, perhaps moated at the outset. North of it were the wasted villages of Eyton and Bausley.

A little to the west of Shrewsbury the river Severn achieves one of the most dramatic twists of its meanders and with its tributary, the river Perry, provides an isolated water-defended site to each of two 'radman villages', **Rossall** in Rhiwset Hundred and **Fitz** in Baschurch Hundred. The name **Rossall** means 'horse nook' (*hross halgh*), and suggests that there might have been a horse stud here within the isolated and safe loop of this huge meander,[15] the narrow entrance to which was probably guarded by the stables of the stud and the dwellings of its personnel, the village of **Rossall.** Such an enterprise would be of considerable interest to the Sheriff, whose office carried some responsibility for the provision of mounts for his men-at-arms and perhaps also for some of the radmen, and he held a small demesne worked by slaves here in 1086. (This was possibly on the site of the land marked on the Cassini map 1832/3 (SJ45 15) and called Ross Hall just outside the narrow entry into the Isle meander.[16] It is shown with an avenue-driveway, a small Park, and laid-out gardens and a shrubbery near the house.) The Sheriff had sub-let the remainder, presumably the Isle and its buildings to Albert, but in the time of Edward the Confessor it had been let to Hunning, perhaps the same Hunning who, in 1086, held the neighbouring land of Fitz. (See below.) The other half of the settlement was held by St. Chad's Church in Shrewsbury, and St. Chad's also held Little Rossall (SJ44 14), now in Bicton parish. That a stud might be held under churchmen would not be particularly surprising. There was a similar medieval stud site tucked in a meander core in Yorkshire at Marrick, held by Ellerton Abbey, and another at Studfold on a flood plain of the Ribble valley and held by Jervaux Abbey; at Docker in Westmorland, monks bred horses at a grange within the forest Hay of Kendal.

The huge meander core was named The Isle in 1832/3 (Cassini map) and was approached across Rossall Heath (excellent for exercising horses) through the narrow gap which was further restricted by buildings called Isle Gate, so that the whole area of the Isle was sufficiently isolated for keeping valuable breeding mares and their young, and one or two stallions. It was no great surprise to discover that field names in the Tithe Award '*by Isle House*' and '*Isle Park*' in 1845, include two Horse Crofts, two Stables, three Yards, five Parks, and a defensive Moat, and two Lawns.[17] This last term derived from Fr. *launde*, meaning a clearing in what would once have been the king's forest. In the medieval Forest of Lancashire such launds were used as protective grazing for deer, or for horses in studs, or for cattle in vaccaries.[18] That such an enterprise might continue over seven centuries in a society dependent on the horse for transport is not very surprising; for any owner there was a valuable investment here in land, specialist buildings and a skilled and experienced work force.

Back-to-back with The Isle land in **Rossall** is the land of the 'radman village' **Fitz** in Baschurch Hundred on the river Perry, which joins the Severn a mile further downstream and closes the southern end, making another water-isolated area between the Perry and one limb of The Isle meander. The name, recorded in Domesday Book as 'Witesot', means 'Fitt's (a personal name) *hoh*, meaning 'a spur of land'.[19] In the time of King Edward it had been held by the free man, Hunning, and possibly the same Hunning (older, and perhaps semi-retired, but still overseeing the work?) still held it in 1086. Significantly Domesday Book records that there was a (black?) smith in **Fitz**. That the two isolated settlements could have worked together is made feasible by the islet (shown on the Shrewsbury Cassini map 126, dated 1832/3) in the course of the Severn between them. Within the same loop is the hamlet of Mytton (derived from OE *gemydtun*, meaning 'a settlement at a river junction or confluence'.[20] From the Tithe Award of 1845 Dr. Gelling lists a Mare field and The Lawn in Mytton Park.

Rossall [2R. and Moat, 3f.6 and 4.3,56] (SJ46 15). Part of Rossall was held by the Sheriff, who had a small demesne there worked by slaves, and the remainder was let to Albert in 1086. (In the time of Edward the Confessor it had been held by Hunning, perhaps the same man who held neighbouring Fitz.) The other part of Rossall was held by the Church of St. Chad in Shrewsbury, and recorded here were 4 smallholders and the 2 radmen.

Fitz [**1R**, 4.20.15] (SJ44 17) in Baschurch Hundred. It is another large area isolated by one limb of The Isle Grange meander and the river Perry, which encloses a village called Mytton. It was held in 1086 by Robert de Say (Picot), one of the Earl's leading men, and he had let it to Hunning, who appears to be the same man who held it before 1066. There was a demesne worked by 9 slaves with 3 ploughs, and there were 3 villeins and 4 smallholders and one radman and a smith with 2 ploughs between them.

To the north of Rowton there was a crossing of the Severn from Great Shrawardine (on the north side in Baschurch Hundred and listed in Domesday Book) to Little Shrawardine (a berewick of Ford). Both have mottes and baileys. A track is shown on the O.S. 'XIVth. century' map from the river crossing to the isolated 'radman village' of **Benthall,** possibly rather hidden behind the wooded ridge at Rowton mentioned above. It is marked on the Ordnance Survey's 'XIVth century map as 'Le Snidde', and 'Snod Coppice' was recorded in 1318; this name is

derived from *snoad* meaning '*something detached or cut off* ',[21] and ridge and woodland may effectively have cut off, at least from view, the village of **Benthall** and its lands, which evidently escaped attack. The 'hall' syllable is derived from OE *halh* (Gelling) which can mean 'a secluded nook in the corner of a parish'. The track continues south past Benthall Cross (also marked on the OS 'XIVth century' map). The 'Cross' was a prehistoric standing stone on a knoll, also known as 'The Maiden Stone'. It is this stone which gives its name to the adjacent farm called 'Benthall Stone Farm' (so named on the 1987 OS 1:25,000 Pathfinder Sheet 869).

Benthall [1R. 4,27,20.] (SJ39 13). **Benthall** was yet another of the villages held by the English free man Alward, son of Almund. In addition to the single radman there were 4 more villagers, and they had a plough between them, but it was recorded that there was land for 3 ploughs altogether. The value of the village had been reduced to less than half the 1066 amount. The track from Little Shrawardine passes from **Benthall** into the large settlement of Ford, which later became the caput of the Hundred of Ford, incorporating and replacing Rhiwset Hundred. The parish of Ford was a composite manor of a dozen small settlements (berewicks).

Benthall was one of the berewicks attached to the manor of Ford (which later became the caput of Rhiwset Hundred) and the track from Little Shrawardine by way of Benthall and Benthall Stone Farm here becomes what I have called (see below) '**the intercepting track**'. This track seems to me to be an important element in the strategic defence of Shrewsbury itself, as it circles round the town from the Severn crossing near Little Shrawardine to beyond the Rea Brook cutting across several radiating roads like the transverse thread of a spider's web.

'The intercepting track'

I have identified this track as an ancient way, based largely on its status on the O.S. Pathfinder 1:25K series, where it is marked as a public bridleway and right-of-way. Furthermore, for the first two miles it follows the western parish boundary of Ford, passing only a few isolated farms or houses.

As it passes round Ford, 'the intercepting track' winds a course about 4 miles outside Shrewsbury, cutting across several roads radiating from the town: **1**, the Frankwell to Oswestry road (now the B4380, was A5); **2**, the road already discussed through the wasted village of Rowton to Buttington (A458T); **3,** the Roman road to Westbury and over the Long Mountain (B4386), and thence to Montgomery or Welshpool; and **4,** the road from Shrewsbury to Pontesbury (A488 which today continues to Bishops Castle), but it was not a significant route then, probably because of the risk of ambush in the Hope gorge. With good scouting advice, such an '**intercepting track'** would permit soldiery from the castle in Shrewsbury to switch roads easily in order to confront a raiding band on its outward or homeward route.

After leaving Benthall Stone Farm, the track, just to the east of Cardeston, dips into a dog-leg to ford the incised small valley of the Cardeston Brook, and then passes an isolated settlement, The Whistones, which H. D. G. Foxall suggests may indicate a pagan idol.[22] It crosses the next two east–west roads as a conspicuously-marked 'road used as a public path'. It crosses the Roman road from Wroxeter to Westbury at Nox and becomes a minor road continuing through what were the un-named berewicks (in italics) of Ford, *Newnham* and *Polmere* [4.17,19] (SJ41 09), also held by Alward, over the Rea Brook to *La Lee* (Lea Cross), and thence by *Sibaldescote* (Sibberscote Manor) or by Halston, to *Pleyleye*, 'a playing place for animals or humans' (Plealey).

These berewicks of Ford all lie in the northern extension of the Long Forest, anciently known as Hanwood, which Gelling suggests is probably derived from OE *han* meaning 'rock or stone'.[23] The whole area traversed by this winding 'intercepting track' and its continuation through the southern berewicks of Ford is land across which, at the end of the Ice Ages, the melting ice, heavily charged with rock fragments, formed moraines, kames and eskers to leave a landscape of low hills and hollows with occasional rocky knolls. On the poor, stony or gravelly deposits sparse woodland, or coppices of scrubby growth with coarse grasses, bracken and fern developed. On the heavier more clayey areas, denser tree and undergrowth developed. Tracks across this area frequently change direction where isolated sections of glacier ice had melted *in situ* between the moraines forming marshy hollows, or meres and pools (kettle holes) between the knolls. Yet it was colonised, even in the Middle Ages, by land-hungry peasants who were given permission to make small assarts (clearings) for pastures and scattered arable strips, their dwellings clustered in tiny groups for mutual protection.

Ford, sited on terraces above the Severn flood plain, was a large manor with 14 berewicks in 1086 (but it was not a 'radman settlement') **[4.1,16]** (SJ41 13). It had 64 peasants (heads of households), together with 26 slaves (male and female), who worked on the demesne. Ford eventually became the new caput (replacing Alberbury) of Rhiwset Hundred (later re-named Ford Hundred). This was evidently a cereal-producing area of 39 ploughlands, with a

very profitable mill, and a fishery shared with Montford (probably at the weir across the Severn still marked on O. S. maps).

Thus this ancient right of way circles from the Severn near Little Shrawardine to beyond the Rea Brook, around the outer environs of Shrewsbury, cutting across any tracks radiating from Shrewsbury, like a spider's web. It could have played a valuable part in the interception of raiders by the Earl's soldiery from the Castle.

Ahead is the northern end of the Long Mynd, rising from Plealey (*c*.120 metres, 400 feet) to an open plateau surface about at about 475 metres (*c*.1300 feet (and reaching almost 1700 feet (516 metres) at the crest of Pole Bank. From prehistoric times this upper surface of the Long Mynd has provided a drier passage than was offered by the valleys until the development of metalled roads. It also provided rough pasture for animals, mainly cattle, until the rise of the wool trade during the Middle Ages when the grazing rights increasingly became confined to sheep. The roads and tracks leading to these grazings therefore carried seasonal movements of stock, as well as long-distance traders with pack-horses, their hooves steadily deepening the tracks, especially on slopes. Just beyond Plealey the track enters the Hundred of Condover passing through **Oaks** ('probably from a single particular oak tree' and **Wrentnall**. Gelling suggests that this derives from an unrecorded personal name, Wrenta, and, because the village is not in a hollow, that the *halh* element was being used 'in its administrative sense'; in fact the village is so shown on the Cassini 1832/33 map, in the corner of Pulverbatch parish.)

Barely a half-mile beyond **Wrentnall** the track merges with a far more important and very ancient road to and from Shrewsbury, and continues through the other two townships, of Church Pulverbatch and **Castle Pulverbatch,** a 'radman village', with a large motte and bailey in the widening stock funnel at the edge of the Long Mynd. Cothercott, unfortunately for itself, lay just beyond the motte and bailey and had been seriously wasted after 1066, but by 1086 was beginning to recover. The track was a busy drovers' way to the medieval and later markets and fairs of Shrewsbury and had been in use as a stock track for transhumance and trade from prehistoric times. Beyond **Castle Pulverbatch** the road diverges, one branch leading to The Portway, a prehistoric track, which follows the crest of the Long Mynd, a broad plateau and underfoot, a dry route from north to south. The other branch, beyond Cothercot, keeps to the western side of the plateau (remaining high above the valley of the East Onny) and descends gently into Rinlow Hundred by Wentnor to Lydham held by the Earl himself.

The moor-edge townships in Condover Hundred.

The Long Mynd in prehistoric times was a wide, unenclosed and intercommoned moorland providing summer grazing for the communities that lived around it. Eventually the areas of grazing were assigned to the townships and farms, and boundaries were established. On this northern shoulder of the Long Mynd are the parishes of (Church) Pulverbatch and its four townships, **Oaks, Wrentnall, Castle Pulverbatch** and Cothercott, **Smethcott** with its townships, Betchcott and Picklescott, and the parish of Ratlinghope. All had mainly pastoral economies from prehistoric times. In the later 12th century Haughmond Abbey began to develop an interest in acquiring land hereabouts and is said to have established a 'bovaria' (vaccary) in the early part of the next century, grouping Ratlinghope (4.5,2) and the villages of Betchcott, Picklescott, Wilderley (4.22,2), Cothercott (4.27,8) and Stitt, and, to the east in the Stretton valley, Leebotwood (4.27,13). Ratlinghope, as well as Cothercott, was wasted soon after 1066, and Ratlinghope was still so recorded in 1086, so the Abbot might have obtained them for a modest outlay.

Radman villages in Condover Hundred

Oaks [1R, **4.5,4]** (SJ42 04). Oaks was a hamlet of only 3 households in 1086 (and 2 slaves working on the small demesne, near the Hall, a short distance north of the hamlet). It was probably well-hemmed in by woodland, but it was claimed that 4 more ploughs could be employed than its existing one. The value of the hamlet had reduced since 1066 to a fifth of its former value, but could with effort be brought into production again.

Wrentnall [1R, 4.26,3] (SJ42 02). This forest hamlet of only 3 villagers together with the radman, and endowed with woodland for 100 pigs, was held by Roger Hunter. He and his brother Norman were the Earl's huntsmen and held their lands close to, or within, the forests of the county.

Pulverbatch [2R. *m*. 4.26,4] (SJ43 02) As well as the two townships above, the parish includes the church village, Church Pulverbatch, and the defended village, **Castle Pulverbatch**, with 2 radmen and 7 villagers, with 3 ploughs, and woodland for fattening 100 pigs, as well as a demesne employing 4 slaves with 2 more ploughs. It was a valuable manor, held in 1086 by Roger Hunter, one of the Earl's huntsmen, and might have been partially

wasted as its value of £6 before 1066 was reduced to only £1, but by 1086 it was worth slightly more at £1 10*s*. The road by-passes the church village, but goes through the castle village to reach the motte and bailey, the considerable ruins of which fill the wider space where the road begins to open out as a funnel on to what was then open (unenclosed) heath. Just beyond the motte and bailey is the wasted settlement of Cothercott [4.27.8] (SJ42 02), held by Avenel under the Earl, with half a hide worked by 2 slaves with a plough. By 1086 it was beginning to recover. It might have been the size of a family farm then, and it is little larger today.

Smethcott [2R.*m*. 4.27, 15] (SO45 99) It was a tiny settlement of 2 radmen and one smallholder, sharing 1 plough, although there were also two other townships in the parish, which suggests it might have been depopulated at some time between 1066 and 1086. It was valued at 4*s*. in each of these years.

By the medieval period the king held Long Mynd as his hunting territory (king's forest), but local villages had kept their rights of common there. These rights were retained when the ownership and hunting rights reverted to the local lords. The heathers and heath grasses could provide valuable grazings through the summer from May (Ellenmas/St. Helen's Day) to the end of October (All Saints or Martinmas) for the townships on the edges of the moor which had rights of grazing there (as did some more distant parishes, but their rights were more restricted). From autumn to spring cattle were taken down to the villages, either to be housed or to graze on more sheltered in-bye fields. With the rise of the wool industry sheep took the place of cattle and by the end of the middle ages the pastures (and the hunting) became steadily more managed, often by, or at least, with, the agreement of the commoners. Some form of restraint on numbers (a stint) of animals allowed to each township reduced the danger of over-grazing and appears to have developed early. The farm name Stitt, on the western brow of the Long Mynd, is derived from *stint*, and was probably the farm which checked the numbers of animals brought by each farmer (or township), to ensure that they had not over-run their stint. It is possible that the 'Castle Hill' above Stitt Farm (and on its land) was a cattle-pound to make easier the checking of the stint.

William I died in the year after the production of Domesday Book, leaving a reputation for severity, for competence, a man feared rather that loved, but undoubtedly respected. He was praised for 'the good security he made in this country', and for the fact that, 'any honest man could travel over his kingdom without injury, his bosom full of gold, and no man dared strike another'.[24] While this verdict might not have been entirely applicable to the Welsh border, it suggests that road security was recognised as important, and it may explain why radmen were retained there in considerable numbers. The main difference between the pre-Conquest role of the radmen, compared with their role in the reign of William I seems to be that their duty was owed not as men to lesser lords in their demesnes, but, as a team of men, to the kingdom through the Sheriff (probably thereby becoming a more efficient service) in his role as leader of the militia.

After William's reign radmen disappear from the records, but F. C. Suppe in 1994 drew attention to a group of men first referenced in the national records ninety years after Domesday Book as *muntatores* (Latin; from the French word *mounter*) mounted men. Although he suggests that 'there is no argument for continuity of tenure between *radmanni* and *muntatores*', he acknowledges that 'the Domesday subtenants were the ancestors of the later muntators.[25] These muntators do not appear again until 1255–6, recorded as men who owed service for their lord at castles (castle-guard tenures), most of them at Oswestry Castle. Castle guard usually required forty days service centred on a specific castle, but he suggests that they might then be used as a mobile force and dispersed to where they were most needed, recognising especially the need for patrolling routes used by Welsh raiders. These muntators are envisaged as of relatively low status, and perhaps they were no more at liberty to release themselves from their lord than were the villein-status radmen of 1086.

With new overlords some change and development from Stenton's tenth-century radmen was inevitable, and the disappearance of radmen after 1086 seems likely to have been, at least in part, the consequence of a change of name, and the somewhat French-sounding name of muntators seems a very possible development. The practicalities of an eleventh-century radman's work was probably very little different from that of a thirteenth-century muntator – for each the most useful tool (and weapon!) was likely to be a billhook – and by 1300 there appears to be something of a team organisation and a service planned on a wider regional scale, rather than a manorial one.

Thanks

Notes

1   H. C. Darby, *Domesday England*, 1977, 87–8.
2   F. M. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 1942, 466–7.
3   Darby, *Op. Cit.*, 84–5.
4   P. M. Remfry, *Medieval Battles 1047–1295*, 2010, 192–200.
5   S. Davies, *Welsh Military Institutions 633–1283*, 2004, 14–18.
6   *Ibid.*, 45.
7   *Ibid.*, 91.
8   F. Noble, '*Offa's Dyke reviewed*', Archaeological Reports, British Series, **114**; M. Gelling, *The West Midlands in the early Middle Ages*, 1992, 106.
9   I have use throughout the Phillimore edition of Domesday Book (General Editor, John Morris), *Shropshire*, 1986, with magnificent introduction, notes and indices compiled by Frank and Caroline Thorn.
10   P. and A. Duckers, *Castles in Shropshire*, 2006.
11   T. Rowley, *The Welsh Border: Archaeology, History and Landscape*, 2nd revised edn., 2010, 26.
12   Darby, *Op. Cit.*, 15–16.
13   O.S. Map, published 1932, entitled 'South Wales and the Border in the XIVth century'.
14   Davies, *Op. Cit.*, 118–19.
15   M. Gelling in collaboration with H. D. G. Foxall (eds.), *The Place-names of Shropshire*, part 1, 1990, 251–2.
16   Cassini Publishing Ltd., Old Series Map 126, 1;50,000, 2006, Shrewsbury and Oswestry 1833–38.
17   Gelling and Foxall (eds.), *Op. Cit.*, part 4, 2004, 166.
18   M. A. Atkin, 'Land use and management in the upland demesne of the de Lacy estates, *c*.1300', *Agricultural History Review*, **42**, 1–19.
19   Gelling and Foxall (eds.), *Op. Cit.*, part 5, 2004, 68–70.
20   *Ibid.*, part 1, 1990, 132–3 and part 4, 2004, 164–6.
21   *Ibid.*, part 2, 1995, 13.
22   H. D. G. Foxall, *Shopshire Field Names*, 1980, 67.
23   Gelling and Foxall (eds.), *Op. Cit.*, part 1, 1990, 143.
24   From *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle E* 1087, quoted by D. C. Douglas, *William the Conqueror*, 1964, 373–4.
25   F. C. Suppe, *Military Institutions on the Welsh Marches: Shropshire AD 1066–1300*, 1994, 74, 86–7.

ALVELEY REVISITED: A NOTE ON PATRONAGE

By JOHN HUNT

Abstract: This paper revisits arguments presented in 1997 associating the Romanesque sculpture preserved in the former 'Bell Inn' in Alveley with the nearby Church of St. Mary and the patronage of the Lestrange family. This has subsequently been challenged in favour of le Poer patronage and Romsley chapel for the origin of the sculptures. These propositions are reviewed, discussing Romsley, the le Poer tenure, and the basis of the alternative proposals. It is argued that contrary to the proposition that the 'Alveley sculptures' originated at Romsley, they, or some, were more probably taken to Romsley from the church of Alveley. It is concluded therefore that the arguments published in 1997 remain the most credible interpretation.

In 1997 Hunt and Stokes published an account of a group of sculptures preserved within the former Bell Inn in Alveley (Hunt and Stokes 1997). In this article the authors argued that the sculptures belonged to the Herefordshire School of Sculpture and that they were most probably originally produced for the nearby church of St. Mary, known to have been present during the 12th century. Stylistic comparisons suggested that these sculptures might be dated between the early 1150s and the early 1160s. The probable patronage context was also reviewed, arguing that the most likely patron for such work in Alveley was Guy Lestrange whose tenure of the manor was consistent with the stylistic dating and also offered a meaningful context. Furthermore, such an association also permitted a further refinement in the dating of these sculptures to the period c.1155 to the early 1160s. While they were to some extent informed by each other, it is also the case that this assemblage of sculptures was dated by two different approaches, one based on stylistic analysis, and the other on the probable patronage context.

A few years after this publication James Lawson raised some concerns regarding the conclusions of Hunt and Stokes, questioning in particular the suggested provenance of the sculptures from Alveley Church and their attribution to the patronage of Guy Lestrange. Although Lawson's arguments have not, so far as this writer is aware, been formally published, they have nonetheless gained some currency locally.[1] Thus, in 2006 the new edition of the Shropshire volume in the 'Buildings of England' series felt able to state in its discussion of the sculptures at Alveley that 'James Lawson has convincing evidence that they came from a chapel at Romsley... demolished some time before 1780' (Newman and Pevsner 2006, 114). Recent conservation work on the former Bell Inn, now a private residence,[2] together with a current local society research project on Romsley has again brought Lawson's arguments to the fore. It therefore seems appropriate to review Lawson's thesis and its implications for the conclusions previously offered by Hunt and Stokes.

The essence of Lawson's case rests on the following points –

1. That the Bell Inn sculptures should not be associated with the church of St. Mary in Alveley; rather it is claimed that they came to the Bell Inn site as part of a demolition clearance from elsewhere, that alternative site being a known medieval chapel at Romsley, a couple of miles to the south of Alveley.
2. If the above point can be established, then it follows that the arguments advanced in 1997 as to the patronage of the work cannot be sustained; consequently the patronage context would require further investigation.

This review will therefore consider each of these points in turn and their implications for our interpretation of the sculptural assemblage from Alveley.

The Question of Provenance

Mr. Lawson observes that 'The Bell' is a multi-period building, dating back to the early 15th century in its timber-framed core, but whose construction continued until 1826. In noting this lengthy period of development, Lawson seems to suppose that the incorporation of the sculptures in the building was unlikely before the 17th century, but that, if it were to have occurred at an earlier point, he argues that the sculptures would have needed to have been available as an assemblage for incorporation, and that this would have required that they were available a long time after their removal from the church. The tone of his observation suggests that he thinks this to be unlikely.

Lawson goes on to argue that for the sculptures to have been available from the church of St. Mary, they must have formed part of the chancel arch and of the north or south nave doors of the church. If the 12th century church were an aisleless building, then we may suppose that the north and south doors were removed in the 13th century at the time of wider alterations to the church's fabric; the present south door is dated to the early 13th century. The chancel dates to the 13th century and is entered through a chancel arch of early 14th century date. From this sequence of changes to the fabric at different periods, but affecting those places in the church where Lawson supposes that the sculptures must have been located, he deduces that 'the possibility of a coherent dump of Romanesque rubble surviving for incorporation in the Bell and surrounding boundary wall in the seventeenth, let alone the eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries, seems a trifle problematic'.[3] This 'problem' is, of course, accentuated by Lawson's suppositions on both the original dispositions of the sculptures, and his requirement for a 'coherent dump'. Thus Lawson concludes that it is more likely that the sculptures were part of demolition clearance from a site elsewhere, implicitly requiring a site whose demolition was chronologically closer to the building dates of the Bell.

Such a candidate seemingly presents itself at the nearby settlement of Romsley where there was a chapel by the mid-13th century, a chapel that was attached to Alveley Church (Eyton 1854, 121; 1856, 203–4). Lawson notes that the chapel had been demolished by the 1780s, but that when Eyton referred to the site in the 1860s he commented that the location of the chapel was still discernible through its foundations and the ceramic tiles of the floor. Built into the wall of an adjacent stable were two carved stones, carrying the Zodiacal signs of Leo and Sagittarius; Eyton, and Lawson after him, supposed that these stones came from the chapel site and that they might have originally been part of a series of twelve such stones. Lawson then takes this further to suggest that this chapel represents the more probable provenance of the sculptures subsequently found in the Bell, having been taken there as part of a demolition clearance of the disused chapel site. The site of the chapel may well have been confirmed in July 1975.[4] The earliest reference which we have to the chapel dates to 1255, at which time it was acknowledged as belonging to the prebend of Alveley (Eyton 1854, 121; 1856, 204). Lawson has traced a handful of subsequent references, which included mention in the will of William de la Hulle in 1349 and in the register of Bishop Charles Bothe of Hereford in 1524, on the basis of which a dedication to St. Giles may be determined. From a Chancery case of 1653, which made reference to the ancient church or chapel of Romsley, it may be deduced that the chapel had most probably been abandoned sometime in the first half of the 17th century.[5]

While the case put forward by Mr Lawson has evidently been considered by some as 'convincing evidence' (Newman and Pevsner 2006, 114), it is in fact highly speculative and rests on assumptions at several turns. The first part of the thesis revolves around the point at which the sculptures might have become available for use as building stone and a perception that they must have all come together at the same time, and moreover must have been used fairly soon after their removal from the building of their origin. This leads to further speculation on where in the church the sculptures were originally utilised, before the rebuilding which led to their removal.

In reality, it is not possible to determine precisely when the sculptures became available for use as building material, and whether they became available as an assemblage or piecemeal over time. Nor do we know anything of any use that they may have been put to, if any, between their removal from the church and their incorporation in 'The Bell'. It is certainly clear that 'The Bell' sculptures are only fragments from an extensive Herefordshire School scheme, to which the recent restoration and conservation work on the building have added some further pieces.[6] These comprise fragments of a capital decorated with interlace, and a square stone displaying a large bird standing on and pecking a small bird, similar to those found on a corbel at Kilpeck and a capital of the west window of Leominster Priory Church, although the detailed treatment of the body owes more to techniques applied to bird sculptures at Rowlestone and on the Castle Frome font. The general iconography is a familiar one within the wider repertoire of the Romanesque.

Lawson's suppositions regarding the disposition of the sculptures in the church, associated with north or south nave doors and the chancel arch, are not unreasonable, but they are assumptions. Nave windows and use within the chancel cannot be entirely disregarded, particularly when we have only fragmentary remains available for study. Of course, Lawson's point is that he is attempting to establish their likely date of removal from Alveley Church based upon the dating of the building phases of the present church. He assumes a period of 300 to 400 years between the removal of the sculptures and their incorporation in 'The Bell', supposing that such a

chronological gap was too great to allow for this to have been the source of the sculptures used in 'The Bell'. This is all predicated on Lawson's assumptions that the sculptures were all removed together, were not reused elsewhere at any point before their incorporation in 'The Bell', and that they must have been brought together as a 'coherent dump' of demolition material before being used in the building work. This in turn overlooks the fact that the building work in 'The Bell' itself was undertaken over a lengthy period of time, and one might suppose that the very fact that we have only fragments of the original sculptural scheme suggests that there was no 'coherent dump' from the outset.

Furthermore, Rachel Morley has recently suggested that 'The Bell', as a building, may have much earlier origins than was previously supposed, not surprisingly since previous dating has largely been related to the timber phases of the building and dendrochronology. She has argued that the building may well have its origins in the 13th century as a single-ended hall, which she associates with a possible priest's house (Morley 2012, 4.15). Leaving aside the identification of this building as a priest's house, which is not improbable, although the possibility of a seigneurial hall might also be entertained, these observations offer a scenario in which stone removed from the church from the 13th century and later might be incorporated into contemporary construction work on an adjacent site.

Therefore, not only does the basis of Lawson's thesis, in any case, have weak foundations, but there is also good reason to believe that there may not have been any significant chronological gaps between the removal of the sculptures from the church and their re-use as building material in 'The Bell'. Under these circumstances we might suppose that there is no reason to proceed further to a discussion of Romsley chapel and James Lawson's identification of an alternative patron. However, the observations of Eyton and others on the site do warrant some further discussion.

The Romsley Chapel Carvings

Mr. Lawson's attraction to Romsley Chapel is based on the fact that in the 1860s Eyton had observed a chapel that was by then in ruin and that built into the wall of an adjacent stable were two carved stones, carrying the Zodiacal signs of Leo and Sagittarius. These sculptures, Lawson assumes, should be linked with those known from Alveley, which he implicitly supposes to be a part of the same original assemblage.

Fragments of 12th century sculptures remain in private possession in Romsley, and are supposed to be part of what Eyton saw. Two stones now set into a boundary wall appear to be those to which Eyton referred. Although the outlines of the figures are quite clear, they are heavily weathered and lacking in detail. They lack the diagnostic details of the Herefordshire School, but given their condition this is not too surprising; however, the presentation of the head of the lion does recall the approach used on the lions of both the Castle Frome and the Eardisley fonts (although, like the Herefordshire School birds, the 'ghost' of Anglo-Saxon forms may be discerned). However, there are in addition at least three other pieces of 12th century sculpture from Romsley. In another boundary wall there is an inset fragment of two-stranded interlace. This has a striking resemblance to the central section of the serpent interlace currently situated to the left of the 'Samson and Lion' sculpture in 'The Bell'; although only a fragment, it lends weight to the possibility that there is a shared hand and iconography between the sculptures in Alveley and Romsley.

In addition there are also two damaged capitals preserved at Romsley. One of these comprises the capital and attached impost; the base of the capital is defined by a cable moulding, above which there is a band of interlace and, at the angle of the capital, two affronted birds, whose heads and feet touch each other, although the bulk of the former has been lost; some strands of the interlace run over the rear of the bird's body. The figures are well modelled and, although detail has been lost, they appear comparable in approach with the bird sculpture recently uncovered at 'The Bell'. The weathering makes it too difficult to determine clearly if these birds are drinking from a central stoup or chalice, but it does appear so, and this is a familiar Romanesque iconography, although not one previously demonstrated in the surviving corpus of the School. There is no doubt that this is work of the Herefordshire School of sculpture. The other side of this capital has been lost.

The second capital is less well preserved and might not have been produced by the same hand as that which carved the other piece. There is again a cable carved base (although less well preserved and defined) and a band of rather disordered interlace above this. However, like its partner the design is again one of affronted birds with heads touching over what may be a drinking vessel.

James Lawson is therefore right to suspect that there might be links between the carved stones of Alveley and Romsley. They are both sites which hosted Herefordshire School work, and they may include pieces that were carved by the same hand. This is, however, a long way short of demonstrating the kind of relationship between the two sites that Lawson supposes, namely that Romsley Chapel was the provenance of 'The Bell' sculptures; this will be discussed further below.

The attribution of the Alveley patronage

Mr. Lawson argues that if the hypothesis he proposes for the provenance of the Alveley sculptures is correct, then 'the historical arguments advanced by Stokes and Hunt as regards the patron of the supposed sculptures from Alveley church must be regarded as unsafe'. Lawson proposes that the patronage should be attributed to the le Poers, lords of Romsley, whom he suggests were equal in status to the Lestrange family.[7] This alternative suggestion therefore must be reviewed.

As J. H. Round long ago noted, the name of le Poer (Poher, and other variants) is one which is commonly met in England and Ireland during the 12th and 13th centuries (Round 1896, 215–16). Several branches of the family occurred in the west midlands, their appearance being represented by Walter Pontherius in the folios of Domesday Book. Walter was a tenant of the church of Worcester and of Westminster Abbey in Worcestershire, where he also held a virgate of the Church of Pershore. These tenancies taken together amounted to a little over 28 hides and were valued at £16 6*s* 4*d*, suggesting a man of some standing (Keats-Rohan 1999, 457; Morris 1982 a, 2.5, 2.49, 2.58, 2.59, 2.60, 2.77; 8.8, 8.10d, 8.19, 8.20, 8.22; 9.6c). In addition he was a tenant in Gloucestershire, where he held four hides of the Church of St. Peter, Westminster (Morris 1982 b, 19.2). By 1108–18 Hugh Puiher had succeeded Walter in Worcestershire (Round 1964, 141–5), and in 1135 held 2½ knight's fees of the Bishop of Worcester (Hall 1896, 300). The *Carta* of the Bishop of Hereford also shows a Roger le Poher holding one knight's fee by 1135, and both Drogo Puher and Stephen de Puher appear in the mid-12th century among the witnesses to the charters of the earls of Hereford, Drogo serving as Earl Miles' 'dapifer' (Hall 1896, 278; Walker 1964, Nos 3 (September 1144); 11 (1143–55); 23 (1148–55)).

By the middle of the 12th century kin of the family had established themselves widely across the Midlands. In addition to members of the family in Worcestershire and Herefordshire, in 1166 there was a Robert Poer holding 5½ knights' fees in Leicestershire of William de Albenni (Hall 1896, 328); in Warwickshire, by about 1135, a Stephen le Poer was a subinfeudated sub-tenant (of Margery de Bohun, who held of the Bishop of Worcester) holding 2½ hides in Clifford Minor near Stratford-upon-Avon. The name of Stephen Poer appears as tenant here in 1182 and again in 1208, this span of some seventy years suggesting father and son in succession (Clifford 1817, 108–9; Styles 1945, 263).[(8)]

In the case of Shropshire, the le Poer family were certainly present at Romsley by the early 13th century, but demonstrating their presence here earlier than this is difficult. Eyton observed that when in 1167 Alan de Nevill held an 'Assize of the Forest' in Staffordshire, he imposed a fine of a half-mark on the vill of Romsley, entered on the record as '*Rameslea Hugonis*'; he suggested that this place-name may incorporate a reference the Hugh Puher who held in Worcestershire of the Bishop of Worcester, holding Romsley of Osbern fitz Hugh, baron of Richard's Castle. This is possible but by no means certain; the 1166 *Carta* of Osbern fitz Hugh and its later interpolations make no reference to le Poer, and there are no subsequent indications of any direct links between the lords of Romsley and the Worcestershire le Poers, beyond their obvious kinship. By 1211–12 a Roger Poer does appear as lord of Romsley (Eyton 1856, 197; Anon 1889, 56; Hall 1896, 287, 335, 605; Redmond 1891; Baugh 1998, 215). Together with Badger, the overlordship of the manor of Romsley had passed to the barons of Richard's Castle following Henry I's tenurial reorganisation of the Welsh March in the wake of Robert de Bellême's failed rebellion, and by the mid-1170s Badger was held of Osbern fitz Hugh by Guy Lestrange. Given that Romsley and Badger are sometimes associated in later documents (Morris 1986, Notes EW2), the possibility that Guy at this time held Romsley cannot be entirely discounted, but equally nor can this possibility be raised beyond the level of speculation, particularly given the possibility that Romsley was at about the same time associated with a man named Hugh. To assume that this Hugh should be equated with Hugh le Poer does represent something of a leap of faith, in this case projecting backwards from the known to the unknown in a rather tenuous manner.

However, in 1211–12, and certainly by 1274, Badger and Romsley were held as one knight's fee by the le Poer family of the honor of Richard's Castle (Baugh 1998, 215). Roger Poer occurs as lord of Romsley in 1212; William Poer occurs in 1255 as mesne lord, with Roger Poher occurring similarly in 1287. John Poer is noted in 1291, and in 1307 Leo Poer was styling himself as Leo de Romsley; Roger Poer held the manor in 1315 (Redmond 1891, 7).

Other members of the le Poer kin have also been associated with Wollascott (Woolascott), or Willescote, in this case Alan le Poer by 1235 (Rees 1975, 371, No 401; Rees 1985, Nos 327 (1242–50), 515 (1235–43), 772 (1243–48), 773 (*c.*1240)),[9] who was succeeded by his son, John (Rees 1985, No 996);[10] and Baldwin Poer with Neen-Baldwin (later Neen-Sollars) sometime before 1185 (Redmond 1891, 7).

The le Poer family do figure among the witnesses of 12th-century charters to religious houses in the west midlands. Particularly associated with grants relating to lands in Worcestershire in the cartulary of Worcester Priory were Hugh Poer, John Puiher, William Puiher of Pirton, Henry Puiher and Simon Puiher (Darlington 1968, Nos 214 (early Henry II); 100 (1184–88); 164 (1178); 165, 183, 184 (1175); 185 (1189–96); 392 (*tempore* Henry II); 397 (late 12th century); 449 (1196–1203)), men who seem on this basis to have been associated with the Worcestershire branches of the family. However, Worcestershire lands also found their way as grants to the

Shropshire Augustinian house of Haughmond Abbey. Around 1172 Hugh Poer confirmed the donation by Richard Mustel of a messuage in Worcester to Haughmond, while before 1186 Roger le Puher appears among the witnesses to a grant of Osbert fitz Hugh concerning land in Little Cotheridge (Worcestershire) held of the Bishop of Worcester (Rees 1985, Nos 1312 (c.1172); 252 (before 1186); 253 (1186–90)).

The Haughmond Cartulary does also associate members of the le Poer family with some Shropshire grants. Around 1155–59 William fitz Alan confirmed Gilbert of Hadnall's grant of the churches of Hardwick, Aldeton and Ham to the Abbey. The witnesses to this grant included Roger Puher, in the company of John Lestrange and his two brothers, Guy and Hamon (Rees 1985, No 529 (1155–59)). The grant relates to Hadnall, a near neighbour north-east of Woolascott (to the north of Shrewsbury); it might be expected that a neighbouring lord would witness local grants, and if so, this Roger Poer might well have been lord of the manor of Wollascott in the mid-12th century, but this cannot be confirmed. A Robert le Poer appears among the witnesses *c*.1195–1201 regarding the grant of land in Shawbury, which again suggests a focus in north Shropshire in the vicinity of Wollascott (Rees 1985, No 304 (1195–1201)), particularly as Robert also appears as a witness to a grant made by Leticia, the daughter of Gilbert of Hadnall, together with his son Henry and Guy de Shawbury (Rees 1985, No 507 (1182–1201)). While this review of some key local cartularies is not conclusive, it does tend to reinforce the impression that the le Poer lordship of Romsley cannot be clearly demonstrated before the 13th century.

The manor of Romsley in 1086 was valued at forty shillings; assessed at one hide, the seven villeins and seven bordars may well reflect a population in the order of seventy people. By 1255 Romsley, then in the possession of John le Poer, but held of William le Poer, was assessed at 1½ hides and held by service of one-fifth of a knight's fee and suit of court to the Hundred of Bridgnorth (Morris 1986, 12.9; Illingworth 1818, 59a). By the 13th and 14th centuries, at least, the manor does not seem to have been a particularly wealthy one. In 1294 John le Poer was said to hold here 74 acres of land which rendered 2 shillings yearly; in 1315–16 the manor, comprising a messuage and a virgate of land, was held by Roger le Power (i.e. le Poer) by the service of 2 shillings yearly, who headed the list of four taxpayers a few years later, when the lay subsidy was collected in 1327. This suggests a population by this date of around fifty, hinting at a declining manor, since the normal trend between the late 11th and early 14th centuries was one of expansion, even allowing for the difficult decades at the beginning of the latter century. While we must continue to be cautious on how the 1327 data is interpreted, Roger's payment of 1*s*. 6*d*. suggests an assessment based on a valuation of his 'moveables' at 7*s*. 6*d*., reinforcing the impression of a very modestly placed family. By 1354, following the death of Roger le Power, the manor was said to comprise a messuage, forty acres of land, one acre of meadow and one acre of wood, all held by knight's service; no other lands were held by Roger in the county (Fletcher 1907, 371; CIPM, iii, No 194 at 121; v, No 611 at 392; x, No 207). While many misfortunes might befall both a family and a manor over time, there is little to suggest that Romsley was, for the manorial lords at least, a particularly prosperous possession. However, it is difficult to judge when any decline, if such there was, might have set in, and even more difficult to determine if the manor could have offered either the resources or the 'raison d'être' to commission an extensive sculptural programme.

Therefore, the le Poers were well established as mesne tenants across the Midlands, with branches of the family holding estates in Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Shropshire, and further afield. In the case of Shropshire there were seemingly members of the family established by the 12th century at Neen-Baldwin, held of the barons of Richard's Castle, and possibly, but not certainly, also at Wollascott. In the case of Romsley, however, also held of the honor of Richard's Castle, the case for their tenure before the 13th century is rather more tenuous. The possibility that they did not enter into this tenure until the 13th century cannot be discounted.

An implicit aspect of Lawson's thesis is that the le Poers of Romsley were a family of significant standing, sufficiently well-placed to engage with the patronage of a significant project such as that represented by the sculptures. While the resources of the le Poer kin as a whole were undoubtedly considerable, there is no evidence that the le Poers of Romsley were distinguished in this regard. Such kinship groups were effectively a collection of independent branches of the family, rather than elements of a larger whole, the resources of each to be accounted for individually and independently. So, while the standing of the le Poer family in Worcestershire appears to have been fairly substantial, as was that of Robert le Poer in Leicestershire in the mid-12th century, a similar standing cannot simply be assumed for the cadet branch of the family holding Romsley. The Hugh le Poer holding knight's fees in Worcestershire and Gloucestershire in 1166 was not necessarily the Hugh whose name was attached to Romsley in 1167, particularly since the Shropshire le Poers of the late 12th and early 13th century, Robert and Roger, seem not to appear in Worcestershire, or in Herefordshire. This tends to reinforce the impression that the Romsley le Poers were a cadet branch of the family, and, while their attachments to the barons of Richard's Castle might have facilitated contact with their kin who shared similar associations, there seems no reason to imagine that they were a family of particular standing.

In short, the undoubted standing of the le Poers in mid-12th century Worcestershire was not necessarily directly translated also to other branches, such as the le Poers of Romsley, whether in the 12th or the 13th centuries. This is equally true of other contemporary families, such as the Bassets. The resources of the whole should not

be conflated to their individual components. Thus it is unwise to assume a status and standing for the le Poers of Romsley, and with it their capacity or motivations towards patronage which cannot be demonstrated. If the mid-12th century 'Hugh of Romsley' were to be equated with the Hugh le Poer holding in Worcestershire and Gloucestershire in 1166, then Lawson's attribution to him of a patronage role might be tenable from the point of view of a personal resource base, and therefore his capacity to undertake it, but there would remain the very real question of why he should want to do so in a tenurially isolated and relatively unimportant manor.

Discussion

Therefore, in summary, the supposition that the le Poers were the patrons of these sculptures is difficult to sustain, as are the arguments challenging an Alveley provenance for them. However, the Romsley sculptures may be directly compared, in style and date, with those found in Alveley and therefore the possible nature of these links needs to be considered further.

There are three possible scenarios that might explain these neighbouring sculptures –

Firstly, concurrence with the thesis advanced by James Lawson, namely that the Alveley sculptures originated at Romsley. The weaknesses inherent in this argument have already been examined above.

Secondly, that the Romsley sculptures and the Alveley sculptures originated contemporaneously but independently.

Thirdly, that the Romsley sculptures originated in Alveley but were brought subsequently to the chapel.

Therefore, it is the second and third of these possible explanations which require closer examination, but in the case of the former it is the absence of a demonstrable context which causes disquiet.

It is certainly not, of itself, problematic that neighbouring churches might attract the services of the same masons and sculptors; the Herefordshire School masons who worked in Alveley might well have been persuaded to work in Romsley as well, or indeed, vice versa. It is not possible to determine how extensive any scheme in Romsley might have been, but such patterns of activity are readily recognised regionally in medieval churches. More problematic is the question of who might have commissioned such building work and why. Even if the le Poer tenure of Romsley were traced back to Hugh in the mid-12th century, itself a debatable contention, it is difficult to imagine why a lord, whose interests so clearly lay in Worcestershire, would want to undertake such a scheme in a small and modest manor which was relatively isolated from his tenurial 'centre of gravity'. Unlike the case with the neighbouring church at Alveley, there is the lack of a meaningful context in the case of Romsley, and this remains the case even if the Lestrange family were influential in and holding Romsley at the time.

Therefore, we must consider the possibility that the sculptures originated in Alveley, but were brought subsequently to the chapel in Romsley. A central aspect of this is the dating of the chapel itself, on which our information is relatively limited. However, the information which we do have, the sculptures apart, all points to the 13th century and later. While not necessarily reflecting the date of foundation, the earliest documentary reference which we have to the chapel in Romsley occurs in 1255, when the jurors of Bridgnorth reported that Henry de Wingham held the prebend of Alveley, with its member, Romsley, together worth forty marks (Illingworth 1818, 59b; Eyton 1854, 121; 1856, 203–4). It appears not to have warranted any mention in the 1292 *Taxatio* of Pope Nicholas.

The physical remains of the chapel are equally scanty. In 1975 E. W. Tipler investigated a site in a small paddock known locally as 'Chapel Yard', situated some 300 metres to the west of Old Hall Farm. He found a heavy stone spread and pieces of worked stone, some fairly sizeable and of 'good workmanship' and pottery of medieval to 19th century date. The site appeared to have been robbed out, but roof tiles and two broken decorated tiles were found, of identical design in yellow on brown tile depicting an animal's head with leaf and stem, dated between the 13th and 15th centuries. Other types were recovered in plain yellow face on black. It seems likely that Tipler had located fragments of the 13th century or later chapel floor, as had Eyton before him. An aerial survey followed in 1976 during which the foundation outline was defined together with a nearby moated site. The presumed chapel site is recorded as being orientated NE/SW, then visible as a roughly level platform measuring approximately $30m.\times14m.\times0.5m.$ high. The Historic Environment Record notes that the building 'stands out as a patch of light coloured stony soil, with a few dressed blocks, surrounded by a ring of dark soil in a ploughed field which is otherwise of a reddish colour'. A visitor to the site around 1854, R. C. Warde, observed the 'impression' of the building, commenting that it 'appeared to have consisted of a simple nave some forty feet in length built of roughly hewn sandstone. Numbers of fragments of encaustic tiles lay scattered within its limits the exact types of those now existing in the Abbey Church of Malvern'. No record of these tiles, apart from a sketch and photograph of one tile, have been seen by this writer, but if Warde's observations are borne out then at least a part of the floor in Romsley Chapel seems likely to have been re-laid or patched in the second half of the 15th century (Tipler 1975, 71; 1976, 59; Warde 1854, 464).[11]

Various worked stones have been found at the neighbouring farms, probably from the chapel site, among them in 1979 a large stone bearing an incised cross motif which it has been suggested may have formed the keystone of an arch (Tipler 1976, 59; 1979, 76–7) (12). Apart from the Herefordshire School sculptures, there is nothing to suggest that these stones were all fashioned at the same date.

Taken together, there seems no reason on the basis of the documentary and archaeological evidence to suppose that the chapel must have been in existence in Romsley before the 13th century unless one supposes that the Herefordshire School sculptures can be used to date the building. This observation is lent further weight when account is taken of wider patterns of activity in post-Conquest south-east Shropshire.

Jane Croom's study of the minster parochiae of south-east Shropshire has drawn attention to a conspicuous characteristic of the parochial geography of the area in the 11th and 12th centuries, that is the large number of surviving minster churches which were still active at this date (Croom 1988, 79), which, she suggested, might partly be the result of a relatively late development of separate lordships in Shropshire.

The parish of Alveley was most probably part of a middle Saxon land unit which originally encompassed the parishes of Worfield, Claverley, Quatt, Quatford and St. Mary Magdalene, Bridgnorth. Croom suggests that Worfield might have been the original minster church within this territory, to be eclipsed in the 10th century when Quatford emerged as the chapel of the royal burh, the forerunner of St. Mary Magdalene, Bridgnorth (Croom 1989, 156, 163).

The survival of these minster communities into the early post-Conquest period may well have influenced the chronology of local church foundation and the development of the parochial system in the area, in essence slowing down the pace at which private chapels might have been established. It was not until *c*.1100 that the minster system broke down in south-east Shropshire, with perhaps some further 200 years before the replacement pattern of numerous local churches and small parishes was finally established. Croom further suggests that the continued subordination of many small churches in south-east Shropshire during the later medieval period might well have been a consequence of their relatively late arrival on the scene (Croom 1988, 80). While the details of Romsley Chapel's foundation are unknown, the prevailing context which Croom has established for this part of Shropshire seems to suggest that a later rather than an early foundation date is likely. Romsley, attached to the Church of Alveley which was in turn a prebend of the Royal Free Chapel of St Mary Magdalene in Bridgnorth (originally in Quatford; Croom 1989, 157–9), seems to be consistent with this proposed pattern. Therefore, the foundation of Romsley Chapel in the 13th century rather than the 12th century seems entirely probable, and is not inconsistent with what has been observed of the known documentary and archaeological evidence.

The implication of these conclusions is that the Herefordshire School sculptures probably found their way into the chapel of Romsley during the 13th century, and that they were probably taken there from Alveley, the church to which the chapel was attached; of course the very converse of what Mr. Lawson's thesis supposed. Such a reconstruction of possible events also has the advantage of offering a meaningful context. It has been observed that, whatever the truth of Hugh le Poer's links with Romsley, this family's associations with the manor are most clearly seen from the early 13th century onwards, with Roger le Poer in 1212. It does not seem improbable that the arrival of the cadet branch of the le Poers in this manor might have occasioned the building of a chapel sometime between *c*.1211 and *c*.1255, both as a matter of convenience and an affirmation and celebration of their tenure.[13] Although it is only a matter of speculation, one wonders about the relationship of the nearby moated site to both this chapel and the le Poer family. However, if the decision to build a chapel had been taken in the first half of the 13th century, at a time when the church in Alveley was itself being refashioned in part, it seems not improbable that some of the available decorated stones might have been gifted or purchased to adorn the new chapel.[14] When R. C. Warde visited Romsley around 1854 he remarked on two bas relief carvings which 'evidently represented the zodiacal signs Leo and Sagittarius: the former appearing as a well-executed lion, standing; the other as a Centaur, drawing a bow'. Warde was informed that these carvings had 'surmounted the lintel of the principal doorway' (Warde 1854, No 267, 464). While the reliability of such testimony may be open to doubt at several points, if taken at face value it would suggest that the sculptures were incorporated into the building where they might be fitted, rather than in accordance with any conventional planned sculptural scheme, an approach which would be consistent with the acquisition of sculpture from another building to adorn the new one. Such a scenario seems far more sensible than attempting to understand the alternative context of commissioning a remarkable and extensive set of sculptures in the mid-12th century for a small chapel without any parochial rights or any clear tenurial attachments.

Therefore, while acknowledging that the evidence available is often inconclusive or open to challenge, the strong impression which nonetheless emerges from this review is that there are no grounds for confidence in the revisions proposed by Mr. Lawson for the provenance and patronage of the Herefordshire School sculptures from Alveley; rather, that for the present the arguments presented by Hunt and Stokes in 1997 remain the most credible explanation of the context of these sculptures.

Notes

1   This writer's understanding of Mr. James Lawson's thesis is based on personal communication and a typescript note kindly sent to me around November 2005.
2   Rachel Morley, *A Study of the Twelfth Century Stone Sculptures at The Bell Inn, Alveley*, unpublished manuscript, April 2012.
3   This argument is advanced in the manuscript noted at 2, above.
4   SO 786.829; *West Midlands Archaeological News Sheet*, 18 (1975), 71.
5   In a Chancery case regarding the demolition of a pew in the chancel of Alveley Church it was recorded 'that there was anciently a church or chapel in Romsley which the inhabitants of Romsley did usually resort to divine service, but when the said church or chapel grew into decay and fall into ruin few of the inhabitants of Romsley had any seats within the parish church of Alveley until of latter years. The said inhabitants of Romsley consented to pay such payments and duties as others and they gained and obtained to themselves seats in the chancel of the parish church and other parts thereof as they could conveniently get and many of these inhabitants of Romsley did sit in the Alleys and in the great chancel belonging to the impropriator of the tythes of the said parish'; Alan Nicholls, 'Alveley Chancery Cases', *Transactions of the Alveley Historical Society* (2003), 25–7 (accessed on-line, 12.01.2013).
6   Morley 2012, 3.5, 4.10; Morley describes the scene as depicting a pelican, following the Bestiary account, but the bird represented is much more akin to a bird of prey.
7   Lawson typescript note, and *pers comm*. (e-mail 16 November 2005).
8   At different times both the bishops of Worcester and the barons of Stafford appear as the overlords. That the bishops may be shown granting lands in Clifford in the 10th century suggests that this manor may have been among those where their tenure was disrupted. However, the establishment of Stephen le Poer on this land may owe something to Hugh le Poer's relationship with the bishop at this time. In 1252 Humphrey de Bohun was recorded as holding ½ a knight's fee here, presumably held of him by the Hugh le Poer who whose widow, Julian, still held of the earl in 1299.
9   An agreement between Abbot Henry of Shrewsbury and Alan le Poer of Wollascott. Alan le Poer also appears witnessing charters in favour of Haughmond Abbey.
10 Referring to John, son of Alan le Poer of Wollascott.
11 See also Shropshire Historic Environment Record, HER No. 01358 (accessed on-line, 18.01.2013); with regard to the floor tile recorded by Tipler, he suggests comparisons with tiles from Holt Church. It is not improbable that the building may have contained several phases of floor tiles put in place over several centuries.
12 HER No 01358; Mr. Tipler (Tipler 1976, 59) reported worked stone material from two adjoining farms; a part wall corner base in two parts from Cross Farm Cottage, and four carved works in wall stones at Low Farm, which he identified as a lion and a centaur, and 'a possible pillar head...depicting a bird, possibly a dove based by complicated tracery'. The Low Farm stones have been viewed by the present writer, the latter item clearly being the affronted birds and interlace described above. The stone marked with a cross has also been examined by this writer and while tapered it does not convince as a keystone, although this may be a reflection of the quality of the work. In any case the relatively poor quality of the work on this stone cannot be associated with the Herefordshire School stones. See Tipler 1979, 76–7.
13 Even if Hugh le Poer held this manor in the mid-12th century, this does not necessarily imply a close or residential association with the manor and nor would it undermine the possible implications of the arrival in the 13th century of a cadet branch of the family who wanted to make 'their mark' on the place; nor would it contradict the suggestion that Romsley Chapel was built in the first half of the 13th century.
14 While to be approached with caution, such an explanation for the 'recycling' of the sculptures from Alveley might therefore suggest that the affronted bird capitals now in Romsley originated from the south doorway of the 12th century church of Alveley as this appears to have been replaced early in the 13th century. Although not precisely the same, the south door of Ribbesford Church is called to mind. However, this can be no more than speculation as the original disposition of the Alveley scheme is unknown, as is the sequence by which the sculptures were 'decommissioned' and removed.

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'HOPTON QUARTER':
A *TIME TEAM* EVALUATION AT HOPTON CASTLE, SHROPSHIRE

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Illustrations by Rob Goller

Abstract: An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Channel 4's *Time Team* at the site of Hopton Castle, Shropshire (centred on NGR 336667 277930). This site is the location of a late 13th or early 14th century fortified structure in the form of a tower house (Scheduled Monument 1013827, Listed Building 1054935), which was the subject of a notorious siege during the Civil War, in 1644, of which an eye-witness account exists.

The evaluation identified three major phases of activity on the site: medieval, early post-medieval and mid-17th century (Civil War period). As well as reviewing what was previously known of the upstanding remains of the medieval tower house, the evaluation also found evidence for the medieval moat and curtain wall. A large cellared building and a stone-built tower were also identified within the bailey. The dating for these remains uncertain: they are likely to have been of medieval origin, but still standing during the Civil War siege.

To the north-east of the castle, remains were encountered, which were interpreted as structures associated with the early post-medieval re-landscaping of the site before the Civil War period. There was also evidence that some structures might have been demolished at this time. The eye-witness account of the 1644 siege described several parts of the castle complex, and the evaluation identified the remains of some of these, including the defensive earthworks, although others remain unidentified. In addition, it was possible to re-evaluate the previous earthwork and geophysical surveys conducted on the site in the light of the archaeology uncovered.

Introduction

In June 2009, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Channel 4's *Time Team* at the site of Hopton Castle, Shropshire (centred on NGR 336667 277930) (Figure 1). Comprising geophysical survey (radiometer and resistance survey) and seven evaluation trenches, the project aimed to characterise the nature and date of the site and to place it within its historical, geographical and archaeological context (Wessex Archaeology 2010). A particular objective was to identify elements and structures on the site mentioned in the account of the 1644 siege of the castle by a Royalist force.

The site, consisting of the upstanding structure and wider earthworks, is a Scheduled Monument (1013827), while the tower keep itself is also a Grade I Listed Building (1054935). It is situated on a level platform at a height of 158m. aOD with number of pronounced earthworks concentrated to the north and west of the central keep. Further earthworks lie beyond the Scheduled Area to the north and west, and there is a pond in the south-eastern part of the site. The underlying geology is limestone (British Geological Survey, sheet 56).

Before this evaluation no known fieldwork had been carried out on the site, although a detailed earthwork survey (Bowden 2006) and geophysical survey (Elks 2005) had been undertaken. Both reports highlighted features which might relate to former structures associated with the castle and elements relating to the period of the Civil War siege.
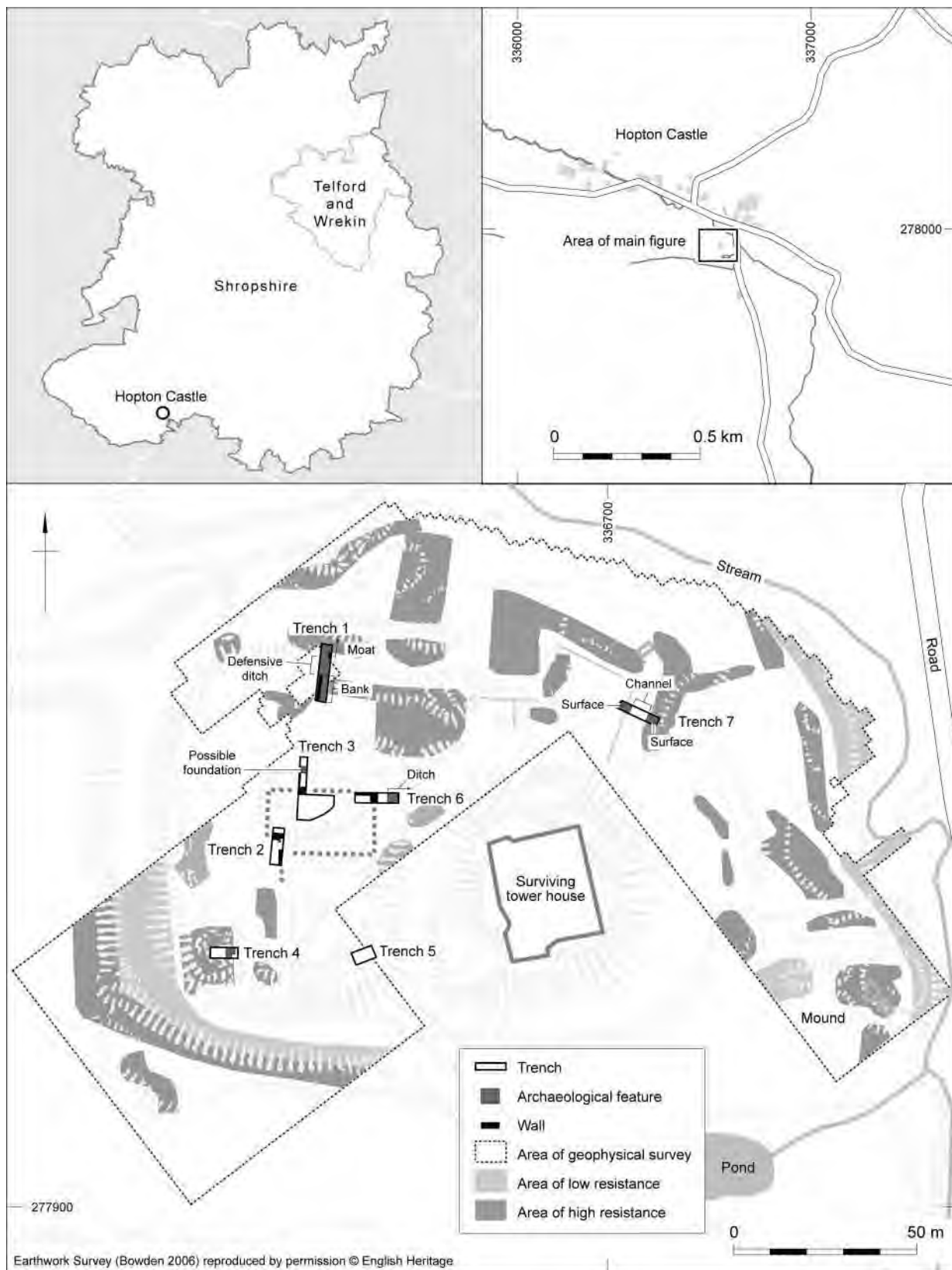
Figure 1   Site location, trench location, and geophysical survey results.

Results of the evaluation

Geophysical survey

An area of approximately 0.5ha. was investigated by resistance survey, while a smaller area, focused on Trenches 2, 3 and 6, was subjected to gradiometric survey (GSB 2009; Figure 2). This identified a number of anomalies which relate to structures, including a south-west corner tower within the inner bailey, probably contemporary with the medieval castle; wall foundations associated with large rectangular building to the west of the tower house; and a number of other rectangular features within the northern part of the inner bailey. Sections of the defensive bank and ditches were also identified.

The evaluation demonstrated that the spread of demolition material across the site posed a hindrance to clear geophysical responses. What has been identified in many cases is the spread of rubble from collapse or demolition, rather than the wall remnants themselves. Equally, later phases of activity on the site effectively mask some of the earlier features, in particular the northern course of the moat.

Medieval

The focus of this evaluation was mainly on the post-medieval history of the site. However, a few traces of possible earlier, medieval structures were found, although it was clear that many of the medieval features had been masked or disturbed by later activity.

The form and development of the medieval castle at Hopton has been much debated, most recently by Morriss, who has reviewed the documentary records and topographical and geophysical survey data against a careful
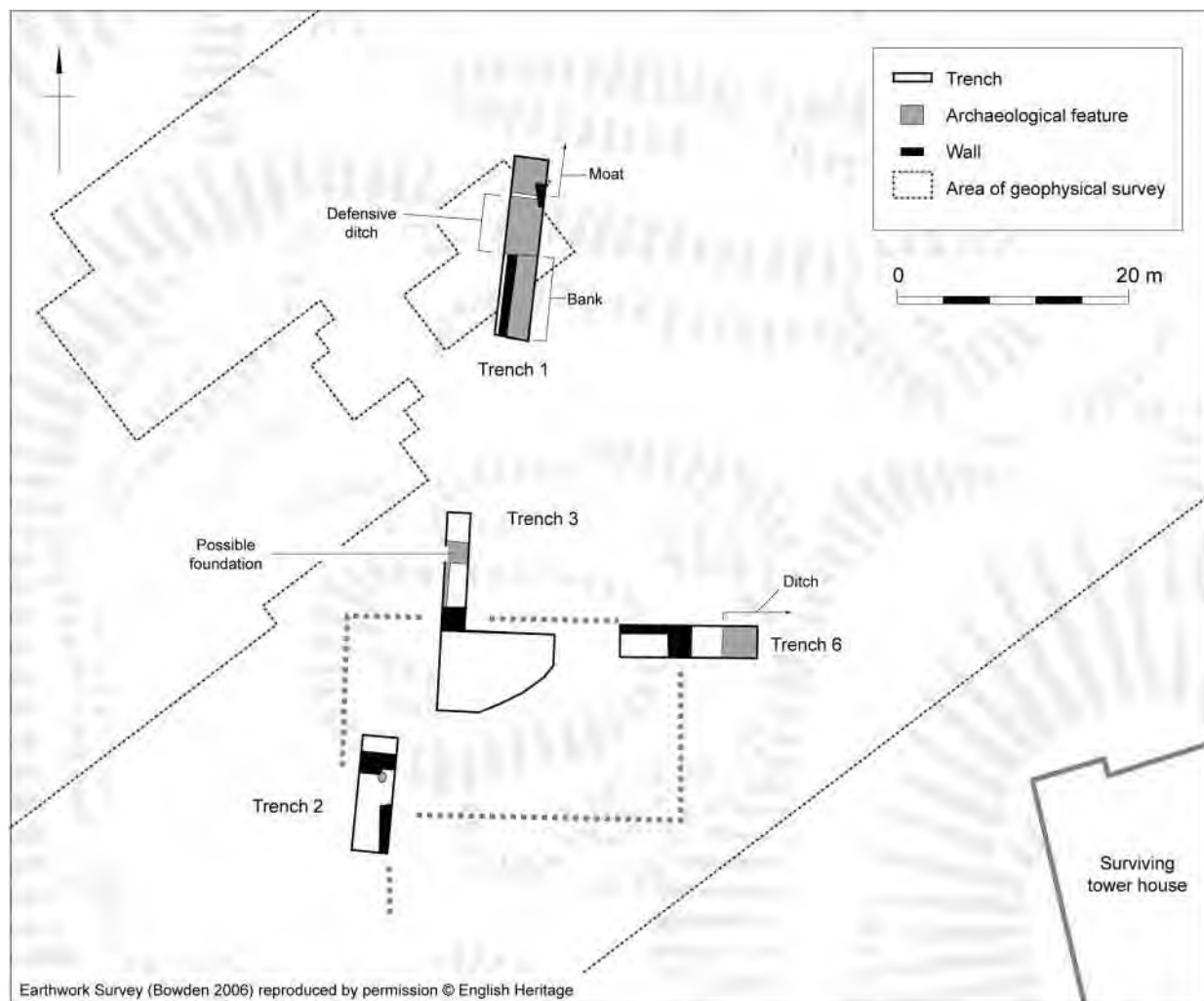
Figure 2   Detail of Trenches 1, 2, 3 and 6 (dotted lines indicate postulated walls).

examination of the standing structures (Morriss 2006). His conclusion is that the existing tower house, although of archaic 12th century form, was built in the late 13th or early 14th century, and replaced an earlier structure, probably of timber, to which there are documentary references. The tower house sits on a mound within a possible bailey enclosure, but both Morriss and Bowden question the identification of the site as a 'motte and bailey' castle in the strictest sense, as not being a particularly defensive site (Bowden 2006; Morriss 2006, 37–8).

The inspiration for Hopton's tower house is likely to have been the castle at Clun, whose baron was the overlord of the de Hoptons. Clun Castle, because of its archaic architectural style, was originally thought to be of Norman construction, but is now considered to date from the late 13th or early 14th century (Morriss 1993). Its imitation at Hopton could have served both to flatter the lord of Clun and also to express the status of an increasingly wealthy and influential family (Curnow 1989, 102). Other aspects of the building works at this time may also have drawn their inspiration from the Clun defences. These are known to have included a stone curtain wall and gatehouse.

A stone wall, although only partially seen within the eastern edge of Trench 1 (Plate 1), seems to be related to the medieval stone defences of the site. It was not only clearly post-dated by the Civil War defences, but it appears to have been partly demolished before this.

This probably occurred in the early post-medieval period, when the areas to the north and east of the tower house appear to have been re-landscaped. This wall overlay the lowest deposit within the moat, but the upper moat fill appeared to be silted up against the masonry. This suggests that the castle was originally defended by a moat and bank, but that these were later upgraded to include stone-built defences. This investment in stone is likely to relate to the remodelling of the keep in stone in the late 13th or early 14th century. The slightly odd alignment of the wall in relation to the moat implies that it formed part of something more elaborate than a straight curtain wall.

A north–south wall suggests that there was a building in the southern area of Trench 1 (Plate 1), and the levelling and abandonment of this structure possibly imply that it was a late medieval structure.

Plate 1 Trench 1, view from the south.

Trench 1 also demonstrated that the post-medieval demolition and Civil War defences must mask the original position of the moated 'bailey' and the alignment of the curtain wall. In contrast to the visible earthworks, the small portions of the moat and possible curtain wall seen in Trench 1 would shift the position of the medieval moat northwards, making the 'bailey' area much more regular in shape.

Nearly all the medieval pottery came from deposits within Trench 2, although occurring residually there, and in the vicinity of a north–south wall seen in the southern end of the trench. This wall could potentially be the remains of one of the medieval ancillary buildings. A large posthole in Trench 2 was the only indication found during this evaluation for an earlier timber structure, though it could not be directly dated.

The remains of a stone tower were revealed in Trench 4, confirming the results of the English Heritage survey, which identified a possible tower in the south-west corner of the 'bailey' enclosure (Bowden 2006). Despite the presence of a few large brick fragments among the demolition layers alongside the tower, its construction and the addition of an external render are the same as that of the tower house, and the two structures are likely to be contemporaneous.

Early post-medieval (1500–1641)

Extensive remodelling of the earthwork defences and the replacement of windows in the tower house in the late 16th and early 17th century are both in keeping with the shift in emphasis from an ostensibly defensive structure to a fashionable country house.

This re-modelling, together with the construction of formal gardens within a more open landscape, seems to be focused to the immediate north and east of the keep, while the southern and western areas of the moat and outer bailey remained largely unchanged. The later account of the 1644 siege suggests that the curtain wall survived in the southern and western portions.

There are indications of the demolition of several structures at this time. The north–south wall in the southern part of Trench 1 appears to have been levelled in this period, before the construction of the Civil War siege

Plate 2   Cellar wall in Trench 3.

Plate 3   Gold coin of James I.

defences. Another levelling layer was seen in the northern part of the trench in conjunction with the dismantling or demolition of the wall seen here. The structure associated with the north–south wall in Trench 2 might also have been removed at this time.

In the same way in which the tower house imitates of the keep at Clun, the gardens created by the Fitz Alan family at Clun may provide a likely parallel for the *pleasance* (pleasure gardens) at Hopton. These appear to lie in the vicinity of Trench 7, where the geophysical survey suggested that they included a number of buildings around a courtyard. The results from Trench 7 suggest the incorporation of water into this design: the channel seen here seems to be ornamental rather than defensive or practical. While the surfaces either side of this channel appeared similar, the higher resistance data to the east of the channel suggests that more substantial structural remains might lie beneath it. Two brick structures mentioned in the account of the siege must also date to this period.

The stone-walled cellared building seen in Trenches 2, 3 and 6 was in use at this time (Plate 2), although it may have been partly constructed earlier. There were some indications in Trench 3 of another building just to the north, which may correspond to an earthwork in this area, but its nature and date are unknown.

Several of the metal finds, including a lace tag, a belt buckle, a gold coin (quarter laurel) of James I (1623–4; Plate 3) and a Nuremberg token (1583–1635), are likely to date from this period.

The Civil War period (1642–46)

One of the most vivid and well documented periods of the castle's history occurred during the early part of the Civil War. One of the aims of the current project was to try to identify some of the structures mentioned in the contemporary account of the 1644 Civil War siege, recounted in the journal of Samuel More, the Parliamentarian who commanded the garrison at Hopton and who was its only survivor, after the mass killing of the rest of the garrison by the Royalist besieging force under Colonel Michael Woodhouse, an infamous act leading to the ironic offer of 'Hopton quarter' to Royalist garrisons suing for surrender later in the war. More's journal is now held in the Shropshire Archives.

The account mentions the lodging of Richard Steward, the '*out walls*', the '*brick tower*', '*Gregory's house*', the '*new brick house*' and the castle itself.

Richard Steward's lodging must have included a fireplace, as there is a reference to a breach through the chimney. It also seems to have been still substantial enough, despite being damaged by fire, to trap the attackers, allowing them to be repulsed by the defenders. The reference to the Royalists approaching the walls and the breach (and by inference the building) lying beyond the defenders' '*works*' suggests that the building lay immediately before or just behind the '*out walls*', but in front of the defensive line which the garrison had created. More also recounts leaving the castle '*over the water*' by Richard Steward's house.

This suggests that the building lay near or beyond the moat, by the stream or by the water features of the formal garden. The fishponds and stream course to the south-east of the castle can be discounted as it is clear that the main attack and approach to the castle lay to the north. The section of the defenders' '*works*' seen in Trench 1 comprised

a large, deep ditch with banks thrown up on either side (Plate 1). This would have served both to deepen the drop of the ditch and to dispose of the spoil. The size of the ditch shows that it was a significant investment of labour by the defenders, understandable if it was their main defensive line. The collapse of material from both the banks into the ditch is perhaps a reflection of hasty and unconsolidated construction.

The numerous references to the '*out walls*' make it clear that there was a curtain wall and, crucially, state that '*the work did not flank, being an old wall made round*'. This suggests that the curtain wall was already discontinuous by the time of the Civil War and accords with the northern part of the defences having been previously re-landscaped. We also know from the account that there was at least one major breach which the defenders were forced to shore up with wood and timber.

More's account mentions two brick buildings: the brick tower and the '*new brick house*'. The brick tower is mentioned as part of the '*works*' which went '*from the out-wall and so to the castle; and on the other side from the castle to the out-wall another, to keep the water to us*'. This suggests a line of defence linking waterways (be it the moat, stream or garden landscaping) along which was the brick tower. More seems to claim that this structure was made as part of the improvised defences, although it seems likely, as Morriss suggests (2006, 12), that it was merely adapted to form part of the defences.

The moat ditch still survives today along the western and southern west side of the bailey, and the south-eastern part of the site is blocked by the fishpond. The stream skirts the north-eastern part of the site, but today it is only a narrow and shallow watercourse. Clearly the defensive line would have had to traverse the northern area of the site. A mound in the south-eastern part of the site would seem to mirror the tower found in Trench 4, and this leads to the possibility that the extent of the bailey was originally much larger than previously thought, placing the tower house much more centrally within it. This would put the eastern extent of the moat near the present stream course.

'*Gregory's house*' is perhaps one of the most enigmatic structures mentioned, although it is known that Gregory was the steward of the castle at the time of the siege. All that can be really inferred is that it must lie in close proximity to the '*new brick dwelling*' for the fire to spread from one to the other. The firing of Gregory's house was apparently a response to the attack on the brick house, also suggesting that it lay close to this structure.

Because of the large amounts of brick rubble within demolition layers within Trenches 2 and 3, it is tempting to place the brick house in this vicinity. Although the cellar wall in Trench 3 is built of stone and is of similar construction to the tower, there were no particular architectural features to date it (Plate 2). Such quantities of brick rubble in this area imply that this structure, or an immediately adjacent one, was predominantly built of brick. The stone walls may be earlier with later brick modifications made above ground level in a newer, more modern style. Another possible structure lay within the northern part of Trench 3, and a geophysical anomaly just to the north-east of Trench 3 could be a further structure, giving perhaps three closely situated structures which would correlate with More's account. The description of the defenders' retreat to the Castle corresponds closely with what can be seen surviving in the upstanding ruins. The porch is described as being timber-built and damaged by the attack. As there is no mention of a drawbridge or fixed bridge on the approach to the door it seems more likely that a flight of steps led up to the entrance. A reference to the attackers breaking in '*through a house of office on the south side*' is explained by the still visible damage to the garderobe in the south-west turret (Morriss 2006, 13). The doorway now at this point is a later feature, possibly utilising the existing breach (*ibid.*, 30).

Evidence of the conflict can also be seen in the artefactual assemblage, which included an impacted musket ball, fragments of fired shot and a cannonball suitable for a gun of 'demi-culverin' size (Scott 2001, table 5.1). Environmental samples collected from demolition deposits in Trenches 1 and 3 contained abundant oak charcoal, possibly from the fire noted in the documentary account.

The demolition deposits within Trench 3 are consistent with a deliberate dismantling of a building. Indeed, the isolated survival of the tower house, relatively intact, in contrast to the above-ground removal of all other structures, suggests a deliberate plan to clear the area around the tower. Such a well-defined and potentially labour-intensive plan is more likely to relate to later landscaping rather than to slighting by the Royalist troops. The intention may have been to create a more open parkland with a single romantic ruin.

No structures were located in Trench 5 although, as it was not fully excavated, structural remains may lie beneath the demolition deposits.

Conclusions

This evaluation was able to locate possible elements both of the medieval castle and post-medieval additions. These later structures were to be the setting of an infamous siege during the Civil War period and these investigations were able potentially to identify some of the structures described in an eye-witness account of the action. Additionally the results allowed earlier work on the site, particularly the earthwork survey, to be

re-interpreted as it became clear how the hastily constructed earthwork defences of the siege had obscured the original layout of the site.

Acknowledgements

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Plas Beddowe(N): The Mansion Of Owain's Grave

By CHRISTOPHER JOBSON

Abstract: The burial place of Owain Glyn Dŵr remains unknown in spite of many attempts to locate it. This paper discusses the relationship between Glyn Dŵr and the Hanmer family of Hanmer, investigates the farm name 'Plas Beddowe' in the parish of Welshampton, and considers a cross on a nineteenth-century map. None of this evidence proves that Glyn Dŵr was buried at Welshampton, but it must remain a possibility.

The disappearance of Owain Glyn Dŵr in 1415 is probably the most celebrated unsolved mystery in the history of Wales. His revolt against the English crown and his struggle to establish an independent Welsh state with its own native prince, language, government, church and universities is well documented. Professor R. R. Davies's *The Revolt of Owain Glyn Dŵr*, 1995,[1] is a magnificent sequel to Sir John Lloyd's seminal book of 1931.[2] When, however, it comes to the death of Owain and the location of his final resting place there is practically no reliable contemporary documentary evidence. The most popular account tells how Owain became a fugitive and eventually took refuge with his daughter at Monnington Straddel, where he died and is buried.[3] This account is given some credibility because his daughter, Alice, did indeed marry John Scudamore and live at Monnington,[4] although even this story has been confused by locating the place as Monnington-on-Wye, a different village.[5] Other claims to be the burial place include Valle Crucis Abbey, the ancestral burial place of Owain's family, Bangor Cathedral, and numerous others. None can provide incontrovertible documentary evidence. Dr. J. R. S. Phillips published an exhaustive study of the sources in the *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, 1972.[6] Phillips's study includes previously unconsidered fifteenth-century Welsh manuscripts in the National Library of Wales and the Bodleian Library. These, quite independently of each other, record a tradition of very early date that Owain Glyn Dŵr died in September 1415, and the study concludes that 'there seems to be no evidence to make such a date impossible'.[7] Indeed this is concordant with the offer of a royal pardon to Owain in July 1415[8] and a similar offer made to Owain's son, Meredudd, in February 1416, which, significantly, makes no mention of Owain.[9] Furthermore, from internal evidence it can be deduced that one of the manuscripts (Peniarth MS 26) was written in the area around Oswestry, Owain's home district. But no mention is made of his burial.[10]

The other contemporary source is the Chronicle of Adam of Usk, an ecclesiastical lawyer and a monk, who, as a supporter of Owain, had ambitions to become Bishop of Llandaff when Owain was in power.[11] He was eventually granted a royal pardon at the instance of David Holbach, a descendant of the ancient Princes of Powys who lived at Dudleston and was the founder of Oswestry School.[12] Under the year 1415 Adam made the following entry:

> 'After four years in hiding, from the king and the realm, Owen Glendower died, and was buried by his followers in the darkness of night. His grave was discovered by his enemies, however, so he had to be re-buried, though it is impossible to discover where he was laid'.[13]

This statement suggests that only his closest followers knew the final resting place of Owain Glyn Dŵr, and it follows therefore that this would be a carefully chosen spot in land held by one of them. The search has always been directed towards the homes of Owain's daughters, especially Alice, and it appears unlikely that the homes of other members of his family circle have been considered. It seems reasonable to assume, given that the first offer of a royal pardon was made to Owain and the second to his son, Meredudd, that members of the family were sheltering them.

The Hanmer brothers had been among Owain's most loyal supporters, right from the beginning. This is not surprising, since their father, an eminent lawyer and justice of the King's Bench, had made it possible for Owain to have the same legal training as them in London, and had given him his daughter's hand in marriage.[14] Some indication of the strength of this family bond may be seen when, on the death of Sir David Hanmer in 1387, his family made Owen one of the feoffes (a trustee) of his estate.[15] Two of the Hanmer brothers, Gruffudd and Philip, were at his side to proclaim him Prince of Wales at Glyndyfrdwy on 16 September 1400, and all three fulfilled the most trusted duties throughout the long campaign for Welsh independence.[16] John Hanmer and Gruffudd Young were sent as ambassadors to the King of France to conclude an alliance in May 1404,[17] and when John was captured in 1405 the single greatest fine (500 marks) of the entire war was imposed on him, reducing him, so he claimed, to poverty.[18] Even in Owain's final year, when all was lost, Philip Hanmer was in Paris, pleading Owain's cause to the bitter end.[19] The Hanmers' then, are certainly strong candidates to have been among the 'the followers', mentioned by Adam of Usk, who were responsible for the secret reburial of Owain. Another candidate was John Kynaston of the Stocks, brother-in-law to Angharad, Sir David Hanmer's wife, and, like Owain, descended from the Princes of Powys.[20] John Kynaston was brought before the King's Bench for his part in the uprising of 1400, the record of which gives us the details of the proclamation that Owain was Prince in September 1400.

Owain and his hastily assembled army proceeded along the border, reaching Oswestry on 22 September 1400, where they were joined by John Kynaston 'arrayed in horse and armour for war, and a companion, William Hunte, likewise "arrayed with a shield, sword, bow and arrows"'.[21] Here they set fire to the suburbs of the town, and it is thought that the memory of this event is preserved in the name 'Pentre Poeth' (the Burnt Hamlet).[22] John Kynaston was indicted in the court of King's Bench with aiding and abetting the rebellion of Owain Glyn Dŵr. He had been seen in 'war-like guise' at a number of places, including Oswestry, which was evidently at that time outside the jurisdiction of English law because Kynaston's plea to this effect was upheld. Kynaston was, however, imprisoned in Windsor Castle until a number of his supporters, including the lord of the manor, raised £100 bail. The indictment was then changed to include Oteley, near Ellesmere, a place which, although over the border, was not one where Kynaston had broken the law, although he had rendezvoused here with Glyn Dŵr. His plea was again upheld.[23] A manuscript in Shropshire Archives states that the boundary of Wales was at that time marked with a stone on the Oswestry road, three miles out of Ellesmere.[24] Later Kynaston had to obtain a royal pardon for coercing the tenants of Ellesmere, Hampton and Colemere to support Hotspur at the Battle of Shrewsbury.[25] This act, in defiance of the lord of the manor's order, demonstrates not only his familial allegiance to Owain, but also to Hotspur.[26] Other supporters from Ellesmere were later prosecuted for supplying Owain with provisions during the campaign.[27]

The estates of Philip and Gruffudd were both confiscated, but John Hanmer and John Kynaston managed to recover theirs.[28] Between the ancient Hanmer estate and that of Kynaston at the Stocks, Welshampton, is a lowland area called Bradenheath, overlooking which is the original site of the village, a high flat hill, still known as 'Old Hampton'. Since the fourteenth century it had been in the lordship of the Lestranges of Knockin. Adjoining this on a smaller steep sided hill is a farm known today as 'Bank Farm', but until the nineteenth century called 'Plas Beddowe'. John Kynaston's house at the Stocks is clearly visible on one side, and the Hanmer estate at Bettisfield on the other. Ancient tracks linking Plas Beddowe with the Stocks and Hanmer are still traceable through the fields.[29] The Hanmers held Plas Beddowe at least as far back as the early fifteenth century, and, if we accept that a feoffment (conveyance) for 'the chief messuage in Hampton' in the Bettisfield Manuscripts in the National Library of Wales, dated 1346, refers to the same place, probably a long time before that.[30] The terms 'chief messuage' and 'plas', usually translated as 'mansion', seem to be describing the same thing. The earliest rent roll (in the Shropshire Archives), dating to when the manor of Hampton came into the estates of the Earl of Derby by marriage in the early fifteenth century, instructs the agent, 'Sir Thomas Hanmer witholdeth my lord of a tenement named place Beddowe it be that the survey have found out...Search the auditors booke and other records how many Sir Thomas Hanmers Ancestors pay for chief rent'. The result of the enquiry is recorded later: 'the rent thereof was always in the Kynnastons tyme, when the same was Stuart there, payd to my lords officers handes and the sayd tenement called place beddowe was in old Mr Hanmers hands that dwelt at Hampton and after inquiry hands of Sir Thomas Hanmers brother or one of his name and so continued here'.[31] Before the end of the century John Hanmer was paying rent, and a lease dated 1604 allowed Lord Hanmer control over the tenancy of Plas Beddowe.[32] Thus we have a record of Hanmer occupation of Plas Beddowe dating back to Kynaston's stewardship of Maelor and Ellesmere. (John Kynaston regained this post after his pardon in 1404).[33]

The name Plas Beddowe is interesting in that while the usual translation from Welsh is 'Beddowe's Mansion', it could very possibly be Plas Beddowe(n) [Bedd Owen], i.e. 'The Mansion of Owain's Grave'. The name first appears in connection with the Hanmers after Owain's death. Before that time it is identified as 'the chief messuage in Hampton', without any reference to a name. Then, as we have seen, the property remained in their control for centuries. This raises the question: what was Sir Thomas Hanmer's interest in a property which lay outside his own

manor and across the border? Furthermore the existence of the lease granting tenancy rights there in 1604 suggests that there was a reason for drawing it up. One possible reason is that Plas Beddowe formed then, as it still does, a geographical link between the Kynaston and Hanmer estates.

Further investigation of the Hanmer/Kynaston connection with Welshampton reveals that during the turmoil of the Reformation a case was heard in the Court of Chancery concerning the collection of tithes by the Chaplain of Hampton and the Patron, George Kynaston. Sir Thomas Hanmer, who acquired the patronage in the process, made representation on their behalf.[34] He presented a Welsh-speaking priest in 1636,[35] and eventually the advowson of the chapelry reverted to Edward Kynaston of Oteley,[36] a direct descendant of John Kynaston of Stocks, who had built it in 1391,[37] and whose descendants had maintained it as a 'free chapel' until the Reformation.[38] The patronage of the chapel at Hampton has been held by either the Kynastons or the Hanmers from the fourteenth century to the present day. It is perhaps worthy of note that all the surviving names of chaplains of Hampton from this period are unmistakeably Welsh.

The Hanmers seem to have lost their interest in Plas Beddowe sometime in the eighteenth or early-nineteenth century, when it was rented out as part of the Bridgwater Estate. In 1922 it was sold to William Mottram, the sitting tenant, and it was thereafter known as Bank Farm.[39]

When this hypothesis about Owain Glyn Dŵr's grave was mooted to the present owner of Plas Beddowe, Richard Hall, he promptly produced his oldest map of the property (undated, but almost certainly nineteenth century), which clearly shows a cross marked beside the house. He informed me that an ancient yew tree used to stand at the intersection of the cross.

None of the evidence discussed here proves that Owain Glyn Dŵr was buried at Welshampton. Individually each piece of evidence is vague and inconclusive, but when the evidence is examined together a degree of coincidence is apparent. What has been established is that there was a nucleus of Owain's family and followers concentrated in this area. To this can be added the connections of two crucial documents, namely Peniarth Manuscript 26 and the detailed evidence given in Kynaston's case before the King's Bench, with Owain's home district of Oswestry, from whence originated the appeal for the pardon of Adam of Usk and possible also that of Owain.[40] Conjectural though the name Plas Beddowe and the cross on the map may be, the early documentation of the Hanmer family's connection with this property is beyond dispute.

One final point to consider is that the earliest known use of the previously unexplained prefix of 'Welsh' to 'Hampton' is found in the 1557 list of recusants preserved in the British Library. The list contains two familiar names, 'Mr. Hanmer of Bradenheath' and 'Mr. William Kynaston of Welshehampton'.[41] The explanation might be that it was added to signify a village largely populated by Welsh, or at least Welsh-speaking, people, but perhaps it might be that the village came to be known as Welshampton because, here carefully concealed, just as Adam of Usk recorded in his Chronicle, is one of the most precious and elusive treasures of Wales.

Thanks

Notes

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3   T. Carte, *General History of England*, 1750, **II**.
4   *Feudal Aids*, **ii**, 410.
5   G. Hodges, *Owain Glyn Dŵr*, 1995, 163.
6   J. R. S. Phillips, *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, **XXIV**, 59–77.
7   *Ibid*., 72.
8   *Calendar of Patent Rolls 1412–1416*, 342.
9   *Ibid*., 404.
10 Phillips, *Op. Cit*., 65.
11 C. Given-Wilson (tr.), *The Chronicle of Adam of Usk 1377–1421*, 1997.
12 Lloyd, *Op. Cit*., 139; *Trans. Shrops. Archaeol. Soc*., series 1, **V**, 228.
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14 Davies, *Op. Cit*., 137.
15 *The National Library of Wales Jnl*., **III**, 48–50.
16 The National Archives (hereafter TNA): *Coram Rege Rolls*, K827/560.
17 Davies, *Op. Cit*., 192.
18 *Ibid*., 305.

19 *Ibid.*, 195.
20 *Ibid.*, 140.
21 TNA: *Coram Rege Rolls*, K827/560 and 565.
22 *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, **78**, 206.
23 TNA: *Coram Rege Rolls*, *Op. Cit.*
24 Shropshire Archives (hereafter SA): 6001/3.
25 *Calendar of Patent Rolls*, 27 Sept. 1404.
26 *Montgomeryshire Collections*, **XV**, 3; SA: 2879, p. 370, n. 1.
27 *The Shropshire Peace Roll*, 1414, C63.
28 Davies, *Op. Cit.*, 312.
29 Pers. Comm., B. Hall and C. Thomas.
30 National Library of Wales (hereafter NLW): *Bettisfield Manuscript 1675*.
31 SA: 212/345/1.
32 NLW: *Op. Cit.*, 291.
33 NLW: Plas Yolyn Manuscript, 192; Davies, *Op. Cit.*
34 TNA: C66/369.
35 *Trans. Shrops. Archaeol. Soc.*, **XLVII**, 15.
36 Lichfield Record Office: B/A/3.
37 Madden, *Collectanea et Topographica et Genealogica*, 1834, **V**, 179.
38 SA: 212/345/1.
39 Pers. Comm., B. Hall.
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41 BL: *Landsdown* 55, f. 166.

'Talbot's Tomb' Revisited

By BARRY LANGSTON

Abstract: A heavily restored tomb at Whitchurch in Shropshire contains mortal remains of John Talbot, first Earl of Shrewsbury. The concern of this paper is with popular and academic misconceptions regarding the manner in which this state of affairs came about. A chronological account makes the point that the facts, as often as not, almost speak for themselves.

John Talbot, first Earl of Shrewsbury, was killed in July 1453 at Castillon, some thirty miles from Bordeaux, during the last battle of the Hundred Years War. In the early fifteenth century, when a nobleman died on active service overseas, the usual procedure was for the body to be boiled; a cauldron was part of an army's equipment. Boiled flesh was buried unceremoniously on the spot, as a form of industrial waste; only the bones, the skull and an embalmed heart were shipped back to England. This practice, which was condemned as barbarous by Pope Boniface VIII, was eventually abandoned as embalming techniques improved.[1] Even if embalming was the norm by 1453, it was probably ruled out, in the wake of disaster, during a very hot summer. Hurried burial of boiled flesh might have been the basis of a peasant tradition, dismissed by the regional historian, Henri Ribadieu, that '*le roi Talbot*' was buried near Castillon. His so-called 'tomb' was a small mound close to a wayside chapel. Dedicated to Our Lady, but popularly known as 'la chapelle de Talbot', this was demolished during the French Revolution.[2] Montaigne, who lived nearby, referred to 'nostre Talabot' in one of his essays and mentioned a 'devise' – impresa? – which presumably hung in the chapel.[3] Talbot's status as a local hero presumably reflected resentment of the Northern French 'liberators', whose triumphs are celebrated in mainstream nationalist accounts.

According to Edward Hall, writing almost a century after Talbot's death, his 'corps was left on the ground, and afterwards found by hys frendes, and conveyed to Whitchurch in Shropshyre, where it is intumulate'.[4] One of Hall's principal sources was the fifteenth century *Chronicle* of Enguerrand de Monstrelet, where the identification of a mangled body by an old herald is movingly described.[5] As there is no suggestion that anything unusual happened after the discovery, Hall must have assumed that the practices of his own day were followed. When Bordeaux finally surrendered to Charles VII in October, it was agreed that the vanquished could pass freely to England.[6] Even if there is a question mark over the date of a heavily restored tomb which can still be seen at Whitchurch, it does not follow that repatriation of Talbot's remains was delayed, much less that he was buried with military honours in France and later disinterred, as historians now claim.

John Leland was a Tudor antiquary who flourished at about the same time as Hall. According to a manuscript in Leland's distinctive hand preserved in the Bodleian Library, it was Gilbert Talbot who interred 'the earle his grandfathers bones brought out of Fraunce at Whitchirche in a fair chapelle where he is also buried himself.' The passage looks like an afterthought on Leland's part. It is written – in effect upside-down – on the back of two pages of notes regarding a Shrewsbury family roll. As Leland normally used only one side of a page, it is a striking exception to his rule. The insertion is amended in a hand which Leland's eighteenth century editor, Thomas Herne, identified as that of the Leicestershire antiquary, William Burton (brother of Robert Burton, the 'anatomist' of melancholy).[7] Though similar amendments occur elsewhere, there is a concentration at this point. In a different volume, where there is no obvious tampering, Leland says nothing about the Earl's tomb in his description of Whitchurch, merely observing that the town 'hath a very good market. And there in the paroche chirch is burid Syr Gilbert Talbot'.[8] The fact seems to be that a grandfather's stock was low until Hall reinvented him as a 'terror' of the French. A little more information can be found in an Elizabethan copy of Leland's notes in the hand of

John Stowe – apparently from an original, now lost, which had been available to Hearne. According to the copy, the bones were 'browght out of Normandy to Whitchurche in Shrobbeshire'.[9] Given the way in which the fate of Talbot's remains became the subject of bitter controversy in the early seventeenth century, forgery on one or more occasions cannot be ruled out. Despite this, there is no clear-cut statement about when the bones were repatriated, or by whom. With the lateness of the season when Bordeaux surrendered in 1453, travelling overland to a Norman port might have seemed preferable to braving storms in the Bay of Biscay. Initially, if interment at Whitchurch was delayed, this would have been in accordance with a last will and testament Talbot signed at Portsmouth in September 1452. The will reminds us that he had hopes that a claim to the earldom of Warwick would be successful; ideally, he wished to be buried in a semi-detached chapel still then under construction at St. Mary's Church in the town of Warwick.[10]

The idea that Talbot was given a formal burial in France can be traced back to *An Armor of Proofe* by Roger Cotton, a long poem published in 1596 with a dedication to the hero's senior living descendant, Gilbert seventh Earl of Shrewsbury. As a native of Whitchurch, Cotton must have believed that the tomb which could be seen there was merely a memorial. At all events, he asserted that Talbot was buried at Castillon, where a tomb (in the strict sense of one containing a body) had an inscription which listed his titles and honours:

> *Heere lyeth the right noble Knight* Iohn Talbot *Earle of Shrewsburie, Earle of Washford, Waterforth and Valence, Lorde Talbot of Goodritche and Vrchingfeilde, Lorde Strange of Blackmeare, Lord Verdon of Alton, Lord Crumwell of Wingfeilde, Lord Louetoft of Worsoppe, Lord Furniuall of Sheffeilde, and Lord Falconbridge, Knight of the most noble orders of S. George, S. Michael, and the Golden Fleece, Great Marshall to King* Henrie *the sixt of his Realme of France, who dyed at the battle of Castilion neare Burdeaux, Anno. 1453.*

A very similar version appeared in chapter five of Richard Crompton's *Mansion of Magnanimitie*, first published in 1599 with a dedication to Robert second Earl of Essex. The only substantive change came at the end: Talbot 'dyed in the battell of Burdeaux' – an event which, strictly speaking, never took place. As the epitaph follows a brief account of events at Castillon, Crompton probably assumed that it was closer to Bordeaux than is actually the case. The inscription, as recorded by Cotton and Crompton, includes a number of anomalies which should immediately put us on our guard. There was never an English (strictly speaking, Anglo-Irish) earldom of Valence. Though South Wingfield in Derbyshire was acquired by John third Earl of Shrewsbury, Ralph Lord Cromwell was still living in 1453 and properties did not come with a title. The real Lord Falconbridge – usually called Lord Falcon*berg* in modern accounts – had merely been Talbot's comrade-in-arms for a time. The Order of St. Michael was not established by Louis IX until 1467.[11] Although it is possible in terms of chronology for Talbot to have belonged to the Burgundian Order of the Golden Fleece, he did not – and there might have been technical difficulties for a non-royal person who was already a Knight of the Garter. In addition, Talbot's membership of the Most Noble Order would probably not have been mentioned in an authentic fifteenth century inscription. At Whitchurch, an effigy indicates it visually.

Despite these difficulties, which are recognized up to a point, those who ought to know better continue to accept that there was a Talbot tomb in France which could still be seen in the late sixteenth century. Modern opinion, however, has been divided over its actual location; in descending order of plausibility, Castillon, Falaise and Rouen all have their advocates. Matters are complicated because the bogus epitaph is regarded as the basis of a memorable speech in *The First Part of Henry VI*, a Shakespeare play written a few years before the publication of works by Cotton and Crompton. In this travesty of fifteenth century history, when Talbot dies in an invented battle of Bordeaux, a herald who searches among the fallen for his body asks:

> But where's the great Alcides of the field,
> Valiant Lord *Talbot* Earle of Shrewsbury?
> Created for his rare successe in Armes,
> Great Earle of *Washford*, *Waterford*, and *Valence*,
> Lord *Talbot* of *Goodrig* and *Vrchinfield*,
> Lord *Strange* of *Blackmere*, Lord *Verdon* of *Alton*,
> Lord *Cromwell* of *Wingefield*, Lord *Furniuall* of *Sheffeild*,
> The thrice victorious Lord of *Falconbridge*,
> Knight of the Noble Order of *S. George*,
> Worthy S. *Michael*, and the *Golden Fleece*,
> Great Marshall to *Henry* the sixt,
> Of all his Warres within the Realme of France.
> (TLN 2294–2305)

The speech appears to follow the epitaph closely, except that Lord Lovetot of Worksop is omitted, perhaps because it refused to scan. If the epitaph was bogus, the likelihood is that the play was its source; Shakespeare was more likely to have made mistakes than a hypothetical medieval 'composer' who ought to have had a more precise idea of when Talbot died in battle. Though *The First Part of Henry VI* remained unpublished until 1623, an anterior version which was substantially the same was performed at the Rose in 1592–3. In Henslowe's 'diary', its short title is 'harey the vj'.[12] As this seems to have been a free-standing piece, it presumably ended with Richard Duke of York's uneasy peace with the French rather than with scenes which link the extant version with *The Second Part of Henry VI*.[13] In the First Folio, the play begins with Henry V's funeral. It is punctuated by the funerals of the Earl of Salisbury and Regent Bedford, both of them organized by Talbot. Curiously, the hero himself is forgotten after the herald, Sir William Lucy, recovers the body. Poetic justice, and symmetry, require his own funeral as a finale. At a time when England's survival depended on the outcome of campaigns in France, a silent tableau would have sent a powerful message. An evocation of early performances in *Pierce Penniless* by Thomas Nashe (a likely co-author of the play) refers to weeping spectators.[14] A bogus inscription on an authentic-looking board was probably one of the props. Collections of epitaphs were popular reading in Shakespeare's day.[15] If this one managed to be incorporated into the system, it would have taken more than technical quibbles to put things right.

The greatest expert of the day was the antiquary William Camden, who became Clarenceux King of Arms in 1597. In early editions of his *Britannia*, there was only a vague reference to Talbot tombs at Whitchurch.[16] Though Camden's *Remaines*, published in 1605, included a collection of famous epitaphs, he regretted being unable to find any funerary inscription for John Talbot, first Earl of Shrewsbury. By way of compensation, he offered 'SUM TALBOTI MIIII XLIII PRO VINCERE INIMICO MEO' from a sword supposedly found in the Dordogne during the 1570s.[17] By the time a new edition of the *Britannia* appeared in 1607, however, further enquiries had evidently been made and this Latin inscription discovered at Whitchurch:

> ORATE PRO ANIMA PRÆNOBILIS DOMINI, DOMINI IOHANNIS TALBOTT, QVONDAM COMITIS SALOPIÆ, DOMINI TALBOTT, DOMINI FVRNIVALL, DOMINI VERDON, DOMINI STRANGE DE BLACK-MERE, ET MARESCALLI FRANCIÆ, QVI OBIIT IN BELLO APVD BVRDEWS VII. IVLII MCCCCLIII.

Strictly speaking, the battle 'near' Bordeaux took place on 17 July 1453, but a small slip of this kind is easily made at any time. Camden offered the epitaph 'that the reader may see some forme of the Inscriptions, according to that age […] though it is little becoming so worthy and heroicall knight'.[18] It sounds like a hint that Cotton and Crompton had been sold a pup. The essential point was presumably that long strings of titles and honours were a late sixteenth century development. When comparisons are made, the Whitchurch inscription seems to be a halfway house between Elizabethan excess and the minimalism of a lost inscription at Worksop for John second Earl of Shrewsbury, who died in 1460. In this instance, subordinate titles were simply left out.[19]

Controversy began in earnest in 1622 when a junior herald, Augustine Vincent, launched an unusually savage attack on his disagreeable colleague, Ralph Brooke. The bogus inscription had resurfaced in Brooke's *Catalogue and Succession of the Kings, Dukes, Marquisses, Earles and Viscounts of the Realme of England since the Norman Conquest to the present yeare 1619*, where it was followed by the assertion: 'This *Iohn* being slaine as aforesaid, with *Iohn* Viscount *Lisle* his sonne, his body was buried in a Toombe at *Roane* in *Normandy*, whereon this Epitaphe is written'.[20] Vincent, who took Brooke's entire work apart, almost line by line, now had a field day. Rightly dismissing Earl of Valence, Lord Cromwell of Wingfield and Lord Falconbridge as spurious titles, he also pointed out that the Order of St. Michael did not exist during Talbot's lifetime, adding that he would hardly have been buried at Rouen three or four years after the Norman capital had fallen to the French. The *coup de grace* was the Whitchurch inscription revealed by 'Learned *Camden* (the Sunne-shine of whose iudicious knowledge hath enlightened these our latter dayes)'.[21] Though it was not said *en clair* that a Shakespeare play was the effective source of the English inscription, it was probably implied by Vincent's inventive personal abuse. Before calling Brooke 'a widower of wit', he had asked rhetorically, 'Must he (like the slaue that stood in the Market with *Æsope* to be solde) know all, and leaue nothing for poore *Æsope* to know? Must all else be Vpstarts, Nouices, Intruders & Mountebanks?'. In *Greene's Groatsworth of Wit*, published in 1592 after 'harey the vj' had been performed fourteen or fifteen times at the Rose, the 'vpstart Crow' Shakespeare was equated with the thief of an Aesopian fable.[22] Equally to the point, the play as performed was probably responsible for Brooke's belief that there was a tomb at Rouen. If the Talbot of the play was buried at Bordeaux, the obvious implication was that this was also where his opponent, Joan 'the Maid', would be burned, in defiance of chronology and geography. As Brooke presumably knew that the burning actually took place at Rouen, a little knowledge turned out to be a dangerous thing. He should have remembered that Talbot's imagined burial in France was not linked with Rouen in 1596 when Gilbert Shrewsbury went to the city as Elizabeth I's special ambassador, to deliver Garter insignia to Henri IV.[23]

If Vincent did not have the final word, it might have been because Camden's scholarship was not as exemplary as his followers liked to think. Documents from the second half of the seventeenth century indicate that the Whitchurch inscription as it appeared in successive editions of the *Britannia* gave a somewhat misleading impression of the original. As well as making the inscription seem neater by silently expanding contractions and using Roman upper case for Gothic lettering, Camden was evasive about whether it went with the actual tomb. To make matters worse, its authenticity might have been doubted because only English titles were listed. Irish ones, which included Earl of Waterford, had been in abeyance since 1536, because of an act passed by the Dublin parliament.[24] When it came to matters of detail, it should be added that Vincent's own scholarship was not always impeccable. When he referred to the *Britannia*, he cited the wrong edition and, in the inscription itself, carelessly omitted the first of the subordinate titles, Lord Talbot.[25]

Elias Ashmole, who visited the old parish church of St. Alkmund at Whitchurch in 1663, was shown a manuscript 'wherein (15 July 1598) there were entered some extracts out of the old Church Register, this Epitaph is to be seene'. This was the bogus English epitaph in the Cotton version, suggesting that a copy of *An Armor of Proofe* had been acquired, perhaps as a gift from the local boy made good. Though Ashmole did not reject it unequivocally, its authenticity was clearly in doubt. His notes included a copy of the missing Gothic inscription, which looks authentic, except that the date of Talbot's death has been corrected. He also sketched an earl's coronet.[26] This was presumably a detachable item added in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century: a possible sign of interest stimulated by performances of 'harey the vj' at the Rose. The effigy as such has a chaplet or coronal.

When Thomas Dingley visited Whitchurch at the end of Charles II's reign, he was shown a stone in the church porch, with an indent and nails, from which the plate had apparently been taken, probably by soldiers during the civil wars. This was where Talbot had been buried and the tomb in the chancel was merely a 'Cenotaph or Honorary Monument'. Since Ashmole had come away with the impression that the plate had been in the upper part of the arch above the actual tomb, the obvious way of squaring the circle would be if it was moved from the porch to the chancel to create a more convincing effect: a corrective to the confusion caused by Cotton and Crompton. According to Dingley, though opinion was still divided between the claims of Rouen and Whitchurch, a well-informed majority now favoured the latter. If so, the balance was probably tipped by the publication of William Dugdale's *Baronage of England* in the mid 1670s. Dugdale had visited Rouen in 1648, during a first and last trip to the continent. Having apparently failed to find any trace of a Talbot tomb, he sketched a memorial plaque (in French) for Regent Bedford, who had been buried in Rouen cathedral in 1435 to make the point that he was not a foreign invader. Dugdale's *Baronage* effectively endorsed Camden, while repeating Augustine Vincent's error of omitting the first of the subordinate titles from the Whitchurch inscription.[27] Though Dingley followed suit, the wrong date was accurately recorded, despite his mistaken belief that the fatal battle took place on 20 July 1453. In his sketch of the tomb, the anachronistic coronet was conspicuous.[28]

In 1712, a year after the old parish church of St. Alkmund collapsed, there was partial vindication for Dingley. Digging in the ruined porch led to the discovery of an urn containing an embalmed heart. This was reburied in the same place, after tiny medallions had been removed; later experts thought that these dated from the sixteenth century.[29] The location of Talbot's body – or more accurately, bones and a skull – seems to have remained a mystery. Though the tomb was now badly damaged, it survived and was moved to its present location, the south aisle of the fine new church consecrated in 1713, just over a decade before the publication of Daniel Defoe's *Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain*. For this 'travelogue', its author shamelessly lifted material from Edmund Gibson's new translation of the *Britannia*, unaware that the old parish church, as well as the epitaph, could no longer be seen.[30]

The idea that Talbot was buried at Rouen and brought back to England after a significant interval seems to have surfaced for the first time in Joseph Edmondson's *Baronagium Genealogicum*, published in five volumes between 1764 and 1784; a bald assertion appeared as a footnote to the Talbot family tree.[31] Edmondson, a royal coach-painter by trade, was created Mowbray Herald in 1764 through the personal favour of the hereditary Earl Marshal. When his work was first published, for the sake of academic credibility he exaggerated a debt to the papers of Sir William Segar, Garter King of Arms in the reign of James I.[32] As the College of Arms had an exceptional collective memory, insiders perhaps appreciated the irony of a belated olive branch to Brooke extended in Segar's name. In 1616, when York Herald tricked Garter into granting the arms of Aragon and Brabant to the public hangman of London, both men had to cool their heels in the Marshalsea.[33]

Edmondson's footnote seems to have had little immediate impact. In 1790, the greatest of Shakespeare's early critical editors, Edmond Malone, cited Crompton's *Mansion* as the first extant version of the longer epitaph and agreed with Brooke rather than Edmondson with regard to the supposed tomb at Rouen.[34] When a posthumous Variorum edition of the plays and poems appeared in 1821, Malone's note was allowed to stand by his disciple, James Boswell the younger.[35] Despite this conservatism, local historical studies had moved on. In Joseph Hunter's *Hallamshire*, first published in 1819, Edmondson's idea was fleshed out. Many years after his death, Talbot's

body was brought back to England by Sir Gilbert Talbot of Grafton, who was also responsible for erecting the monument.[36] On the last point at least, judging from the details of the Whitchurch effigy, Hunter was probably right. Less satisfactorily, he followed Vincent and Dugdale in omitting the first of the subordinate titles from the lost inscription and, unlike Edmondson, he was not prepared to say where in France Talbot had been buried. Also, as J.A. Tait observed in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, he failed to state his authorities. There are tell-tale clues nonetheless. Hunter's account of the Earls of Shrewsbury as lords of Sheffield includes a family tree which looks remarkably like Edmondson's. He also drew explicitly on Leland's notes for the career of John third Earl of Shrewsbury, who 'had among his brethren one caullid Gilbert Talbot, after a knight of fame' – in other words, he was knighted by Henry VII, for timely services rendered at Bosworth in 1485.[37]

Hunter returned to the subject of tombs in his account of the collegiate church (now the cathedral) at Sheffield. Here he described the tomb of George sixth Earl of Shrewsbury, who died in November 1590 and was then buried with great ceremony. In addition to the elaborate Latin epitaph composed in advance by the martyrologist, John Foxe, Hunter included a long English inscription from a painted board, already lost, which had hung nearby. Though part of the detailed content tallies with that of a 'tablet' referred to in Dugdale's *Baronage*, from this we should probably not have expected the medium to be lack-lustre verse. In Hunter's words, which might be applied to the speech of the herald Sir William Lucy in *The First Part of Henry VI*, 'it was more of an elegy than an epitaph'.[38] Foxe gave the subordinate titles as Lord Talbot, Furnivall, Verdun, Lovetot and Strange of Blackmere. The alternative list was closer to Shakespeare's for Talbot:

> George Earle of Shrowsbury, Washford and Waterford,
> Earle Marshall of England, Talbot of Goodridge, Lord
>   Verdon of Altoun, Furnivall of Sheffield,
>   Lord Luftot of Worksopp, Lord Crumbewell of Wingfield
>
> Lord Strange of the Blackmeere, and Justice by North Trent
> Of forests and chases, a councellor, President
>   Unto his soveraine Queene, &c., for his loyalty
>   Knight of the Garter, eke these titles all had hee;
>
> Which solemnly proclaimed by heralds that daie
> When was his funeral; with honour every day.
>   Lefetenant of Stafford and Darbyshire also
>   In days most dangerouse he was assigned tho.

While Hunter provided a valid reference to the Dodsworth manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, he might have hoped that no one would check. The location of the board is noted in Roger Dodsworth's secretary hand of 1620. The inscription is in a different hand which looks more modern, though it may not be significantly later. The four-line units turn out to be Hunter's. In the original, there are spaces between couplets, while titles and honours, including the dubious Lord Cromwell of Wingfield, are part of a block of *eleven* lines, with amendments in an unknown hand which suggest a first attempt to make the passage scan, or at least look like rhyming verse. In other words, Hunter improved upon changes which were manifestly inauthentic.[39]

If the historian of Hallamshire considered making a possible literary connection more explicit, he had second thoughts. In 1819, he wrote that Talbot would live for ever 'in the divine language of Shakespeare'. Though his own edition of the collected plays and poems never saw the light of day, two volumes of introductory material were published in 1845 as *New Illustrations*. On this occasion *The First Part of Henry VI* got very short shrift. It was unworthy of Shakespeare; Malone had been right when he maintained that it was effectively the work of an unknown author.[40] In the same publication Hunter questioned the authenticity of a letter, apparently from Shakespeare's patron, the Earl of Southampton, which had been discovered by John Payne Collier. Collier was a leading scholar who eventually came unstuck because he manufactured evidence in order to 'prove' his pet theories.[41] If harmless deceptions were more commonplace than is now generally supposed, his aberrations would be easier to understand.

Also in 1845, the Rev. Thomas Corser's edition of a mid-seventeenth century poem, *Iter Lancastrense*, was published under the aegis of the Chetham Society. In a long note on Talbot, he implied that there was still room for doubt about where he was buried and the belated return of his body to England. Without directly challenging Hunter, or even naming him in this context, he maintained, in effect, that the Whitchurch tomb dated from the middle, not the end, of the fifteenth century. In doing this, he quoted an anonymous contributor to the *Gentleman's Magazine* who linked the tomb with three others which supposedly shared characteristics not found elsewhere.[42] If one makes comparisons for oneself – with the tombs of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick (*ob*. 1439) at Warwick, Walter Lord Hungerford (*ob*. 1459) in Salisbury Cathedral and Sir John Crosby (*ob*. 1475) in Great St. Helen's Church, London – one may well wonder what, specifically, they were reckoned to have in common. The

more obvious likeness is with the effigy of John Lord Cheney, KG. at Salisbury, and he died in 1499. One might also have difficulty in finding the relevant article in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Each volume has a full index; a number of pieces to do with Talbot or Whitchurch are indicated, but not the one quoted by Corser, and others subsequently, without providing chapter and verse.

A decade later, while Collier's work – most of it legitimate enough – was picked over by friends and colleagues, who might not have been quite as innocent or disinterested as they seemed, a remarkable discovery was made at Arundel with implications for Whitchurch. It had always been supposed that John seventh Earl of Arundel, who had fallen fighting in France in 1435, was buried at Beauvais; the so-called tomb in the Fitzalan Chapel at Arundel was merely a 'cenotaph'. Then the Rev. R. W. Eyton, author of the *Antiquities of Shropshire*, discovered a reference in the will of his ancestor, Fulke Eyton, which suggested that the remains had in fact been repatriated. In 1857, excavations confirmed this: a six-foot skeleton with one leg missing was found. Henry fourteenth Duke of Norfolk was delighted; the story was told, in *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, in an open letter from his chaplain.[43]

The Howard (later Fitzalan-Howard) and Talbot families had been closely allied since the mid-seventeenth century. When it seemed as if the Talbot male line had finally come to an end, Bertram seventeenth Earl of Shrewsbury, who died unmarried in 1856, tried to bequeath his estates to Lord Edmund Bernard Howard, a younger son of the Duke of Norfolk. In the event, Henry Chetwynd-Talbot, third Earl Talbot, became eighteenth Earl of Shrewsbury after a House of Lords ruling in 1858.[44] In 1873 Adelaide Countess Brownlow, daughter of the eighteenth Earl, commissioned a restoration of the Talbot tomb at Whitchurch. An account of what happened may be found in an article for the *Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological and Natural History Society*, written by the Rector of Whitchurch, the Rev. W.J. Egerton. When workmen lifted the stone under the effigy, a wooden box was discovered containing bones and a skull, damaged in ways which tallied with one of the early French accounts of Talbot's death. Exposed to the air, the box soon crumbled to dust, but not, it seems, before exact measurements had been taken. After forensic examinations, the remains were solemnly reinterred.[45] A neo-Gothic inscription appropriately began with the phrase, 'Hic jacent ossa…' After this, it followed the lost inscription as recorded by Thomas Dingley, with the first of the subordinate titles omitted and the date of the battle incorrect. The most striking difference was that it ran along the splay of the upper moulding of the tombstone; a brass plate below the new arch of the tomb commemorated the restoration and Lady Brownlow's generosity. Any claim that early sketches and notes were religiously followed by the restorers is absurd.

Awkward questions must now be asked, if not confidently answered. Crucially, where was the fragile box, with its precious contents, when the damaged tomb was rescued from the rubble in 1712? In contributions to the Shropshire *Transactions*, this was one of the issues which Egerton fudged. His position, however, was clearer in an article which appeared in the Whitchurch parish magazine in April 1874. The bones were found underneath the slab and 'doubtless were carefully preserved until a site was found for the effigy in the new church, where the bones were replaced in the same relative position which they occupied for three centuries and a half'.[46] Despite, or because of, the excitement associated with the urn found in the porch, a greater discovery which went some way to ending an old controversy was forgotten. As a result of this, a 'doubtful point' was not settled until 1874. Whether this scenario is credible is another matter. It is at least as likely that the Talbot family had somehow managed to retain an ancestor's bones and skull until the discovery at Arundel suggested a way of being more public-spirited without loss of face. While this may seem very unlikely, it is hard to think of another explanation which fits the facts. Even as a party to deception, Egerton emerges with some credit because his scholarship, like Collier's, was genuine enough. An 1887 article in particular seems to have been prompted by a desire for accuracy, even if it was out of the frying pan into the fire when he concluded that Talbot had originally been buried at Castillon, not Rouen. At the same time, the initiative might not have been his when guidance was sought from a French counterpart, Abbé J. J. Simon. Though Egerton reproduced a response in which the possibilities of a Talbot tomb at Rouen were reviewed and rejected, it was addressed to a lady whose name was not given.[47]

Thanks to the inflated reputation of Malone, Shakespearean editors and commentators have continued to accept that there used to be a Talbot tomb at Rouen; there are some exceptions to this rule, but remarkably few. As academic specialization takes its toll, 'critics' and historians often seem like ships that pass in the night. While disinterment is a feature of modern accounts of Talbot, burial at Rouen is out of favour. A. H. Burne maintained that he was originally buried at Falaise before his remains were brought back to England.[48] His warrant, if any, was unclear and he failed to address Augustine Vincent's objection to Rouen, which might apply to any French town or city (apart from Calais) by 1453. Hugh Talbot came up with a more elaborate hypothesis: the hero's body was buried with military honours at Castillon by the French, in recognition of a valiant foe; it was then removed to Falaise, where it remained for several decades until it was brought back to England by 'Gilbert, 3rd Earl of Shrewsbury' – an apparent conflation of Sir Gilbert Talbot of Grafton and John third Earl of Shrewsbury.[49] Though he appeared to offer Jean Chartier as the authority for part of his tale, this turns out to be a red herring; the French chronicler's treatment of Talbot's end is perfunctory.[50] According to A. J. Pollard in the new *Oxford Dictionary of*

National Biography, Talbot was buried at Castillon before being disinterred. Pollard was presumably following Rector Egerton's second contribution to the Shropshire *Transactions*, which he had already cited elsewhere.[51] Differences of opinion, along with incidental errors, contribute to the impression that hard evidence for an early Tudor reburial is lacking. If this paper has managed to make better sense of Talbot's posthumous history, it is by picking up details which have hitherto seemed unimportant or unconnected. There may be other ways of explaining them and it would be rash to insist that I, uniquely, am right in all particulars. The problem today seems to be the way in which reputable historians have been misled because of the assumption that predecessors always played the game by our rules.

Notes

1　Ian Mortimer, *1415: Henry V's Year of Glory*, 2009, 365. See also J. Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, 1955, 145. *Pace* Huizinga, Henry was embalmed.

2　Henry Ribadieu, *Histoire de la Conquête de la Guyenne par les Francais*, 1866, 312–13.

3　Albert Thibaudet (ed.), Montaigne, *Essais*, 1937, 324. In Florio's translation, 'devise' becomes 'imprease', suggesting a painted shield with motto.

4　Edward Hall, *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustre Families of Lancaster and York*, 1548, 84.

5　G. du Fresne de Beaucourt (ed.), Mathieu d'Escouchy, *Chronicle*, 1863–4, **II**, 42–3. This continuation of Monstrelet was not originally presented as a separate work and the modern attribution is speculative.

6　Hall, *Op. Cit.*, 85.

7　Bodleian, MS Top. Gen. e 11, 40*v*. See also Thomas Hearne, *The Itinerary of John Leland*, 1711–18, **IV**, 13.

8　MS Top. Gen. e 12, 81.

9　Bodleian, Tanner MS 464. See also Hearne, *Ed. Cit.*, **VII**, 8.

10　Work on the Beauchamp Chapel (as it became) continued until 1464; it was finally consecrated in 1475. For the will, see Talbot, *Op. Cit.*, 183–5.

11　Telling points are made in Augustine Vincent, *A Discoverie of Errours*, 1622, 464. See also Geoffrey H. White (ed.), *The Complete Peerage by G.E.C.*, **XI**, 1949, 698–704.

12　R. A. Foakes (ed.), *Henslowe's Diary*, 2002, 16–20.

13　Allison Gaw, *The Origin and Development of '1 Henry VI'*, 1926, 27–31.

14　R. B. McKerrow (ed.), *The Works of Thomas Nashe*, 1898, **I**, 212. On the historical background to performances at the Rose, see Barry Langston, 'Topical Shakespeare', *Shakespeare Survey*, **LXVII**, 61–3.

15　On manuscript collections, see R. D. Dunn (ed.), William Camden, *Remains*, 1984, 474.

16　William Camden, *Britannia*, 1594, 462.

17　*Remaines of a Greater Worke*, 1605, 47.

18　*Britannia*, 1607, 452–3. This may also have been the first occasion that Talbot was called an 'English Achilles'. For the English translation by Philemon Holland, made in association with Camden, see *Britannia*, 1610, 364.

19　William Dugdale, *Baronage of England*, 1675–6, **I**, 331.

20　Ralph Brooke, *A Catalogue and Succession*, 1619, 196.

21　Vincent, *Op. Cit.*, 465.

22　A. B. Grosart (ed.), *The Life and Works of Robert Greene*, 1881–6, **XII**, 144.

23　Dugdale, *Op. Cit.*, 333–4. On this occasion, Baron of Valence was given as one of the Shrewsbury subordinate titles despite the 1536 act.

24　White, *Ed. Cit.*, 708, 714.

25　Vincent's unhelpful page reference is noted in W.G. Boswell-Stone, *Shakspere's Holinshed*, 1896, 234.

26　Bodleian, Ashmole MS 854, 219.

27　J. G. Nichols (ed.), Thomas Dingley, *History from Marble*, 1867–8, **II**, clxxvi–clxxviii.

28　Dugdale, *Op. Cit.*, 330. An engraving based on Dugdale's sketch of the Bedford plaque is reproduced in Jenny Stratford, *The Bedford Inventories*, 1993, pl. xxi. Bedford's tomb was destroyed by vandals in 1562; the plaque survived until the early eighteenth century.

29　Without explanation, it has been claimed that this meant the *late* sixteenth century; see Hugh Talbot, *The English Achilles*, 1981, 176.

30　D. C. Browning and G. D. H. Cole (eds.), Daniel Defoe, *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, 1928, **II**, 73–4. Defoe's working practices are discussed in Richard West, *The Strange and Surprising Adventures of Daniel Defoe*, 1997, 304. See also Edmund Gibson (trans.), Camden, *Britannia*, 1694, 550.

31　Despite an apparent oversight by Malone, *An Armor of Proofe* was recognized as a potential Shakespearean source when the young forger, William Henry Ireland, annotated a copy in what was supposed to be the poet's hand. See the article on Roger Cotton in the old *DNB*.

32　Joseph Edmondson, *Baronagium Genealogicum*, 1764–84, **II**, 83.

33　See Adrian Ailes's article on Edmondson in the *ODNB*.

34　Sir Anthony Wagner, *Heralds of England*, 1967, 203–4.

35　Edmond Malone (ed.), *The Plays and Poems of William Shakspeare*, 1821, **XVIII**, 132.

36　Joseph Hunter, *Hallamshire*, 1819, 46–7.

37　*Ibid.*, 16.

38　*Ibid.*, 148–50; see also Dugdale, *Op. Cit.*, 333–4.

39　Bodleian, Dodsworth MS 160, 127.

40   Hunter, *New Illustrations*, 1845, **II**, 63–4.
41   Rev. Thomas Corser (ed.), *Iter Lancastrense*, 1845, 27–8.
42   On Hunter and Collier, see S. Schoenbaum, *Shakespeare's Lives*, 1991, 256–69.
43   Very Rev. Canon Tierney, 'Discovery of the Remains of John, 17th [*sic*] Earl of Arundel', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, **XII**, 1860, 232–9. According to Tilney, Arundel was another 'English Achilles'.
44   White, *Ed. Cit.*, 727–8.
45   Rev. W. J. Egerton, 'Talbot's Tomb', *Trans. Shrops. Arch. Soc.*, **VIII**, 1885, 413–40.
46   W. H. Owen (ed.), *The Story of Talbot*, 1955, 19–23.
47   Egerton, 'Talbot's Tomb – Corrigenda and Addenda', *Trans. Shrops. Arch. Soc.*, **X**, 1887, 416–20.
48   A. H. Burne, *The Agincourt War*, 1956, 341–2.
49   Talbot, *Op. Cit.*, 172–4.
50   Vallet de Viriville (ed.), Jean Chartier, *Chronique de Charles VII*, 1858, **III**, 6–7.
51   Pollard, 'The Family of Talbot, Lords Talbot and Earls of Shrewsbury in the Fifteenth Century', Bristol Ph.D. Thesis, 1968, 207–8.

'Not a Silver but a Golden Talent':
The Life of the Reverend Francis Tallents

By JANICE COX

Abstract: Of all the ministers who served Shropshire parishes over the centuries, Francis Tallents was one of the most notable. After a distinguished career at Cambridge University and Presbyterian ordination in 1648, Tallents became the minister of St. Mary's, Shrewsbury in 1652. He was ejected in 1662 for refusing episcopal ordination but continued to minister outside of the Established Church while also attending services within it. He maintained contact with eminent families, scholars and fellow ministers both Anglican and dissenting. He travelled on the Continent, wrote, and read extensively, never giving up hope of a reformed Church of England. When the Presbyterian chapel was opened in Shrewsbury in 1691 an inscription was painted on the walls 'This place was not built for a faction or a party, but to promote repentance and faith in communion with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity', a statement which summed up his Christian beliefs.

In the vestry of Swan Hill Congregational Church in Shrewsbury hangs a portrait of a man whose appearance belies his age, which was eighty-five when the portrait was painted in 1704 (Plate 1). He is wearing a large wig, a black Geneva gown and bands and looks out from the portrait with a steady purposeful gaze. There are parts of some Latin words, now almost illegible, visible on either side of his head, which are possibly two quotations, one from Horace's Odes '*pulvis et umbra sumus*' (we are dust and shadow) and the other '*post tenebras lux*' (light after darkness) the motto of the Protestant Reformation and of the City of Geneva.[1] If these quotations are correct they must have been chosen by the sitter himself, for they are very apposite.

Early Life and Ordination

If one were to read the bare facts of his life it would appear uneventful and unremarkable. He was born in obscure circumstances in 1619, went up to Cambridge and following graduation became a fellow of Magdalene College and then a minister in the church. In 1662 he was ejected from his living for nonconformity and was a dissenting minister until his death in 1708, at the grand old age of eighty-eight. Although these unadorned facts give us a sense of a principled man dedicated to the service of God and his fellow man, they reveal little of his eventful life and remarkable personal qualities. His considerable intellect and ability, and quiet moderation, led many prominent figures of the day, both lay and clerical, to value his friendship and advice. One suspects that he also had a certain Gallic charm, for he married four times.

Francis Tallents's French grandfather, almost certainly a Huguenot, is believed to have been brought to England by Sir Francis Leake, whose life he had reportedly saved.[2] In return Leake helped him to establish himself here. His grandson, Francis Tallents, was born in the village of Pilsley in the parish of North Wingfield in Derbyshire in November 1619, the eldest son of Philip Tallents and his wife, Eleanor, née Dob. They had married in the parish church of North Wingfield on 29 October 1616. Francis was baptised there on 13 December 1619, followed by Eleanor in 1622, Mary in 1625, Philip in 1628, Eliza in 1630 and Dorothy in 1633. Sadly, both parents died when the family was young. Francis's uncle, Francis Tallents (Philip Tallents's eldest brother), the vicar of the

Plate 1   The Revd. Francis Tallents.
(by kind permission of the Revd. Debbie Martin, Minister of Swan Hill Congregational Church, Shrewsbury)

neighbouring parish of Tibshelf, took them in and brought them up. He had been appointed to the living of Tibshelf in 1629 by Sir Francis Leake (d. 1655), and he also served him as his domestic chaplain and tutor to his sons. The young Francis Tallents went to the grammar schools in Mansfield and then Newark, where one of his masters described him as 'not a silver but a golden talent'.[3] When he was sixteen he went up to Cambridge University as a sizar (a poor student who had to earn his tuition fees by acting as a servant to richer students and to fellows), first to Peterhouse where he matriculated in 1637, then on to Magdalene College the following year, which he may have found more congenial than the Laudian ambiance of Peterhouse.[4] He was then given a Smith scholarship as he was a brilliant student. Even in old age he still had a remarkable memory and could repeat verbatim long passages out of the classics for the entertainment of his friends.[5] Tallents graduated B.A. in 1641 and then became a sub-tutor at Magdalene.

In 1642 two young aristocrats, George and Henry Howard, brothers of James Howard, the 3rd Earl of Suffolk, the hereditary visitor of Magdalene College, set off on a continental tour. The Howards were given permission on 12 October 1642 to travel abroad with Edward Rainbow (who had very recently been chosen master of Magdalene by the Earl of Suffolk), Adiel Baynard (soon to be appointed vicar of Saffron Walden by the Earl of Suffolk), Edward Smith (perhaps a relative of Rainbow's father-in-law and predecessor as master of Magdalene, Henry Smith, who was another Suffolk protégé) and Tallents himself.[6] For a young man of French ancestry this must have been a particularly thrilling prospect. One of the reasons that he was chosen must have been his ability to speak French.

Few details of the tour are known except that they visited Paris and then travelled to the Loire valley, a place popular with many young English travellers. There, in Saumur, the young men learned the French language and the gentlemanly accomplishments of fencing and riding.[7] It is not known how long the tour lasted, but Matthew Henry believed that Tallents was abroad more than two years. At Saumur there was a famous Protestant Academy, which provided Tallents with a golden opportunity to discuss theology, philosophy and history with the professors, and there he 'improv'd himself very much with the Conversation of the Learned Men he met with'.[8]

Upon his return to England, he was made a fellow of Magdalene College in 1644 and proceeded M.A. in 1645. He was then made a senior fellow and chosen as president by the master, Edward Rainbow. He is thought to have been 'by far the most interesting and distinguished of the new fellows in the 1640s'.[9] Other fellows at that time included John Wood, a Presbyterian and particular friend of Tallents, and Joseph Hill who later became the minister of the English Presbyterian Church in Rotterdam in 1678, both of whom were to be ejected from Magdalene at the Restoration, Richard Cumberland a future bishop of Peterborough with latitudinarian sympathies and Samuel Morland, a considerable inventor of mechanical devices.[10]

Among Tallents's pupils was John Cromwell who became rector of Clayworth, Nottinghamshire, in 1655 and was ejected for nonconformity in 1660, suffering considerably for his radical views in the years that followed.[11]

Another pupil was Hezekiah Burton, later a leading latitudinarian Anglican.[12] Quite how much of Burton's desire for comprehension was due to the influence of Tallents is unknown, but it could have been substantial. Among his other pupils were Robert Sawyer, the future attorney general, and John Perceval, son of Sir Philip Perceval, an Irish landowner. Correspondence between Tallents and Philip and John Perceval casts an interesting light on the wide range of books that Tallents expected the young Perceval to read: Thomas More's *Utopia*; Thomas Jack's *Onomasticon Poeticum* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, translated by George Sandys; Jonas Moore's *Arithmetick*; Pierre Gassendi's *Institutio astronomica*; and two unspecified books, one by the German astronomer and mathematician Johannes Kepler and the other by Johann Stier, possibly *Præcepta doctrinæ, ethicæ, physicæ, metaphysicæ, sphæriæque*, which had just been published in Cambridge; William Ames's *Guilielmi Amesii magni theologi ac philosphi acutissimi philosophemata*.[13] Ames (1576–1633) was a puritan divine and philosopher who was much influenced by the philosopher, humanist and educational reformer Pierre de la Ramée, whose works Tallents also used in his teaching.[14] Also at Magdalene, while Tallents was there, were Samuel Campion, Samuel Taylor and Edward Lawrence, who were ejected from their livings at Hodnet in 1660 and Edstaston and Baschurch in 1662 respectively.[15] Tallents's own brother Philip followed him to Magdalene in 1647, proceeding B.A. in 1651 and M.A. in 1654, but whether he was one of his brother's pupils is not known.

One of Tallents's greatest loves was history and it was during his years as a tutor at Cambridge that he started to compile chronological tables for the use of his pupils. It was also during this time that Tallents met and befriended Robert Boyle, the eminent natural philosopher, whose brother Roger, Lord Broghill, was married to Margaret Howard the sister of Henry and George Howard, Tallents's former pupils. It is in a letter which Boyle wrote to Tallents in February 1647 that there is one of the earliest descriptions of the 'Invisible or Philosophical College', a precursor of the Royal Society.[16]

Towards the end of 1645, following a call to the ministry, Tallents began to preach, and thereafter often preached in the college chapel and at St. Mary's, the university church. Tallents was a young man of sincere Protestant beliefs and Presbyterian sympathies. In his preaching Tallents studiously accommodated himself to the capacities of his hearers.[17] In this, he was at one with Richard Baxter, who wrote 'If you would not Teach men, what do you in the Pulpit? If you would, why do you not speak so as to be understood?'[18] Tallents soon became well known. By an order of the Lords and Commons on 4 April 1648 he was one of two 'able and godly preachers' appointed by the Committee for Plundered Ministers and approved by the Assembly of Divines to serve the city of Lichfield in Staffordshire.[19] Later that year, on 29 November, Tallents was ordained by the 3rd London Classis at the church of St. Mary Woolnoth in the City of London. In the following year he was one of twelve graduates chosen by the University annually to preach anywhere in England or Ireland without a licence, a mark of the esteem in which the University held him. Tallents was also appointed to the living of Chesterton, just outside Cambridge, in 1650, thereby supplementing his income, as other fellows did.[20]

Minister of St. Mary's Church, Shrewsbury

At the end of 1652 Tallents left Cambridge. He declined to take his degree of Bachelor of Divinity as it might have meant being given precedence in the country over his seniors in the ministry. He became the minister of the parish of St. Mary in Shrewsbury and the town's public preacher. In June 1652 the mayor, recorder and four aldermen had sent a messenger to Tallents in Cambridge asking him to come to Shrewsbury, and this was followed a fortnight later by two letters from the parishioners and elders of St. Mary's. Equally keen to have Tallents as the minister and public preacher were Richard Pigot the chief schoolmaster, who had studied at Cambridge and was an old friend of Richard Baxter, Samuel Fisher the former minister of St. Mary's, Humphrey Mackworth, religious radical and Parliamentary governor of Shrewsbury, and his son Thomas Mackworth, a future Commonwealth MP, both of whom had briefly studied at Cambridge.[21] How was it that these men knew of Tallents, who was not a local man and who had no local connections? The answer lies not just in his growing reputation, but also in the strong link between Shrewsbury School and Cambridge University, and while Tallents was a fellow of Magdalene, Samuel Lowe, the son of a leading Shrewsbury Presbyterian, John Lowe, was studying there.[22]

The eminent divine Richard Baxter, a native of Shropshire, also wrote to Tallents. Baxter did not know Tallents personally, but he wrote 'having so full a Testimony of many of my friends, of your Piety, Prudence, and Ability, to make them to seek you. I understand you demurr, and have some discouragements...I do assure you, impartially, that were I loose, I know not one congregacon in England that I would sooner choose. The People are (those that are godly) very serious, sober Christians, as most ever I knew. The Meeting Place very convenient for many to heare with an easy voice. Many godly ministers in the country about...'[23] After all this encouragement, Tallents decided to leave behind the stimulating intellectual life and libraries of Cambridge to become a minister in Shrewsbury. He received £130 *per annum* for being the town's public preacher, in addition to his stipend as the minister of St. Mary's.[24]

Soon after arriving in Shrewsbury, Tallents married Anne Lomax at West Felton on 9 June 1653. She was born in 1632 at Ashby de la Zouch, the daughter of the Parliamentary soldier Gervase Lomax. It was probably due to the death of her father that she came to live with her uncle, the Reverend Samuel Hildersham, who was to be ejected from his living at West Felton in Shropshire for nonconformity in 1662. In 1655 Tallents's son, Hildersham, was born, but he died two weeks later. Another son, Francis, was born in 1656. He followed in his father's footsteps, going to Magdalene College in 1672, proceeding B.A. in 1676 and M.A. in 1679. According to Matthew Henry, he died young and 'did not prove a Comfort' to his father.[25] Sadly, Tallents's wife Anne died in March 1659. He married again, in 1661, his new wife being Martha Clive, daughter of Thomas Clive of Walford in the parish of Baschurch, a woman twenty years his junior. The Clives of Walford were a godly family who invited ministers to preach in their house. No children came from this marriage and Martha died two years later.[26] Tallents remained a widower for a number of years following her death until he married for the third time in December 1673. His wife was Mary Greenhill the 40 year old widow of William Greenhill, gentleman, of Harrow on the Hill.[27] Her late husband, a man of substantial means, bequeathed money to a number of ejected ministers as a token of his esteem and friendship.[28] Tallents and Mary Greenhill may have met through a mutual acquaintance, Rowland Hunt (a 'very loving friend' of William Greenhill) who had a house in Harrow.[29] Mary Tallents, whom Tallents described as his 'holy wife', died in 1685, and within a few years Tallents married for a fourth time. He lived with this wife, Elizabeth, for fourteen years, until she died in 1702 and was buried at St. Mary's on 11 March.[30]

During the 1650s Tallents played an active role in the religious life not only of Shrewsbury but also of Shropshire. He was appointed one of the 'ministers assistants' who had the task of ejecting 'scandalous' ministers in the county,[31] and Baxter proposed him as one of the county agents for Shropshire.[32] In 1656 he acted as the moderator of a public debate concerning infant baptism held in Ellesmere parish church between the Revd. Thomas Porter of Whitchurch and the Baptist Henry Haggar. Tallents directed the progress of the debate 'with Prudence and Candour.' He brought the discussion to an end with the words 'I think it fit therefore to break off this dispute, and to conclude with Prayer, especially considering that the Congregation…have stood in the croud [sic] for the space of five hours'.[33]

Although Tallents endeavoured to avoid conflict, there were occasions when he was its victim. In early November 1659 one of the local Quakers, William Griffiths, went into St. Mary's church and interrupted Tallents during the service. The mayor sent Griffiths to prison for six months.[34] Some Quakers, whom he visited while they were imprisoned in the Burgess Gate in January 1661, accused him of being a deceiver, a preacher of false doctrines, one who allowed himself to be called 'master', took a text and raised doctrines and uses upon it, preached by an hour glass and caused a bell to be rung to call the people together.[35]

At the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 Tallents accepted the King's pardon as promised in the Declaration of Breda.[36] In it the King declared 'a liberty to tender consciences, and that no man shall be disquieted or called in question for differences of opinion in matter of religion which do not disturb the peace of the kingdom.' Despite the King's Declaration, however, the next ten years saw a whole series of measures by Parliament against dissenters from the Church of England, although, of course, Tallents could not have known what was about to happen. Philip Henry wrote that Tallents 'shew'd an entire Satisfaction in that Re-settlement of the Government… and a sincere Affection to the King, as the Presbyterians throughout the Kingdom did, but intimated likewise his readiness to conform as far as he could with a good Conscience, to the Changes that were then made in the Church. He therefore read…some Parts of the Liturgy at that time'.[37] This partial conformity had the support of the Presbyterians in the town. The town clerk, Thomas Jones, was reported to have encouraged ministers such as Tallents to preach 'boldly and seditiously.'[38] The newly ascendant royalists, who had suffered during the Interregnum, had no liking for any liberty for tender consciences. Twice during 1661 the grand jury at Shrewsbury quarter sessions presented Tallents 'for not reading divine service for one month last past' and for 'not reading the book of common prayer upon the Lord's day for 3 months last past.'[39] On 14 July he, fellow minister John Bryan, and other local Presbyterians were committed to the castle prison for a few days. They were to be recommitted whenever the state of things was 'disturbed' in the town.[40] Tallents was entirely innocent of any plotting, but he, like other ministers appointed during the Interregnum, was viewed with suspicion by the local royalists. It was only two years since the overthrow of the Commonwealth, and political uncertainty abounded.

Ejection from St. Mary's and Persecution

In 1662 the 'Act of Uniformity of Publique Prayers…' came into force. Among its requirements was the episcopal ordination of all clergy. The mayor and many of the corporation wanted Tallents to continue as town preacher and minister of St. Mary's, and they did all they could to retain him. However, four commissioners for the visitation of St. Mary's came to Shrewsbury in September 1662. They were Francis, Lord Newport, Timothy Tourner and Sir Walter Lyttleton, all staunch royalists, the second of whom was heavily fined during the Interregnum as

was the father of the first,[41] together with the bishop of Lichfield John Hacket, who intended to deal firmly with Shrewsbury, one of the strongest Presbyterian towns in his diocese. Some ministers in the diocese of Lichfield submitted to reordination,[42] but Tallents refused. He told the commissioners that he had been ordained by the hands of the presbytery and that he was so well satisfied with that that he did not desire to receive further ordination.[43] Matthew Henry wrote that Tallents 'was necessitated to quit his Place which was his Livelihood, and (which was more grievous to him…) his Work and Usefulness which were his Life.' Ever afterwards Tallents observed St. Bartholomew's Day as a day of humiliation and prayer. Tallents said later that two new barriers were erected by the Act of Uniformity of 1662 to keep puritans out, one of which was the declaration that assent and consent to everything contained in the Book of Common Prayer still remained 'to many tender Consciences such an Objection against Conformity, as they cannot get over.'[44]

The church of St. Mary and its services returned to a style in keeping with the restored Church of England. The churchwardens wrote in their account book 'This year EPISCOPACY and the LITURGIE of the Church wer [sic] restored. Gloria Deo. Amen. 1662.' A new minister was appointed, a surplice was made, rails were erected around the communion table and the King's coat of arms was painted.[45] The Book of Common Prayer was brought into full use again. The sign of the cross was used during baptism, people once again knelt to receive communion and marriages were returned to their former custom. According to the 1653 Marriages Act, marriages had had to be performed before a magistrate. Tallents, who disliked the Act, said 'I and others have Married many before a Justice, he saying nothing but only declaring the Marriage was Valid.'[46]

At the same time that Francis Tallents was ejected from his living, his brother Philip was ejected from Lilford cum Wigsthorpe in Northamptonshire, which he had served since 1654, to be succeeded by Hezekiah Burton, Francis Tallents's former pupil at Magdalene.[47] However, unlike his brother, Philip Tallents conformed two years later in 1664. Many other Shropshire ministers lost their livings at the same time as Tallents, as they too refused to conform to the Act of Uniformity. Tallents sometimes observed that before the civil wars the puritans generally made an effort to conform and come into the Church, despite the treatment they were likely to meet with. This was still the case after the Restoration. Few Presbyterians wished to be separated from the restored Church of England, and after 1662 many attended their parish churches and received communion there and still hoped for a Reformed liturgy. For the most part, Tallents 'attended the Publick Ministry, and the Liturgy both Morning and Afternoon, and Preach'd only in the Evening, and on the Week-days, as he had opportunity, and fell not into any constant stated work for some Years…after he was Silenc'd, waiting to see what GOD would do with him'. Tallents said later that Anglicans and dissenters should sometimes attend services in each other's churches, so that they would better understand one another and be brought closer together.[48]

From his ejection in 1662 until his death in 1708 Tallents's life continued, in its essentials, much as it had done before his ejection. He carried on his ministry, the greatest love of his life, outside the Church of England, despite being subjected to intermittent prosecution because of his nonconformity. He returned to teaching by taking on a few pupils. He read a great deal and wrote a number of treatises, some of which were published. All the time he corresponded with many men, particularly eminent churchmen and those with political influence who had Presbyterian sympathies, thereby hoping to advance the cause of comprehension. He also took the opportunity on two occasions to travel abroad again.

The 1660s were a particularly difficult time for all dissenters. In Shrewsbury Francis, Lord Newport continued to take a close interest in the activities of ejected ministers and advised his deputies to watch them. He ordered informers to infiltrate religious meetings and arranged for the arrest of any attending them who were deemed seditious or treasonable. Tallents, Bryan and other local Presbyterians were still viewed as local 'plotters' by Lord Newport, who committed them to the castle prison in October 1663, but released them after a few days.[49] Tallents then went to London to collect money for ejected ministers in Shropshire who were in financial difficulties, and preached at the Wheatsheaf and Three Pigeons in Cannon Street and at the Bell in Friday Street in the City, which was reported to the government by informers in 1664–5.[50]

On 1 July 1664 the first Conventicle Act came into force. Amongst its provisions, anyone over the age of sixteen who attended a religious meeting not in accordance with the liturgy of the Church of England could be heavily fined. The 'Five Mile Act' was passed by Parliament in 1665. It was designed to separate nonconformist ministers from their followers and thereby weaken religious dissent, something, in the event, which it signally failed to do. Henceforth all nonconformist ministers who refused to take the 'Oxford Oath', which required them to swear never to attempt to alter the government of church or state, had to live more than five miles away from any town where they had formerly ministered. Richard Heath formerly of St. Alkmund's, John Bryan formerly of St. Chad's and Francis Tallents all had to leave Shrewsbury by 24 March 1666. Tallents wrote to Richard Baxter in that month saying that he was shortly to return to Derbyshire, to stay with John Gell, a patron of ejected ministers, at Hopton.[51] This provided him with a living as Gell's chaplain and as the minister to a Presbyterian congregation at Hopton, which continued until at least 1669. Gell was powerful and influential and still attended Anglican services, 'noe other Conventicle in this country [i.e. Derbyshire] observes this decorum', it was reported.[52]

A second Conventicle Act was passed by Parliament in 1670. Edward Rainbow, bishop of Carlisle and former master of Magdalene College, was one of only two bishops to vote in the House of Lords against it.[53] By its provisions the penalties for attending conventicles were reduced, but anyone arrested for preaching at a conventicle was liable to a fine of £20 for a first offence and £40 for a second. Parliament realised that the laws against conventicles had not been rigorously and systematically enforced by local magistrates. In order to ensure that the new Act's provisions were implemented as Parliament intended, informers were to receive one third of the fines imposed as a result of the conviction of dissenters, thereby creating 'professional' informers. In addition magistrates not enforcing the law were liable to a fine of £100.

For Tallents, relief from the threat of prosecution was at hand. He was asked to undertake a tour of France and Switzerland as the tutor to two young gentlemen, Theophilus Boscawen and John Hampden, sons of landed families with Presbyterian sympathies. Tallents was the ideal leader for such a tour, as he spoke good French, had the experience of his tour of France thirty years before and was highly educated, with personal qualities of trustworthiness and imperturbability. The tour, beginning in February 1671, lasted two and a half years. They travelled mainly on horseback, covering much of France and some of Switzerland. Tallents took the opportunity for extended stays in Tours, Lyons and Geneva. He made full use of his time to become intimately acquainted not only with the local Protestants, but also with the learned men in those towns where he stayed.

During the tour, as well as attending Calvinist and Lutheran services, Tallents made a point of studying the Roman Catholic religion, visiting monasteries, convents, abbeys and churches, attending some services and speaking with nuns, priests and monks. At Whitsun in 1673 he was staying in Auteuil near Paris when he went to see a service of blessing the baptismal water in the local Catholic church. In his detailed account of this service, he wrote 'I could easily have smiled at many of these things, they are so pretty, if one might laugh and not rather weep at things wherein our blessed religion is so much concern'd. How long O Lord wilt thou suffer persons thus to be deceived and to think to honour thee by such fopperies, which are so far from what thy apostles and servants practised of old and are recorded in thy holy word, the only sure rule of our faith, life and worship. …After dinner I went to him [the Catholic priest]…this good thing I learnt of him. Upon asking for Tertullian or Hieron [Jerome] or Bernard to read in a little when here, he said he had them, but they were at Paris, for now growing old he left reading them, and gave himself wholly to study his own soul and promote his salvation.'[54] Whilst in Paris Tallents wrote a treatise on the Roman Catholic Church 'comparing their Books, which he carefully read, with their Practice which he carefully observ'd, with each other.' but this was never published.[55]

Tallents wrote a full account of his journey as he travelled.[56] He could have had it published while he was living, but Matthew Henry wrote 'I doubt not, but it would have been both an acceptable Entertainment to the World, and a considerable Reputation to him: but his great Modesty conceal'd it, not only from the World, but from his intimate Friends...'[57] His account is certainly an 'acceptable entertainment' for it is full of detail of the places they visited, the people they met and the events that they saw. He had a dry sense of humour, well mixed with a philosophical attitude. He was remarkably well informed about the religious controversies in France and the leading figures in the Reformed church there, and his knowledge of Continental books and authors was considerable.[58] The whole volume is a testament to his learning and powers of observation, and a wonderful account of France during the reign of Louis XIV. Sadly, on their way towards Paris on the last leg of their journey, Theophilus Boscawen fell ill with smallpox, and died a week later on 13 November 1672. His body was taken back to Strasbourg for burial, and Tallents wrote that they left there 'the remains of a dear and loving friend.' Tallents left money for a stone to be inscribed and for rose trees to be planted on his grave.[59]

During Tallents's absence Charles II issued a Declaration of Indulgence in 1672, which suspended the penal laws against dissenters, Protestant and Catholic alike. When Tallents came back to Shrewsbury he joined John Bryan, the ejected minister of St. Chad's, to minister to the Presbyterians in the town, even though 'it broke him off very much from his Conversation with Scholars and Great Men.'[60] Shrewsbury Presbyterians, unlike the Independents, held their meetings at times which did not clash with those in the parish churches, which was something that they wanted the Independents to do lest they infringed the liberty that they all enjoyed.[61] During the 1670s and early 1680s the Five Mile Act was not enforced against Tallents, John Bryan or the other dissenting ministers who lived quite openly in the town. Nor is there evidence to suggest that Presbyterian meetings were raided.[62]

As well as his work in the ministry Tallents took a few young men as his pupils. These included his own nephew Francis Hutchinson (1660–1739), who become the bishop of Down and Connor in 1721, and Samuel Lawrence, who was to become a dissenting minister, studied in the late 1670s under Tallents.[63] In 1696 John Hampden's eldest son, Richard, stayed with Tallents for a while and then went on to 'Mr Woodhouses', a noted academy.[64] In addition to his teaching and his work in the ministry, Francis Tallents spent much of his time in the 1670s enlarging the chronological tables which he had originally compiled for the use of his pupils at Cambridge. Working on these complex chronological tables 'was his great Delight, next to the immediate Service of God, and the Work of his Ministry.'[65]

Tallents was on close terms with a number of prominent families of Presbyterian sympathies, not only the Boscawens, Hampdens and Gells, but also the Foleys, Wilbrahams and Harleys.[66] These families were active in

Parliament, promoting bills for religious comprehension. In November 1680 a bill was introduced for 'uniting his Majesties Protestant Subjects' supported by Richard Hampden (John Hampden's father) and Hugh Boscawen (Theophilus Boscawen's father), but this was lost when Parliament was prorogued. The bill was reintroduced in the following year by Sir Edward Harley, but it was lost when Parliament was dissolved.[67] The close contact between these eminent figures and Francis Tallents had been maintained over the years, and in November 1680 Tallents went to France again with John Hampden and his family and two servants.[68] Hampden had returned to England by March in the following year, and by 11 July 1681 Tallents was back in England, visiting the Hunt family at Boreatton.[69]

Following the Exclusion Crisis of 1679–81 the government became increasingly irritated about nonconformist meetings. In 1682 and 1683 Secretary of State Leoline Jenkins was informed that 'tis true the loyal gentry of Salop are far more than the disaffected, yet Shrewsbury is full of faction and conventicles are publicly kept there without any opposition of the magistrates', and that conventicles in Shrewsbury were 'winked at, if not countenanced.'[70] However, during 1683 the situation changed. Matthew Henry wrote that 'The Meetings in Shrewsbury were suppress'd, and he [Tallents] was then forc'd again into obscurity; and durst not be seen there for fear of the Five-Mile Act, which Mr Bryan was brought into Trouble upon.'[71] The Conventicle Act and the Five Mile Act were being enforced against the Presbyterians in Shrewsbury for the first time since 1672. Tallents went to live in London, which provided him with a certain degree of anonymity and the companionship of many other dissenting ministers, and also easy access to printers and engravers. Before his chronological tables, entitled *A View of Universal History*, were printed in late 1684,[72] Tallents sent his nephew Francis Hutchinson with them to Edward Stillingfleet, Richard Kidder and William Beveridge, all living in London at that time, and 'desired their perusal of it, that he might correct any mistakes.'[73] The first two of these men were latitudinarian Anglican ministers and the third was a chronologist and writer on early Christian history. Tallents employed an engraver, James Clerk,[74] to come to the house where he was then living to engrave the sixteen copper plates, which enabled him to oversee the work.

Some of Tallents's friends urged him to publish his chronological tables in Latin for the benefit of foreigners, but he declined, saying that he wanted it for the benefit of the nobility and gentlemen of Britain.[75] What stimulated Tallents to publish this monumental work? He may have been inspired by the publication of the French Protestant Jean Rou's chronological tables entitled *Histoire universelle moderne, ou détail historique généalogique et chronologique*, the first part of which appeared in 1672. Tallents was in Paris in 1672–3 and is known to have bought books then.[76] It is not known whether he saw or bought a copy of Rou's chronological tables, but they were a great success, and as Tallents moved in scholarly circles it seems likely that he was acquainted with them.[77] Some in France who saw Tallents's *A View of Universal History* thought he had copied Rou's work. Even as late as the 1870s David Agnew in his *Protestant exiles from France*, said that Rou's tables 'were pirated and appeared as a production of a Dr Tallents.'[78] The layout of both these publications is similar, but the content of Tallents's chronological tables was all his own work and had been started long before Rou's publication. The second part of Rou's *Histoire* was published in 1675 and was banned in France because of its perceived anti-Catholic view.

The tables, masterpieces of data compression, have a decidedly Protestant bias. Many Popes he described as having met their deaths by poisoning. Boniface VI was reported to have thrown five cardinals sewn in sacks into the sea, and was then poisoned; Pius IV died wasted by his pleasures; and Julius II threw St. Peter's keys into the Tiber, to name but a few. His column on 'Martyrs' is full of the persecution of Protestants by the Catholic Church, such as the Waldensians, the Lollards, the Hussites and the Huguenots in France.

It was not just the empires, kingdoms and countries that he included in his tables, but he also had columns for writers and 'miscellanies'. This latter included up-to-date information, such as the beginning of the Royal Society, 'many excellent and useful experiments by the Honourable Mr Robert Boyle', advances in medicine, the invention of telescopes, astronomical discoveries by Galileo, Kepler and Cassini, the work of the botanist Nehemiah Grew, and finally, at the very bottom of this column 'The E[arl] of Rochester dies penitent'.[79] Rochester, a satirist, poet and notorious rake, died in July 1680, having made a well-publicised deathbed repentance. He would otherwise have been thought unworthy of being included in such eminent company. Tallents's column on English history from the civil war in 1642 up to the year 1680 was deliberately left blank, except for the names of the descendants of Charles I, although he did include recent Scottish history. He explained his omission of modern English history by quoting from the French historian Jacques Auguste du Thou (who quoted these words of the Roman poet Statius) when writing about the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre of Protestants in Paris in 1572: '*Excidat illa dies ævo, ne postera credant secula, nos certe taceamus; et obruta multa nocte tegi propriæ patiamur crimina gentis*'.[80]

A View of Universal History was much admired. The dissenting minister Richard Stretton wrote to the Leeds antiquarian Ralph Thoresby in October 1684 saying that the tables 'will be much prized and bought up by ingenious men.'[81] When Sir John Gell died in 1689 he bequeathed his son-in-law, William Eyre, his 'Mapp of Chronology made by Mr Tallents', obviously one of his most valued possessions.[82] Even in the eighteenth century the eminent antiquarian Thomas Hearne thought the tables were 'good ones'; Philip Doddridge used them at

his dissenting academy in Northampton, and Joseph Priestley was very familiar with them.[83] Apart from those distributed by Tallents himself, copies were sold by five London booksellers including Awnsham Churchill, to whom Tallents sold the original copper plates *c*.1694.[84] Churchill included it amongst the books sent out by him for sale in Pennsylvania in 1700.[85]

On 20 June 1685, at the time of the Monmouth Rebellion, an order was issued to arrest disaffected persons, especially nonconformist ministers, and send them to Chester Castle.[86] As Tallents had returned to Shrewsbury to attend his third wife's funeral (for she had died suddenly while visiting the town) on 27 June at St. Mary's he was arrested and imprisoned. About eleven days later he was sent to Chester Castle. Also imprisoned there at the same time were his good friends Sir John Gell, John Woodhouse, 'Mr Hunt' and Philip Henry, amongst others. They were 'crowded up in close narrow rooms, with many other worthy persons, far from enjoying such liberty and fairness as others, when imprisoned, have had.'[87] At the same time as Tallents was in Chester Castle his friend and former travelling companion John Hampden was incarcerated in the Tower of London under sentence of death, later commuted to a large fine, because of his involvement in the Monmouth Rebellion.[88] A month later, on the failure of the rebellion, the King ordered the release of all those prisoners who had been confined on the grounds of suspicion only.[89] Tallents then returned to London 'where he liv'd very privately'.[90]

He may have lived privately but he was not inactive in dissenting circles. In November 1685 Tallents visited a famous French Protestant minister who had recently arrived in England with his wife and two young children.[91] It seems probable that Tallents attended some services in the French churches in London. The irony was that he could attend services in any French church in London without fear of prosecution. These churches had the freedom to worship according to their own Presbyterian practice and liturgy, whereas if Tallents had attended an English service not in accordance with the liturgy of the Church of England he could have been arrested and fined. While he was living in London he came to the notice of that great chronicler of national politics and religious dissent Roger Morrice, who briefly noted his peace-making involvement in a squabble over a libel.[92] A more pleasurable activity for Tallents was his participation in the ordination of Matthew Henry on 9 May 1687. It was done 'with great Privacy, so for the same Reason they did not think fit to give him a Certificate in the usual Form…'[93] Such caution was understandable.

On 4 April 1687 the Catholic King James II issued a Declaration of Indulgence, which suspended the penal laws against Protestant dissenters and Roman Catholics alike, and allowed them to assemble for worship without fear of prosecution. Some dissenters viewed this Indulgence with suspicion, but others, such as Tallents, were grateful for the freedom that they were allowed. He felt sufficiently confident to return to live in Shrewsbury. He and fellow Presbyterian ministers John Bryan and George Long and 130 local dissenters signed a loyal address to James II and presented it to him when he visited the town on 25 August 1687.[94] Tallents and Bryan ministered to the Presbyterians in the town, meeting at the house of Elizabeth Hunt, and no longer confined their meetings to Sunday evenings, but held their meetings at the same times as those in the parish churches, both morning and afternoon. Tallents wrote a topical tract entitled *Compulsion in matters of religion* against compelling people to the Christian religion and punishing those who 'erred'.[95]

Toleration

In 1689, after James II had fled the country, William III and Mary became king and queen, and the first Act of Parliament passed into law was 'An Act for exempting their Majestyes Protestant subjects dissenting from the Church of England from the Penalties of certaine Lawes.' This Act freed dissenters from prosecution, for which they were grateful, but it brought an end to nearly all Presbyterian hopes of comprehension within the Church of England.[96] Tallents was called to London by 'worthy gentlemen' who valued his judgement concerning comprehension and particularly concerning the re-ordination of those originally ordained by presbyters. Tallents was as resolute in 1689 as he had been in 1662 and he would not submit to being re-ordained by a bishop.[97] He drew up a paper entitled *If Persons ordain'd by Presbyters may be receiv'd as Min[rs]. of Christ amongst us without a new Ordination or imposition of hands by some of our Diocesan B[isho]ps ….This ought to be done now*, and sent the manuscript to Sir Edward Harley on 19 October 1689 for his consideration.[98] However, despite accepting the political reality of the situation, Tallents, unlike many Presbyterians, never give up hope of comprehension within the Church of England, and continued to work and write to that end. Ultimately Tallents failed in that mission. Not only that, but he foresaw a threat to traditional Christian belief. In 1690 he wrote to Richard Baxter saying 'A great fault hath been for about 20 years, to incline to neglect Christ under pretense [*sic*] of exalting Reason and Goodness.'[99] He also wrote to Sir Edward Harley in 1700 saying that he had just read André Lortie's new book, *Irenicum Magnum; the Gospel terms of communion stated*, of which he wrote that he was 'much for Large Foundations, but not so large as that designs, to bring in Socinianism.'[100] The age of reason and enlightenment was dawning.

After the death of Elizabeth Hunt, in November 1690, Presbyterian meetings were held in Tallents's own house while a meeting house in the High Street was fitted up for worship. It opened on 25 October 1691 with John Bryan and Francis Tallents as the joint ministers.[101] Tallents preached the first sermon on a text from Isaiah 57:15 'I dwell in a high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit.' He caused an inscription to be painted on the walls which read 'This place was not built for a faction or a party, but to promote repentance and faith in communion with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.' This latter sentence is from Psalm 124:8 and was the traditional beginning of Reformed worship in France. A fortnight later, on 7 November 1691 his house on Claremont Hill and the Presbyterian Meeting House in the High Street were both licensed for nonconformist worship and Tallents took the oath intended for nonconformist ministers.[102]

In February 1690 Tallents wrote to Richard Baxter about a 'notorious lye that goes through the Court and Towne, as you say, that I am a Papist Priest and Jesuit.' This story had circulated since about 1678 (at the time of the 'Popish Plot') and was spread because he had travelled in France.[103] The rumour was still circulating in 1693, so Tallents was persuaded to prosecute one of the perpetrators at the assizes for saying that he was a Jesuit and had read mass at St. Omer. The man was fined 50*s*.[104] This did not completely stop the rumour for even as late as 1719 the Jacobite antiquarian Thomas Hearne wrote that 'I am told that Mr. Francis Tallents…was a Jesuit, whereas I thought he had been a sort of Presbyterian.'[105]

Tallents's book, *Large and Sure Foundations* was published anonymously in London in 1693.[106] The title that he chose was a phrase which he had used as far back as 1675, when he wrote a poem about the great ejection of 1662. The preface says 'THESE Papers were drawn up some time ago, and are the result of Setled Thoughts for many years. They are made short and plain, and cast in amongst others if possibly they may help to unite us in Interest and Affection, and to make the Publick Settlement of Religion at any time, more Large and Strong to our great Advantage every way.' Tallents was congratulated by John Hampden in May 1693 on the publication of this book and commiserated with him at the same time over the rumour of his having become a Jesuit while in France. Hugh Boscawen (the father of Theophilus who had travelled to France with Tallents in 1671) wrote to Tallents in September 1693 asking him if he could recommend a minister for the parish of St. Michael Penkevil.[107] That he, a dissenting minister, should be asked to recommend an Anglican minister for a parish in Cornwall says much about the esteem in which Tallents was held and is a tribute to the trust in his wide acquaintance.

During the 1690s Tallents wrote to Sir Edward Harley on a number of occasions, asking for his help in raising money for ejected ministers, such as Samuel Taylor and George Long, who by the 1690s were old or ill and in need. Tallents also recommended some poor widows and 'hopeful' students to Harley for his consideration. Tallents wrote to Harley in 1700 thanking him for his love and kindness 'for many years, as well as from your most honoured Father and Brother, which I shall never forget.'[108] Tallents not only asked others for charitable help for those in need, but he also helped the poor and needy himself. Matthew Henry wrote that he was sparing from himself to supply others. He 'had no way of laying up what he had, but by laying it out in Works of Charity.'[109]

In the early 1690s Tallents began disposing of his possessions 'that I might set things in order before my departure.'[110] He gave eight books to Shrewsbury School library, including two of his own writings, *Large and Sure Foundations*[111] and *A View of Universal History*, together with Baxter's *Methodus theologiae Christianae*, and other theological works.[112] In 1696 he generously gave the Leeds antiquarian Ralph Thoresby some manuscripts originally belonging to the eminent puritan minister Arthur Hildersham (his first wife's grandfather), and said that he had others by Walter Travers, Humphrey Fen, Robert Bolton and John Cotton, all noted puritan ministers, theologians and academics. Tallents asked Thoresby to tell him of any autographed manuscripts of any noted person that he might want. Tallents later told Thoresby that he had part of Arthur Hildersham's diary, which he intended to leave in the best hands that he could. When the dissenting minister James Illingworth, Lady Elizabeth Wilbraham's chaplain, died in 1693, Thoresby was afraid that his notable manuscript collection would be lost. Tallents agreed to take the matter up with Lady Wilbraham, 'whom I know very well.'[113] She was a 'wise and religious lady…a sincere and generous friend to all good ministers, whether conformists or nonconformists, without any difference.'[114]

Despite disposing of some his possessions in anticipation of his death, Tallents was still reading, writing and buying books.[115] In 1695 Edward Harley sent a copy of his book *A Scriptural and rational account of the Christian religion* to Tallents, who replied that he had already bought a copy and had read it twice.[116] Tallents wrote to Harley in 1696 and sent him some papers to look at, to see if he wanted to publish them anonymously, and gave him leave to edit them prior to publication.[117] When Edmund Calamy compiled his account, during the 1690s, of those ministers who were ejected from their livings at the Restoration, Tallents supplied him with information on many of those ejected from Shropshire parishes.[118]

During the last twenty years of his life Tallents lost a number of his closest friends. It was, of course, one of the consequences of living to a great age. Most of the puritans who had ministered during the turbulent years of the civil wars and Commonwealth and suffered in the years afterwards, had gone by the time that Tallents died

in 1708.[119] In 1692 Tallents was appointed executor of the will of his 'loving friend' John Wood, a former fellow of Magdalene College. Wood bequeathed his books to Magdalene College and to young students of divinity as Tallents, John Bryan and Philip Henry chose, and asked Tallents to distribute the residue of his estate to 'poor needy servants of God as he shall chuse.'[120] Wood understood that Tallents would know suitable young men destined for the ministry to whom money and books could be profitably given.

Tallents's close friends, the Hampden family, suffered a double blow in 1695–6. Richard Hampden died, which affected Tallents greatly, particularly as he was also very worried about the health and state of mind of Richard's son John, his former travelling companion.[121] Tallents wrote to Sir Edward Harley and also to John Hampden himself and to his mother, Letitia. It was to no avail, as John committed suicide in December 1696. Bishop Gilbert Burnet described John Hampden as 'one of the learnedest gentlemen I ever Knew, for he was a critic both in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew.'[122] On 27 June 1696 Tallents lost his great friend Philip Henry, the dissenting minister of Broad Oak in Flintshire. He preached his funeral sermon, and testified to 'the great Love and Honour, that he had for Mr. Henry, whom he call'd "A friend that is nearer than a brother".'[123] During his sermon he referred to their treatment during the Monmouth Rebellion of 1685, saying 'Oh the dismal times that then was, and the sad prospect of things then! And O the unexpected quiet we had soon after, and the wonderful changes we have seen since; and the great liberties we enjoy this day!' Tallents had intended to publish this sermon, but in a letter to Philip Henry's son, Matthew, he revealed why he did not. 'I readily comply with your desire…not to print my sermon – at least for the present. The age is critical, and many will be very industrious to seek matter of cavil and reproach.'[124]

Tallents's *A Short History of Schism; for the promoting of Christian Moderation, and the Communion of Saints*, was printed in 1705 by the eminent Presbyterian bookseller Thomas Parkhurst. Matthew Henry said that it 'will remain a standing testimony against bigotry.'[125] However, someone calling himself only 'S. G.'[126] soon published a riposte entitled *Moderation in fashion, or an answer to a treatise, written by Mr Francis Tallents, entitled A short history of schism*. This prompted Tallents to publish his own response the following year, entitled *Some few considerations upon Mr. S. G.'s answer to the Short History of Schism; and especially upon the new and bold assertion that there can be no church, or salvation, in an ordinary way, without a canonical bishop*. On the title page is a pertinent Latin quotation from Cicero '*Vestra solum legitis, vestra amatis, cæteros causa incognita condemnatis.*'[127] A reply from 'S. G.' soon followed, entitled *Schism triumphant, or, a rejoinder to a reply of Mr. Tallents*. Tallents was tempted to publish an answer to *Schism triumphant*, but his friends reminded him that 'He that fights with a Dunghil, tho' he be a Conqueror, is sure to come off ill dirty'd.' This brought an end to the dispute.[128]

Tallents remained fit and active in his eighties. He travelled to local towns to hear sermons and to attend ordinations of fellow nonconformist ministers. He continued to write letters and was still preaching constantly when he was 86.[129] In a letter to a member of the Gell family, with whom he had been in regular contact over many years, he wrote that 'God has been good to them in their trials and tribulations.'[130] It is a tribute to his stoicism that he could write such words, after all that he had lived through. His four wives had predeceased him and of his two children, one died as a baby and the other as a young man. He had lost his living at St. Mary's, had been under the constant threat of prosecution, and had endured occasional imprisonment. He had not suffered as much as some dissenters had, but he had had over forty years of uncertainty, never knowing if worse was to come.

In 1699 Tallents's co-pastor John Bryan, died. He was succeeded by James Owen, formerly of Oswestry, but in 1706 he also died. James Owen was succeeded by Samuel Benion, a young man who was very dear to Tallents. Benion admired Tallents 'whose years and wisdom he had a great veneration for.'[131] Sadly Tallents's new co-pastor lived for only two years after coming to Shrewsbury and he died in March 1708. Tallents was much affected by Benion's death and despite being in 'a good measure of health' he declined during the following month, and died on 11 April 1708. Tallents was buried on 15 April in St. Mary's church in Shrewsbury in the grave of his first wife. Thomas Dawes, the vicar of St. Mary's, who performed the burial service, declined to use the words 'in sure and certain hope' of resurrection, but said only 'in hope', which Matthew Henry duly noted. On that evening Matthew Henry preached his funeral sermon in the Presbyterian Meeting House on the text 'Looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto Eternal Life', which Tallents had appointed for the occasion. Tallents also directed that the motto 'There is a Life after this' should be engraved on the mourning rings given out at his funeral,[132] and he specified which words were to be inscribed on his gravestone: '*Reliquiæ D. Francisci Tallents Olim Col. Magd. Cant. Sen. Socii. Postea Concionatoris Publici in hac Ecclesia ab Ann. 1652 ad Aug. 24, 1662. Qui post varios Labores, expectans misericordiam Domini nostri Jesu Christi in vitam Æternam, tandem decessit Anno Ætatis suæ 89. Mense die —*', which only required the day and month of his death to be inserted.[133]

His will, written in his own excellent and steady hand, is dated 15 July 1706.[134] In it he described himself as 'formerly Publick preacher of the Gospel at St. Maries in Salop in the Countie of Salop, from the year 1652 till Aug: 24 1662.' Of all the years that he had been one of the ministers of the Presbyterian Church in Shrewsbury, he said nothing. This was not because he did not value that ministry, but because he believed that his rightful place was as a minister in a reformed Church of England. That was where his heart truly lay. He then wrote 'First I resign my soul into the hands of my most gracious God and Saviour, owning from my heart that blessed Truth

which He of his grace hath enabled me to preach…And I commit my body to be buried…in hope it shall be raised up to glorie by Jesus Christ at the last day.' Apart from small bequests to his three surviving sisters and brother-in-law, his executor, John Dutton, was appointed to distribute the rest of his goods for charitable uses 'as I shall order him by a writing under my hand. And in default of such a writing, to be disposed of as he in his judgment and conscience shall think most fit.' This 'writing' has not survived, so it is not known what ultimately happened to his possessions, except for the journal of his foreign travels.[135] Matthew Henry wrote to Ralph Thoresby in April 1709 saying 'I have many [manuscripts] of Mr Tallents, which yet I have no property in, but upon loan from his executors.'[136] Whether he kept them and what happened to them after that is unknown. Unfortunately, no inventory has survived with his will, so we do not know the value of his estate, but later that year the Presbyterian Church in Shrewsbury received a £60 legacy from his executor.[137]

Nothing sums up Tallents's character better than the words of Richard Baxter, who said of him that he was a 'good schollar, a godly, blameless divine, most eminent for extraordinary prudence and moderation and peaceableness towards all.'[138] A fitting tribute for a golden talent.

Notes

1 The painting is now oval in shape, but was probably originally rectangular.
2 It is uncertain whether he is Sir Francis Leake (d. 1580) or his son Sir Francis Leake (d. 1611). The émigré's son, Francis, and grandson, Francis, might have been named after him.
3 M. Henry, *A Sermon preach'd at the funeral of the Reverend Mr. Francis Tallents* [henceforth M. Henry, *A Sermon*], 1709, 44–5; Sir Francis Leake (d. 1655), the grandson of Sir Francis Leake (d. 1580), was created a baronet in 1611, Lord Deincourt in 1624 and Earl of Scarsdale in 1645.
4 Information from Martin Rose.
5 M. Henry, *A Sermon*, 62.
6 House of Lords Record Office: HL/PO/JO/10/1/135, Main Papers, 12 October 1642, application from Mr George Howard and others for leave to travel; J. Banks, *The Life of the Right Reverend Father in God Edw. Rainbow, D.D., late Lord Bishop of Carlisle*, 1688, 39–40; There is some doubt as to whether Rainbow went on the continental tour; Information from Martin Rose.
7 Information from Martin Rose.
8 M. Henry, *A Sermon*, 47.
9 P. Cunich and others, *History of Magdalene College, Cambridge 1428–1988* [henceforth P. Cunich, *History*], 1994, 56, 125, 137, the president had to be 'the most worthy of the fellows', and was required to act as master during the master's absence.
10 P. Cunich, *History*, 126–9.
11 E. Calamy, *An Abridgement of Mr. Baxter's history of his life and times*, **II**, 2nd. ed. 1713, 526.
12 P. Cunich, *History*, 128–9, 140–1; *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com/> article on Hezekiah Burton.
13 Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, *Manuscripts of the Earl of Egmont*, **I**, **part 2**, 1905, 474–5, 491–2, correspondence dated 5 October 1647 and 29 January 1649/50.
14 A. P. F. Sell, *Philosophy, dissent and nonconformity 1689–1920*, 2004, 24.
15 A. G. Matthews, *Calamy Revised*, 1934, 100, 318, 478.
16 R. Boyle, *The works of the honourable Robert Boyle in six volumes*, **I**, 1772, xxxiv–xxxv.
17 M. Henry, *A Sermon*, 47, 63–4.
18 R. Baxter, *Gildas Salvianus, the Reformed pastor*, 1657, 123.
19 *VCH Staffordshire*, **XIV**, *Lichfield*, 1990, 139; W. A. Shaw, *A History of the English Church 1640–60*, **II**, 1900, 543; W. N. Landor, 'Staffordshire incumbents and parochial records (1530–1680)', *Collections for a History of Staffordshire, William Salt Archaeological Society*, 1915, 171, Tallents is listed as vicar of St. Mary's, Lichfield for 1649 but not for 1650. He was replaced in 1651.
20 A. G. Matthews, *Calamy revised*, 1934, 474; H. Owen and J. B. Blakeway, *History of Shrewsbury*, **II**, 1825, 379.
21 H. Owen and J. B. Blakeway, *History of Shrewsbury*, **II**, 1825, 379–80. His nomination is dated 4 January 1652/3.
22 A. & J. A. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, **I**, *Kaile-Ryves*, 1924, 110; J. V. Cox, The People of God, Shrewsbury dissenters 1660–1699, Part 1, Introduction and Biographies A–L, *Shropshire Record Series*, **IX**, 2006, 154.
23 H. Owen and J. B. Blakeway, *History of Shrewsbury*, **II**, 1825, 379–80.
24 Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, Fifteenth report, Appendix: Part X, *The Manuscripts of Shrewsbury and Coventry Corporations*, 1899, 40; According to N. H. Keeble and G. F. Nuttall (eds.), *Calendar of the correspondence of Richard Baxter*, **I**, 82, his stipend as the minister of St Mary's was £150. However, there is considerable discrepancy in the various sources as to his remuneration.
25 M. Henry, *A Sermon*, 49.
26 Shropshire Parish Register Society, *The Register of St. Mary's, Shrewsbury*, 1911, 115, 116, 117, 121, 127, 129; M. Henry, *A Sermon*, 49; It has often been said, incorrectly, that Tallents's son, Francis, was the chaplain to Sir Denis Gauden, sheriff of London. Sir Denis Gauden was sheriff in 1667–8 when Francis was only eleven years old. The 'Mr Talents, the younger' met by Samuel Pepys at Sir Denis Gauden's house in January 1668 was in fact Philip Tallents (b. 1628), the younger brother of Francis Tallents (b. 1619), who had been an undergraduate at Magdalene College at the same time as Pepys.
27 J. Foster (ed.), *London marriage licences 1521–1869*, 1887, column 1313.

28   The National Archives [henceforth TNA]: PROB 11/325/283, Will of William Greenhill of Harrow on the Hill, gentleman, proved PCC 2 November 1667.

29   He was probably the brother of Colonel Thomas Hunt of Shrewsbury (d. 1669) and the uncle of Rowland Hunt of Boreatton.

30   Shropshire Parish Register Society, *The Register of St. Mary's, Shrewsbury*, 1911, 180, 232.

31   J. E. Auden, 'Ecclesiastical history of Shropshire during the Civil War, Commonwealth and Restoration', *Trans. Shrops. Archaeol. Soc.*, **XXX [3rd series, VIII]**, 1908, 284.

32   N. H. Keeble and G. F. Nuttall (eds.), *Calendar of the correspondence of Richard Baxter*, **I**, 1991, 262.

33   M. Henry, *A Sermon*, 49; Anon, *A True and Faithfull Narrative (for substance) of a Publique Dispute between Mr. Tho. Porter and Mr. Hen. Haggar concerning INFANT-BAPTISM*, 1656, 21; H. Haggar, *Gospel-worship no work for infants*, 1657; Haggar was supported at this debate by two well-known Shrewsbury Baptists, William Browne and Richard Newton.

34   Library of the Religious Society of Friends, London: GBS/2, Salop, 1, *Great Book of Sufferings*.

35   H. Owen and J. B. Blakeway, *History of Shrewsbury*, **II**, 1825, 381.

36   T. Auden, 'Acceptances of the Royal Pardon at the Restoration 1660', *Trans. Shrops. Archaeol. Soc.*, **XIII [2nd series, II]**, 1891, 155–6.

37   M. Henry, *A Sermon*, 49–50.

38   *VCH Salop*, **III**, 264.

39   Shropshire Archives [henceforth SA]: 3365/2250 and 3365/1325 [grand jury presentment misfiled in this roll, it should be in roll 3365/2251], Shrewsbury Borough Quarter Sessions rolls, March and October 1661. The outcome of these presentations is not known, as the quarter sessions order book for this period is not extant.

40   W. Phillips and J. E. Auden, 'The Ottley Papers (2nd series)', *Trans. Shrops. Archaeol. Soc.*, **XXXIV [4th series, I]**, 1911, 309–10.

41   J. E. Auden, 'Ecclesiastical History of Shropshire during the Civil War, Commonwealth and Restoration', *Trans. Shrops. Archaeol. Soc.*, **XXX [3rd series, VII]**, 1907, 278.

42   *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com/> article on John Hacket; J. R. Jones, *The Restored monarchy, 1660–1688*, 1979, 170, 223.

43   H. Owen and J. B. Blakeway, *History of Shrewsbury*, **II**, 1825, 381.

44   M. Henry, *A Sermon*, 50–1.

45   H. Owen and J. B. Blakeway, *History of Shrewsbury*, **II**, 1825, 370; SA: P257/B/3/2, St. Mary's, Shrewsbury, churchwardens' accounts 1627–1703, folios 200, 212.

46   E. Calamy, *An Abridgement of Mr. Baxter's history of his life and times*, **I**, 1713, 67.

47   *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com/>, article on Hezekiah Burton.

48   M. Henry, *A Sermon*, 50–2, 58.

49   W. Phillips and J. E. Auden, 'The Ottley Papers (2nd series)', *Trans. Shrops. Archaeol. Soc.*, **XXXIV [4th series, I]**, 1911, 304–5, 308.

50   A. G. Matthews, *Calamy Revised*, 1934, 474; TNA: SP 29/110, fo. 152.

51   John Gell, 1613–1689, inherited the baronetcy in 1671 on the death of his father; N. H. Keeble and G. F. Nuttall (eds.), *Calendar of the correspondence of Richard Baxter*, **II**, 1991, 48–9.

52   G. Lyon Turner, *Original records of early nonconformity*, **I**, 1911, 55.

53   S. Jefferson, *The History and Antiquities of Carlisle*, 1838, 230.

54   J. V. Cox (ed.), *The Travels of Francis Tallents in France and Switzerland 1671–1673*, 2011, 189–92, contains a very detailed description of this service of blessing the baptismal water and is a tribute to Tallents's prodigious memory.

55   M. Henry, *A sermon*, 53; Its present whereabouts is unknown. It is referred to in E. Calamy, *Nonconformist's memorial* (abridged and corrected by S. Palmer), **II**, 1775, 337.

56   SA: P257/E/3/1. Now published in full in J. V. Cox (ed.), *The Travels of Francis Tallents in France and Switzerland, 1671–1673*, 2011.

57   M. Henry, *A Sermon*, 53.

58   J. V. Cox (ed.), *The Travels of Francis Tallents in France and Switzerland, 1671–1673*, 2011, *passim*.

59   *Ibid.*, 205–12.

60   M. Henry, *A Sermon*, 54.

61   J. V. Cox, 'The Revd. Henry Maurice's Shropshire diary 1672', *Shropshire Record Series*, **IV**, *A Shropshire Miscellany*, 2000, 40.

62   SA: 3365/2260-3365/2267, Shrewsbury Borough Quarter Sessions rolls, 1674–1682.

63   M. Henry, *The Miscellaneous works of the Rev. Matthew Henry*, **II**, 1833, 1067.

64   A. S. Langley, 'Correspondence of Sir Edward Harley, K. B. and Rev. Francis Tallents', *Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society*, **VIII**, 1920–1923, 309–10.

65   M. Henry, *A Sermon*, 55.

66   J. C. Cliffe, *The Puritan gentry besieged, 1650–1700*, 1993, 260 note 23.

67   *The History of Parliament* <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/> shows that Richard Hampden of Great Hampden (1631–1695) was elected ten times between 1656–1695; Hugh Boscawen of Tregothnan (1625–1701) thirteen times between 1646–1701; Sir Edward Harley of Brampton Bryan (1624–1700), ten times between 1646 and 1695.

68   *Calendar of State Papers Domestic* [henceforth *CSPD*], *Charles II, XXII, 1680–1*, 1921, 86.

69   P. Henry, *Diaries and letters of Philip Henry, M.A.* (edited by M. H. Lee), 1882, 301.

70   *CSPD, Charles II, XXIII, 1682*, 1932, 343; *CSPD, Charles II, XXV, 1 July–September 30 1683*, 1934, 301.

71   M. Henry, *A Sermon*, 56.

72   P. Henry, *Diaries and letters of Philip Henry, M.A.* (edited by M. H. Lee), 1882, 306, [1684] 'Oct. 3, Mr. Tallent's Tables of History came forth about this time, a work of much labor and cost. I read one which hee bestow'd on mee, with fowr more to bee dispos'd of as wee can.'

73   *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com/> article on Francis Hutchinson; F Tallents, *A View of Universal History*, 1695 edition, copy in the library of Cambridge University, with a manuscript endorsement by Francis Hutchinson.

74   James Clerk, engraver, fl. 1680–1695.

75   M. Henry, *A Sermon*, 55–6; D. Rosenberg and A. Grafton, *Cartographies of Time*, 2010, 76, The most popular chronology of the 17th century was Christopher Helvig, *Theatrum historicum et chronologicum* published in 1609 and later editions.

76   J. V. Cox (ed.), *The Travels of Francis Tallents in France and Switzerland, 1671–1673*, 2011, 196.

77   J. Rou, *Mémoires inédits et opuscules*, 1857, xii.

78   J. Rou, *Mémoires inédits et opuscules*, 1857, 128 footnote 1, 216–17 footnotes 1 and 2; David Agnew, *Protestant exiles from France*, index volume, 1874, 119.

79   John Wilmot, 2nd Earl of Rochester, 1647–1680.

80   Statius, *Publius Papinius Statius with an English translation by J. H. Mozley*, **I**, 1928, 294–5, 'May that day perish from time's record, nor future generations believe it. Let us at least keep silence, and suffer the crimes of our own house to be buried deep in whelming darkness.'

81   J. Hunter (ed.), *Letters of eminent men addressed to Ralph Thoresby, F.R.S.*, **I**, 1832, 62.

82   TNA: PROB 11/395/201, will of Sir John Gell of Hopton, baronet, proved PCC 14 May 1689.

83   J. Buchanan-Brown (ed.), *The Remains of Thomas Hearne*, 1966, 213; P. Doddridge, Correspondence and diary, **V**, 1831, 281; J. Priestley, *The Theological and miscellaneous works of Joseph Priestley*, **XXIV**, 1826, 130–1.

84   J. Hunter (ed.), *Letters of eminent men addressed to Ralph Thoresby, F.R.S.*, **I**, 1832, 261.

85   E. Wolf, 'A Parcel of Books for the Province in 1700', *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, **LXXXIX**, **4**, Oct. 1965, 441, the price set by Churchill for Tallents's' *View* was 16 shillings.

86   W. Phillips, 'The Lords-Lieutenant of Shropshire', *Trans. Shrops. Archaeol. Soc.*, **XXVII [3rd series, IV]**, 1904, 179.

87   J. B. Williams, *Eighteen sermons by the Rev. Philip Henry, A. M. ... also two sermons preached on his death, the one, by the Rev. Francis Tallents, A. M. ...*, 1816, 17–18.

88   J. C. Cliffe, *The Puritan gentry besieged, 1650–1700*, 1993, 187.

89   W. Phillips, 'The Lords-Lieutenant of Shropshire', *Trans. Shrops. Archaeol. Soc.*, **XXVII [3rd series, IV]**, 1904, 180–1.

90   M. Henry, *A Sermon*, 56.

91   H. D. Roberts, *Matthew Henry and his chapel 1662–1900*, c.1901, 60. Unfortunately the minister is not named.

92   M. Goldie, *The Entring book of Roger Morrice*, **IV**, *The Reign of James II, 1687–1689*, 2007, 70.

93   W. Tong, *An Account of the life and death of Matthew Henry*, 1716, 70–1.

94   J. Barker, *Shrewsbury Free Churches*, n.d., 28–30.

95   M. Henry, *A Sermon*, 57.

96   J. T. Cliffe, *The Puritan gentry besieged, 1650–1700*, 1993, 152–3.

97   M. Henry, *A Sermon*, 57–8.

98   E. Calamy, *An account of the ministers, lecturers, masters and fellows of colleges and schoolmasters who were ejected or silenced after the Restoration in 1660, by, or before, the Act of Uniformity*, **II**, 1713, 552–5, contains an abridgement of it; A. S. Langley, Correspondence of Sir Edward Harley, K. B. and Rev. Francis Tallents', *Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society*, **VIII**, 1920–1923, 270. The tract is not known to have been published.

99   N. H. Keeble and G. F. Nuttall (eds.), *Calendar of the correspondence of Richard Baxter*, **II**, 1991, 304.

100 A. S. Langley, Correspondence of Sir Edward Harley, K. B. and Rev. Francis Tallents', *Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society*, **VIII**, 1920–1923, 313.

101 J. V. Cox, The People of God, Shrewsbury dissenters 1660–1699, Part 2, Biographies M–Z and Indexes, *Shropshire Record series*, **X**, 2007, 120.

102 SA: 3365/2430, Shrewsbury Borough Quarter Sessions order book, 1680–1719.

103 N. H. Keeble and G. F. Nuttall (eds.), *Calendar of the correspondence of Richard Baxter*, **II**, 1991, 304.

104 M. Henry, *A Sermon*, 60.

105 J. Buchanan-Brown, *The Remains of Thomas Hearne*, 1966, 213.

106 Published by Awnsham Churchill, who was also one of the distributors of *A View of Universal History*.

107 J. T. Cliffe, *The Puritan gentry besieged, 1650–1700*, 1993, 51, 76.

108 A. S. Langley, Correspondence of Sir Edward Harley, K. B. and Rev. Francis Tallents', *Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society*, **VIII**, 1920–1923, 270–3, 308–13.

109 M. Henry, *A Sermon*, 64.

110 J. Hunter (ed.), *Letters of eminent men addressed to Ralph Thoresby, F.R.S.*, **I**, 1832, 261.

111 Now in the Huntington Library, California. The title page (recto and verso) is endorsed in Tallents's own handwriting.

112 Shrewsbury School Library, Benefactors Book 1596–1766.

113 J. Hunter (ed.), *Letters of eminent men addressed to Ralph Thoresby, F.R.S.*, **I**, 1832, 260–1, 315.

114 M. Henry, *The Miscellaneous works of the Rev. Matthew Henry,* **I**, 1833, 148; A wonderful portrait of her painted by Sir Peter Lely hangs in Weston Park.

115 Particular evidence of his considerable knowledge of books and their authors is to be found in the pages of J. V. Cox, *The Travels of Francis Tallents in France and Switzerland 1671–1673*, 2011, passim, and in F. Tallents, *A short history of schism*, 1705, passim.

116 J. C. Cliffe, *The Puritan gentry besieged, 1650–1700*, 1993, 204.

117 A. S. Langley, Correspondence of Sir Edward Harley, K. B. and Rev. Francis Tallents', *Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society*, **VIII**, 1920–1923, 310–11.

118 A. G. Matthews, *Calamy Revised*, 1934, xliv.

119 Reginald Findlow, ejected from Stottesdon, died in 1713, and David Jenks, ejected from Bryngwyn in Radnorshire, died in 1724, were probably the only Shropshire ministers ejected at the Restoration who died after Tallents.

120 Lichfield Record Office: B/C/11, Will of John Wood of Fitz, sometime Fellow of Magdalene College in Cambridge, proved LCC 25 November 1692.

121 A. S. Langley, Correspondence of Sir Edward Harley, K. B. and Rev. Francis Tallents', *Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society*, **VIII**, 1920–1923, 306–7.
122 J. Scott, *Algernon Sidney and the restoration crisis 1677–1683*, 1991, 280–1.
123 P. Henry, *Diaries and letters of Philip Henry, M. A.* (edited by M. H. Lee), 1882, 379.
124 J. B. Williams, *Eighteen sermons by the Rev. Philip Henry, A. M. ... also two sermons preached on his death, the one, by the Rev. Francis Tallents, A. M. …*, 1816, vii–viii, 17–18.
125 J. Hunter (ed.), *Letters of eminent men addressed to Ralph Thoresby, F.R.S.*, **II**, 1832, 43–4.
126 Samuel Grascome, an Anglican clergyman and non-juror.
127 'You read only your own books, you love only those of your own opinion, you condemn others without a hearing'.
128 M. Henry, *A Sermon*, 60–1.
129 A. N. Palmer, *A History of the older nonconformity of Wrexham and its neighbourhood*, *c*.1888, 55; H. D. Roberts, *Matthew Henry and his chapel 1662–1900*, *c*.1901, 109–10.
130 Derbyshire Record Office: D258/38/11/49, letter from Francis Tallents to Elizabeth Gell, dated 5 July 1704.
131 M. Henry, *The Miscellaneous Works of the Rev. Matthew Henry, V. D. M.*, 1830, 1022.
132 W. Tong, *An Account of the life and death of Matthew Henry*, 1716, 208.
133 M. Henry, *A Sermon*, 71–2; 'The remains of Master Francis Tallents, formerly senior fellow of Magdalene College, Cambridge, afterwards public preacher in this church from the year 1652 to August 24 1662, who, after various labours, awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life, finally died in the 89th year of his age, the month and day —'.
134 Lichfield Record Office: B/C/11, will of Francis Tallents of Shrewsbury proved LCC 30 April 1708.
135 SA: P257/E/3/1. For a description of the descent of this Journal, see J. V. Cox (ed.), *The Travels of Francis Tallents in France and Switzerland, 1671–1673*, 2011, vii–viii.
136 J. Hunter (ed.), *Letters of eminent men addressed to Ralph Thoresby, F.R.S.*, **II**, 1832, 162.
137 SA: NO4335/10/6, List of legacies and benefactions to the Meeting in Shrewsbury.
138 N. H. Keeble and G. F. Nuttall (eds.), *Calendar of the correspondence of Richard Baxter*, **I**, 1991, 82.

The Life and Times of William Lawley, Former Secretary of the Wenlock Olympian Society: The Revaluation of a Victorian Criminal Lunatic

By TIMOTHY PETERS, JOANNE SMITH AND GWEN ADSHEAD

Abstract: William Lawley (1843–1924) was from a well-established family in Much Wenlock, Shropshire. He was a successful business man and contributed to several public offices and most notably with Dr. Penny Brookes, the Wenlock Olympian Games, the forerunner of the re-emergence of the International Olympic Games in 1905. These important contributions are recorded and discussed. However in 1897 Lawley became seriously mentally ill and was admitted to a private asylum in Stafford. In August 1898 he was discharged, apparently well, to the care of his sister in Manchester, but returned to Much Wenlock and murdered his wife. He was found guilty but insane at the Shropshire Assizes and detained at Her Majesty's Pleasure in Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum and associated institutions for some 30 years. With the strong support of a living descendant the relevant Broadmoor records have been made available and Lawley's clinical course, management and diagnoses ascertained throughout his illness and confinement. In particular, his conditional discharge to the care of the Salvation Army Hadleigh Farm Colony in Essex has been investigated. A retrospective diagnosis of psychotic depression has been noted by current Broadmoor staff. Applying the computer-assisted diagnostic programme (OPCRIT) to the available features, atypical psychosis with depression has been put forward as a diagnosis: no evidence of dementia has been identified by analysis of his letters. It is suggested that William Lawley suffered from an affective psychosis with somatic and persecutory delusions and only a partial remission at his initial hospital discharge, which was against the advice of his local doctor and unfortunately for his wife without adequate safe-guards, although she would have been particularly at risk.

> The evil that men do lives after them,
> The good is oft interred with their bones.
> [*Julius Caesar; Act III, Sc.2, ln.79.*]

Introduction

Much has been written about the nature of criminal lunatics: Margaret Nicholson (1786), Mary Lamb (1796), James Hadfield (1800) and Daniel McNaughton (1843), in the 18th and 19th centuries, provided the basis for the legal, medical and physical establishment of Broadmoor and similar institutions.[1-6] However, little is known about the subsequent 'routine cases', their background, the nature and the cause of their mental illness and subsequently their treatment and its outcome. The following case study reports such a patient, including his premorbid background, the nature of his mental illness including initial and current diagnoses, his domestic violence, his judicial conviction and his subsequent care. Contact with a living descendant has provided additional information and assisted with access to the Broadmoor records. The application of recently-introduced computer diagnostics of historical figures assists in objectively formulating the nature of their illness with respect to recent diagnostic criteria and has been applied to William Lawley.[7]

At the time of his illness and offence the subject was well-known locally as someone who had contributed considerably to society, but the stigma of his illness and offence remains a significant local issue, and his major

contribution to the famous Wenlock Olympic Society, the precursor of the modern Olympic Games has been forgotten.

Case Study

Background

William Lawley (1843–1924) was from a well-established Shropshire family (Figure 1). Lawleys in Shropshire date back at least to the Middle Ages and may have originated in the township of Lawley (Lauleia) near Wellington, where de Lawley freeholders are recorded in 1415. By the 16th century they were wealthy landowners.[8] In 1545 a Thomas Lawley purchased the Much Wenlock Priory buildings and land-holdings following the Dissolution of the Monasteries by Henry VIII.[9] The family continued as significant contributors to Shropshire society, including as Members of Parliament, culminating in 1831 with Robert Lawley becoming Baron Wenlock.[10–11] However, their relationship to William Lawley's family in not clear.[12]

The Lawleys were successful business men. Thomas Lawley (1800–1870) established a printing press and stationers in Wilmore Street in 1831. His son, William, continued the successful business until the tragedy in 1898. William Lawley was born, raised and spent his active life in Much Wenlock. Figure 2 illustrates the quality of his work in 1895 and indicates his close links and involvement with the Wenlock Olympian Society.

Wenlock Olympian Society Games

A detailed account of the Society, including its origins, participants and officials, and its influence on the International Olympic Games is available in the recent book *Born out of Wenlock* by Catherine Beale.[13] Details of the Wenlock Olympian Society are available, including events, participants and visitors, committee meetings, correspondence, financial records and photographs, and they may be consulted in the Society's Offices in Much Wenlock.

The Lawleys and Dr. Penny Brookes, founder of the Wenlock Agricultural Reading Society (WARS), the precursor of the Wenlock Games, were next-door neighbours in Wilmore Street in Much Wenlock, and both were closely involved in social and municipal activities. The contribution of Brookes has recently been recorded in detail, but those of Lawley have been largely overlooked.[13–15] Thus Brookes founded the WARS in 1841, but by 1849 the more then 1,000 volumes in the library were housed next door in the Lawley printing shop and were publicly available to readers. The first Wenlock Olympian Games (WOS), an offshoot of WARS, were held in 1850 with Brookes as President and Thomas Lawley a committee member.

It is likely that the Lawley brothers attended the nearby Much Wenlock National School, where Brookes was the manager and encouraged compulsory physical education.[10, 12, 14] William Lawley successfully participated in the games during the 1860s and 1870s, but because he had entered a local race with monetary prizes he was regarded as a professional athlete, and thus was ineligible as a prize winner. He was, however, an active member of WOS: Secretary 1880–1897, Treasurer 1883–1890, and Referee and Judge 1871–1895. No definite photograph of Lawley has been located, but is is believed that the second figure from the left in front of the railing is Lawley (Figure 3). This individual is seen in similar prominent positions in other photographs of the Games.[13]

There is a suggestion that a public contretemps between Lawley and members of the WOS committee in 1891 was the first indicator of his forthcoming mental illness.[13] The Shrewsbury Chronicle of Friday 27 March 1891 reported:

> 'Wenlock Olympian Society. On Wednesday evening a general meeting of this popular society was held at the Raven Hotel, under the presidency of Lyde Benson, Esq. Amongst those also present were – Dr. W. P. Brookes...The Chairman said it was with regret he had heard Mr. Lawley, their secretary, had resigned. Mr. Steadman explained that no resignation had been received, but Mr. Lawley had informed several of the committee he would have no more to do with their society. The chairman suggested that Mr. Lawley be sent for, which was done, but the messenger was informed he was from home…'

The basis and accuracy of this report is not clear. The Minutes of the Wenlock Olympian Society for 3 April 1891 record the attendance and unanimous re-election of Lawley as Secretary. It is noteworthy that Lawley ceased to act as Treasurer from 1891, but he remained actively involved with the Society and the games and he received a salary of £10 per annum as secretary.[16] This episode may reflect Lawley's personal financial problems, as noted in the following account of his business activities. Following his admission to Coton Hill Asylum on 31 August 1897 the Society Minutes of 3 November 1897 record:

> 'That the Society finding with much regret that owing to Mr. W Lawley's continued illness…[they] desire to place on record their appreciation of the zeal and energy which he always displayed in conducting the affairs of the Society: a Society which, in no small measure, owes its very existence to his labours'.[16]

Thomas LAWLEY

Mary PREECE — Married: 02 Dec 1789 in Eaton under Heywood, Shropshire

Elizabeth LAWLEY 1792 - Born: Abt. 1792 in Munslow, Shropshire

John LAWLEY 1795 - Born: Abt. 1795 in Munslow, Shropshire

Mary LAWLEY 1798 - Born: Abt. 1798 in Munslow, Shropshire

Thomas LAWLEY 1800 - 1870, Born: Abt. 1800 in Bouldon, Shropshire, Baptism: 01 Jun 1800 Munslow, Died: 1870 in Madeley district

Jane CHEESE 1804 - 1869, Born: Abt. 1804 in Bridgnorth, Married: 20 Oct 1826 in Much Wenlock, Shropshire, Died: 1869 in Wellington district

Esther LAWLEY 1802 - Born: Abt. 1802 in Munslow, Shropshire

Richard LAWLEY 1804 - Born: Abt. 1804 in Munslow, Shropshire

Sarah LAWLEY 1807 - Born: Abt. 1807 in Munslow, Shropshire

Mary LAWLEY 1809 - Born: Abt. 1809 in Munslow, Shropshire

Elizabeth LAWLEY 1846 - Born: 1846 in Much Wenlock

Stephen LAWLEY 1828 - 1903, Born: 1828 in Much Wenlock, Baptism: 30 Sep 1827 Much Wenlock, Died: 1903 in Hendon

Henry LAWLEY 1829 - 1836, Born: 1829 in Much Wenlock, Baptism: 19 Aug 1829 Much Wenlock, Died: 1836, Burial: 06 Jan 1836 Much Wenlock

Lucy LAWLEY 1831 - Born: 1831 in Much Wenlock, Baptism: 23 Oct 1831 Much Wenlock

John TREVOR 1831 - 1899, Born: 1831 in Much Wenlock, Married: 1858 in Stockport district, Died: 06 Apr 1899

Fanny LAWLEY 1835 - Born: 1835 in Much Wenlock, Baptism: 09 May 1834 Much Wenlock

Jane LAWLEY 1836 - Born: 1836 in Much Wenlock, Baptism: 30 Sep 1836 Much Wenlock

Anthony Prince Married: 05 Jun 1862 in St John's, Manchester

Henry LAWLEY 1839 - 1918, Born: 1839 in Much Wenlock, Baptism: 11 Nov 1838 Much Wenlock, Died: 1918 in Huddersfield

Mary LAWLEY 1841 - Born: 1841 in Much Wenlock, Baptism: 28 Aug 1840 Much Wenlock

William LAWLEY 1843 - 1924, Born: 1843 in Much Wenlock, Died: 22 Apr 1924 in Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum, Berkshire

Helen Sarah SHIRLEY 1858 - 1898, Born: Abt. 1858 in Madeley district, Married: 1876 in Much Wenlock, Died: 17 Jul 1898 in Much Wenlock, Shropshire

Alfred Edward TREVOR 1871 - Born: 1871 in Much Wenlock

Rose Madeline PRINCE 1875 - 1938, Born: 1875 in Much Wenlock, Died: Jun 1938 in Southport district, Note: Married first cousin

Shirley Frank LAWLEY 1879 - 1942, Born: Sep 1879 in Much Wenlock, Shropshire, Died: 13 Apr 1942 in The Infirmary, Southport, Lancashire, Note: Married first cousin

Violet May LAWLEY 1883 - 1963, Born: 20 Jul 1883 in Wilmore St, Wenlock, Shropshire, Died: 03 Jul 1963 in 1 Old Bexley Lane, Dartford, Kent

Charles Henry CLEWLEY 1880 - 1947, Born: 1880 in Lichfield, Staffordshire, Married: 28 Dec 1903 in St Mary, Kingswinford, Died: 11 Sep 1947 in Queen Victoria Nursing Institution, Bath Road, Wolverhampton

Charles G CLEWLEY 1910 - 1924, Born: Dec 1910 in Stourbridge district, Died: Mar 1924 in Stourbridge district

Frank Albert CLEWLEY 1918 - 1979, Born: 03 Apr 1918 in Wall Heath, Kingswinford, Died: Mar 1979 in Greenwich district

Sheila FURNISS Married: Jun 1947 in Sutton Coldfield district

Figure 1 Lawley family tree. William Lawley highlighted.

Figure 2 Wenlock Olympian Society Poster, 1895. Produced by William Lawley. (Reproduced by courtesy of the Wenlock Olympian Society.)

Figure 3 The Crowning of the Champion Tilter, Charles Ainsworth, at the 1887 Wenlock Olympian Games. Dr. William Penny Brookes is the bemedalled man to the right and William Lawley is possibly to the left of the crowning persons. (Reproduced by courtesy of the Wenlock Olympian Society.)

Business and Community Affairs

Lawley was clearly an efficient and successful businessman, at least until 1890, and probably until the onset of his mental illness in June–July 1897. His father, a former post master, established a printing and stationery business in Much Wenlock in 1835. William Lawley, initially with his mother, extended the business to include book selling and fancy goods until 1897. Subsequently it was passed to his nephew, Alfred Edward Trevor, and re-located to 9 High Street, Much Wenlock.[17] No detailed accounts are available, but the business seems to have been successful. Lawley was able to pay the fees for nine months of in-patient care at the private asylum at Stafford.

William Lawley was very much involved with the Wenlock Gas Works (1856–1958), and this might have contributed financial difficulties. The establishment of the gasworks, initially proposed in 1852, was a further contribution of Dr. Penny Brookes to Much Wenlock, and he remained Chairman and Director of the Company until its sale to Lawley in 1890. It was built along traditional lines, with two batteries of retorts and three gasholders distributing coal gas to increasingly the centre and residential areas of the town, including street lighting.[18] From its early days there were continuing financial and staffing difficulties, with frequent changes of Company Secretary and engineer. In 1872 the gasworks were leased to John Gill, who absconded in 1885, leaving considerable unpaid rent, and Lawley was appointed part time Company Secretary at £5 per annum (half that paid to his predecessor) in 1876.[19] The Company tried to sell the gasworks to the local Sanitary Board for £1,700 in 1885, but could not agree a price. It was sold to Lawley for £1,600, and the company wound up, in 1890. It was subsequently sold by Lawley to the Town Council in 1897–8 for £1,500.[19] It has been suggested that Lawley's subsequent depression was related to the low price paid to him for the gasworks.[18] Recurrent problems, exacerbated by the First World War, the general strike and technical difficulties led to the sale to the Ironbridge and District Gas Co. for £3,500 in 1937. They operated the works until nationalisation in 1948.[18] A hazard for workers in the coal gas industry is neurological damage, including dementia and Parkinsonism due to chronic carbon monoxide poisoning, and this might have contributed to Lawley's mental health problems.[20]

Correspondence between Lawley and his solicitor concerning a mortgage contribution of £1,000 towards the cost of the gasworks on 29 May 1890 contains a balanced and well-reasoned account of the price paid and the potential running and replacement costs of the gas works.[19] In addition there is correspondence, with deeds and leases concerning a mortgage agreement between Lawley (mortgagee) and Helen Cooper (mortgagor) between 31 August 1895 and 1 May 1897, which indicates appropriate processing.[21]

Public Services

William Lawley contributed to the public services of Much Wenlock, including being Assistant Overseer and Collector of Rates for the Poor Law Union (1879–98), Registrar of Births and Deaths for Wenlock Sub-district of Madeley Union (1885–98), Vaccination Officer for Much Wenlock (1885–1898), Proprietor of the gas works (1890–7), and Collector for Wenlock Sanitary Division (1891–1897). This information is collated from the Trade Directories for Much Wenlock (1870–1900) and the Madeley Poor Law Minute Books.[22] William Lawley's duties as Assistant Overseer, Registrar and Vaccination Officer were undertaken by his wife, Helen, during his hospitalisation in 1897–8.[23] The Poor Law facilities of Shropshire including the Madeley Workhouse have recently been reviewed.[24]

Mental Illness

Although William Lawley's mental illness extended from 1897 to his death in 1924, it is conveniently subdivided into the following components for analysis: Coton Hill Asylum, 1897–8; Helen Lawley's murder and Shrewsbury Court records 1898; Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum, 1898–1924.

Coton Hill Asylum Admission (31 August 1897–1 July 1898)

Coton Hill Asylum (1854–1976), Stafford, was a private asylum, built to supplement the Staffordshire General Lunatic Asylum (1818). An impressive building (Figure 4) with luxurious facilities, it was demolished and replaced in 1983 by the now notorious Mid-Staffordshire Hospital. Although the medical records for this period are not directly available, copies of the admission and discharge medical reports were produced at the Shropshire Assizes and are available.[26]

A Petition for an Order for Reception of a Private Patient, signed by Helen Sarah Lawley, dated 31 August 1897, stated: 'He is very violent and we cannot manage him at home'. An Annex to the Petition, also dated 31 August 1897, signed by William Gregory Norris, Justice for the Borough of Wenlock, stated that the attack was of duration about one month and was of unknown cause. The patient was not subject to epilepsy, and was considered dangerous to others but it was unknown whether he was suicidal. No near relation had been afflicted with insanity.
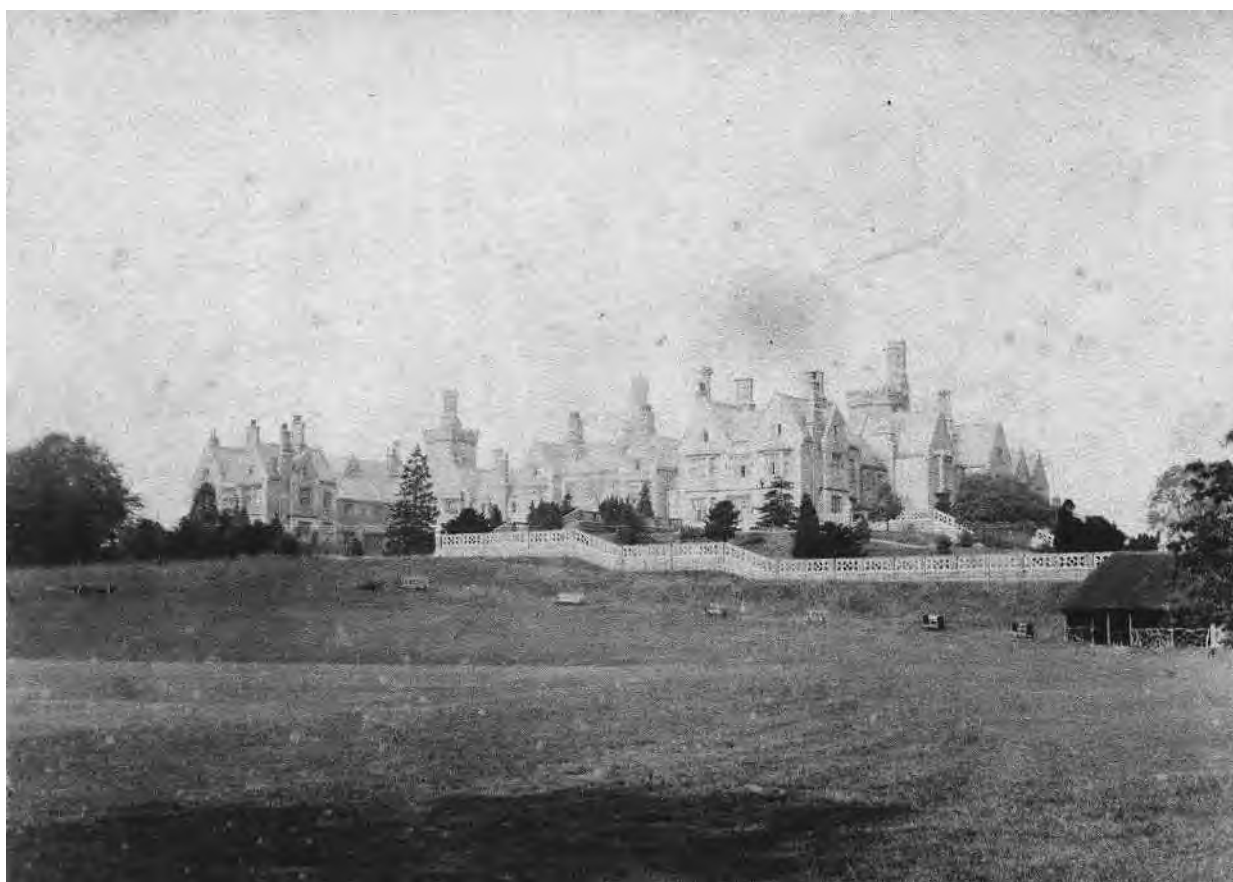

Figure 4   Coton Hill Asylum, *c*.1900; male side. (Reproduced by courtesy of the William Salt Library, Staffordshire Record Office [Stafford 161A].)

Two certificates of Much Wenlock medical practioners are available of the same date. Francis Josiah Hart:

'He is under the delusion that his relatives are trying to kill him and he also said that his medical attendant had injected something other than morphine hypodermically to take away his life. He refused food saying that it is poisoned. He is delirious and sleepless and violent at time requiring considerable restraint. These facts have been related to me by his sister Mrs Jane Prince'. Allan Grant Mackenzie, FRCS Edinburgh: He says his food is poisoned and that he is dying and will go to hell. Sometimes he will not speak, and another time he will get violent and infuriated and talk incoherently. His wife Mrs. Helen Sarah Lawley confirms the above. He has been suffering from want of sleep for some weeks, and at times refuses food. On August 29th 1897 he attempted to strangle her'.

Herbert William Hewson LRCP and LRCS Edinburgh (1850–1924: Medical Superintendent of Coton Hill Asylum, 1889–1924) signed a Deposition for the legal proceedings against William Lawley on 26 July 1898:

'…The accused was admitted to Coton Hill Asylum on the 31st day of August 1897...as a private patient. During the time accused was with me I received numerous letters from his wife begging for his release…I saw the accused and his wife on several occasions together when she visited the Asylum, they used to walk about the grounds together and as far as I could see were upon the most affectionate terms. On the 18th day of May 1898 accused was allowed out on Order of Trial, signed by 2 members of the Committee for one month, in charge of an Attendant named Albert Bentley. By request of accused's wife the time was extended from the 18th of June 1898 to 2nd July 1898. During that time reports from the Attendant came to my Asylum. In consequence of a letter I received from a Doctor at Manchester [Dr. Nolan] I withdrew the Attendant and removed accused's name from the Books of the Asylum giving the requisite notices to the Lunacy Commission. The Attendant left on the 2nd July 1889'.

Some of the evidence at his trial relates to his behaviour and symptomotology before his murder of his wife. Allan Grant Mackenzie, FRCS Edin:

'I have attended Mr. and Mrs. Lawley for several years. In August 1897 I attended William Lawley for lunacy and he was then sent to Coton Hill Asylum at Stafford. He was then suffering from melancholia and occasional excitement. He assaulted his wife two nights before his removal to Stafford and attempted to strangle her. I have seen him from time to time since at Coton Hill, the last time being on May 7th [1898]. He was then better bodily and much clearer in his mind than he had been in March but was still depressed and said that he should not live long and that I knew that well. I did not think him fit to leave the asylum. I then advised his wife not to have him at home. On account of expense I advised her to have him removed to a cheaper asylum'.

Jane Prince:
'I am the wife of Anthony Prince of…Old Trafford, Manchester. I am the sister of William Lawley. About eight weeks before the 16th inst. [July, 1898] he came to stay at my house from Coton Hill Asylum, Stafford. For the first six weeks, he had a keeper but afterward he was at liberty but we always looked after hm. He was during the time he was with us more or less depressed and suffered very much from delusions and was very melancholy. He was always talking of dying and said he could never go to Heaven and that the thought troubled him very much. I last saw him on Saturday the 16th inst. at my front gate about half past ten at night... He often told me he would be glad when the time came that he would be able to go home again. He always spoke affectionately of his wife. He told me that he could not bear to think that he was going to die and leave her behind to marry again. He told me this once or twice during that week'.

Murder of Helen Sarah Lawley (17 July 1898)

The events leading up to the murder, the murder itself and the immediate aftermath and inquest and trial are fully described in the criminal proceedings and reported extensively and accurately in the local papers most notably the *Shrewsbury Chronicle* (22 July–2 December 1898).

Late on the evening of 16 July 1898 Lawley took the night mail train from Manchester to Shrewsbury. He did not purchase a ticket, and the excess fare receipt for 5*s*. 3*d*. [26p.] for a <u>return fare</u> was issued at Crewe. He had previously, in the name of W. Jones, pawned his silver watch and gold chain for £2 10*s*. 0*d*. on 30 June and 4 July respectively. Some of the money was used to purchase a cut-throat razor. Arriving in Shrewsbury, he hired a horse drawn cab at approximately 3.00 a. m. in the name of William Jones, but walked part of the twelve miles to Much Wenlock, arriving at 7.00 a. m. He was admitted by his wife to his house in Wilmore Street, and he cut her throat

from behind, in spite of attempts by their daughter, Violet May, aged 15, to prevent him. She half carried her dying mother across the Bull Ring to the school master's house, where Mrs. Lawley died in the arms of her daughter. The neighbouring police were called, and Lawley was arrested, with some resistance, in his house. He was charged by Sergeant Derbyshire, admitting the offence: 'I have killed the best little woman on earth', and was remanded in custody.

On the following day at Ironbridge Magistrates Court when the charge was read to him by the Magistrate's Clerk, Lawley replied: 'No; it's all right what he says. I have not been accountable for my actions for the last twelve months. I went to Manchester to my sister's, and, intending to do me good, she supplied me with drink. This maddened me and this is the terrible result'.

He was subsequently charged with wilful murder at the Shropshire Autumn Assizes on 29 November 1898. The evidence and various medical reports were presented and, without calling the defence team, the jury found him guilty of murder, but insane at the time, and the Judge (The Hon. Sir Edward Ridley) ordered him to be kept in custody until Her Majesty's Pleasure be known.[27] He was admitted to Broadmoor Special Hospital (Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum as it was then known) on 5 December 1898.

Broadmoor Hospital and Associated Institutions (5 December 1898–22 April 1924)

Independent psychiatric reports prepared for the Shrewsbury court proceedings were transferred to Broadmoor Hospital and contributed to their initial diagnostic assessments.[26]

Arthur Strange, MD, Medical Superintendent, Salop and Montgomery Counties Asylum:

'Report on the mental condition of William Lawley, now in H. M. Prison at Shrewsbury. "As to his present condition, I consider that the prisoner is insane in so far that he is not in full possession of his senses. I think that he is capable of replying to questions put to him when required to plead to the indictment. He says he understands the nature of his crime, and what he is in prison for.
"I visited the prison on Nov. 12th and was with him for some considerable time...During my interview, prisoner was quiet and replied to questions, he appeared very depressed and apparently cares very little of what becomes of him.
"Up to the time of the murder, prisoner appears to have been in a morbid condition of mind imagining that he was going to die and was being poisoned. He made frequent complaints as to his treatment at Coton Hill and at Manchester, his chief complaint being that the authorities ought to have taken hold of him and put him in a strait jacket, and that force ought to have been used against him, and that he should have been strapped down and compelled to take his food. He is very bitter against the Doctor at Coton Hill but apparently not because he was ill-treated. Makes the same complaint as to the Prison, and says his food is too good and that he ought to have the common diet. He repeats these statements and others to the same effect over and over again. The Prisoner's recollections of what took place on the day before and on the morning of the Murder are very hazy, said he must been acting under some influence, and that he ought to have been restrained, he makes a somewhat similar remark concerning a previous attempt to strangle his wife and asserts that the sleeping draught he had were the cause of this...
"He also says he had too much stout, both at Coton Hill and in Manchester. All his statements about Medicine, Food, and drink are confused and contradictory. The prisoner is very firm in his idea that if he had been differently treated all this would not have happened...
"He states that when at Coton Hill, he suffered from wretched thoughts, that he heard voices from the Evil One, telling him to do certain things and he was under the Evil impression all the time and that his brain and nervous system were poisoned by the small room.
"I gathered from him that he had suffered from some disease of the scalp in 1880 when he consulted Dr. Wade of Birmingham and Dr. Gale of Manchester, he asserts that the medicine given him there were the beginning of his illness...
"Prisoner appears to be a quiet inoffensive man of affectionate disposition and to have been very attached to his Wife. During the time he has been insane a fixed idea or delusion has taken hold of him viz. that he is going to die and he appears to have had a great dread of leaving his wife behind him & this idea probably grew on a brain already weakened and although it is difficult to say that he did not to some extent know what he was doing when he started for home, I am of opinion that his mind was in such a state of confusion that he did not realize the nature of his actions..." '.

Lawley's Broadmoor notes indicate a symptom-based approach rather than a disease classification attitude to psychiatric disorders. Thus in December 1898 he was considered 'hypochondriacally melancholic', in 1905 he was

labelled 'chronic delusional insanity' and in 1907 'melancholia and of unsound mind'. On 7 November 1912 he was transferred to Rampton Secure Hospital, built as overflow facility for Broadmoor, especially for patients from the Midlands and North of England. In August 1916 he was described as 'rational' and discharged to the care of the Salvation Army Farm Colony at Hadleigh in Essex.[28] The Salvation Army was one of the organisations to which HMP inmates of Broadmoor were conditionally discharged if there were no suitable relatives available.[1] A letter written by Lawley from Hadleigh to the Superintendent at Rampton is of interest as it allows an analysis of handwriting changes from earlier correspondence (Figure 5).

However in January 1919 he was re-admitted to Broadmoor, having attempted suicide by drowning, and he was found to have a knife and scissors on his person. At that time he was labelled as suffering from 'melancholia' and this was also noted in January 1920, the date of his last available report.

Lawley apparently received no medications during his time at Broadmoor, apart from a digestive draught which he was prescribed on admission in 1899, but he failed to take. Psychiatric treatment in Broadmoor in the late Victorian era was based on the concept of moral management, in which the patient was removed from external pressures and given a regular routine of daily exercise, occupation, regular meals and plenty of fresh air.[1, 5, 6] Most patients were gainfully employed, females in the laundry or kitchen or in general cleaning, and males as skilled or unskilled labourers. Lawley did not appear to have undertaken any work as such in either Broadmoor or Rampton, but he probably availed himself of the extensive libraries available. The Broadmoor notes also record on three occasions, in 1898, 1905, and 1920, that the supposed cause of his illness was 'Not known'.

Based on his altruistic homicide, age of onset of illness and later suicide attempt, a retrospective diagnosis of Psychotic Depression has been put forward by Broadmoor staff.

Discussion

The aim of this project was to research the life and times of William Lawley, both his personal and family life, and his civic contributions, but in particular to determine, if possible, the nature, cause and consequences of his mental illness. The understanding of his mental illness in terms of late Victorian concepts differs considerably from those of today, which continue to develop. It has been argued by social historians that this interpretation of medical disorders, particularly psychiatric disease, is a Whigish approach and is inappropriate.[29] However this view has been challenged by medical historians and there are clear benefits from this approach. [30]

Currently Psychiatric diagnosis is classified against a number of internationally recognised criteria: International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10) and the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders of the American Psychiatric Association (DSM I–V). In addition there are other specific diagnostic criteria, notably Research Diagnostic Criteria (RDC).[31]

These diagnostic criteria have been used manually with living patients, or their clinical case notes, principally for research purposes. However, recently these diagnostic criteria have been incorporated into a computer based diagnosis programme: Operational Criteria in Studies of Psychotic Illness (OPCRIT).[32] This system provides good reliability across a wide range of raters.[33] This technique has recently been reliably applied to a wide range of historical figures.[7, 34]

Figure 6 summarises the OPCRIT diagnoses for Lawley with those listed in the medical reports and hospital records. On his admission to Coton Hill the various diagnostic criteria indicate an atypical or nonspecific psychotic episode. In contrast, the contemporary diagnosis was that of insanity and melancholia. This diagnosis would have a more favourable outcome and might account for Lawley's discharge and the early withdrawal of the care attendant, and their subsequent disastrous consequences. Lawley's family doctor, William Mackenzie, recognised the more serious nature of his mental illness at this time, and advised against the patient's discharge, but his advice was not accepted.

Lawley's OPCRIT diagnoses on his admission to Broadmoor also indicate atypical or non-specific psychosis, but with depression, although the contemporary diagnoses were chronic delusional insanity and hypochondriacally melancholic. The documents thus provide a sad account of Lawley's decline and the family homicide which led to his admission to Broadmoor. It seems that he became 'melancholic', and records describe fixed delusions that he was being poisoned and that he had some form of disease. These delusions led him to be distressed and agitated and to attack his wife. There is thus a good case that this was an affective psychosis rather than a schizophrenic illness, i.e. Lawley developed depression which was sufficiently severe to cause loss of reality testing and the development of fixed distorted beliefs. Everyone comments on his moodiness and misery, and his certainty that he was going to die, either from disease or from being poisoned. Somatic and persecutory delusions are very common in affective psychoses, especially the belief that one has a bodily disease which will kill.[35]

Tragically, family members, especially wives or partners, are always most at risk of homicide by the mentally ill.[36] It is thus sad that there was not more concern about the risk to Mrs. Lawley. No doubt this was because

CRITERIA	COTON HILL ADMISSION-1897	BROADMOOR ADMISSION-1898
DSM-III	Atypical Psychosis	Atypical Psychosis
DSM-IIIR	Psychotic Episode, not otherwise specified	Psychotic Disorder
DSM-IV	Atypical Psychosis	Atypical Psychosis
ICD-10	Non-organic Psychotic Syndrome	Non-organic Psychotic Syndrome
RDC	Unspecified Functional Psychosis	Major Depression
Contemporary Diagnoses	Insane; Melancholia	Chronic Delusional Insanity Hypochondriacally Melancholic

Figure 6 OPCRIT (OPerational CRITeria) 32 analysis of William Lawley's Hospital Admission Records.

she still evinced a lively attachment. The survival of this relationship during his illness is also indicative of an affective psychosis. The fact that Mrs. Lawley wanted him home indicates that she was not frightened of him, and he appeared to be the man she knew. The manner of her death suggests that he tried to kill her very quickly without any warning in an effort to spare her distress.

The risk of perpetrator suicide after a family homicide is very high and it persists for many years, and therefore there is no surprise that Lawley became suicidal. It is not impossible that Lawley developed post-traumatic stress disorder. This is also reported in family homicide perpetrators, and would have been a risk factor for further affect instability and a suicide risk. Nowadays, Lawley would have been treated with medication and offered psychological support. He would have been an ideal candidate for the Homicide Group that is run for men at Broadmoor.

The cause of his mental illness and the murder of his wife was of contemporary interest and is also of some concern to his living descendants. This need for an explanation of any untoward event is reflected in the current interest in attribution theory.[37] On three occasions the Broadmoor records note that no cause for Lawley's illness has been determined. This is an important finding, as it excludes inheritance as a contributory cause. A similar finding is recorded in the medical certificates prepared before his admission to Coton Hill. This is evidence against a positive family history of mental illness, substance or alcohol misuse, or a primary medical disorder, for example head injury or venereal disease, as a contributory factors to his psychiatric condition. It also does not support the claim that his illness was precipitated by financial issues. Review of his ancestors during the present study do not find any family history of psychiatric disorder. The only finding of violence by a Lawley was recorded in Court Records in 1450 when two Thomas Lawleys, father and son, were involved in multiple assaults![8]

The availability of handwriting by Lawley (Figure 5), before and after the onset of his mental illness, is of diagnostic value. The handwriting recorded at the ages of 47 and 52 show no significant changes. In particular, there is no evidence of any tremor which might have been expected if he had developed Parkinsonism type disorders as a consequence of exposure to coal gas.[20] The content of the 1916 letter is of interest. Lawley is clearly time, place and person orientated and is aware of the First World War-related War Loans, with the possibility of a financial return. This letter has been shared with the living descendant of William Lawley, and he mentions that after the death of Lawley's daughter, Violet May, his grandmother bequeathed some First World War War Loans, valued at £100, to him and his brother. The National Probate Index indicates that William Lawley on his death left effects valued at £3,404, which presumably included the War Loans.

Analysis of the verbal and lexical skills and the spatial orientation of the two letters by the method of Fontano *et al*. give normal scores of 9.5/10.0 for both letters.[38] These scores correlate with measures of cognitive status, and indicate a Mini Mental State Examinations score of 24 with no deterioration. This is within the normal range of 28–24. Mild impairment is associated with a score of 23–19. This finding essentially excludes dementia, occasionally a consequence of non-fatal coal gas poisoning.[20]

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Hearth Tax 1672: Part of Pimhill Hundred

By JANICE COX

When the Shropshire Archaeological and Parish Register Society published *The Shropshire Hearth-Tax Roll of 1672*, in 1949, the second membrane or rotulet covering part of Pimhill Hundred was missing. As a result of recent work in examining and sorting fully all the surviving hearth tax records at The National Archives, this rotulet, formerly E 179/255/36, has now been restored to its proper place. It has been thought worthwhile to put this into print in the *Transactions*. Unfortunately there is a hole in the manuscript which has obliterated part of the entry for Prescott and on the verso, Little Ness, and some lettering is now faded and difficult to read. Doubtful names are followed by a question mark, and illegible letters are indicated thus: –?

The National Archives, E 179/168/216, 1672 Hearth Tax for Shropshire, rot. 63.

	Hearths	£	s.
PRESTON BROCKHURST			
Thomas Wingfeild, Esq.	5	00	10
Arthur Downes	4	00	8
Sar. Adeney	3	00	6
Rob. Badeley	2	00	4
Willm. Donne	2	00	4
Andr. Downes	2	00	4
Wid. Socket	1	00	2
George Reve	1	00	2
Robt. Davyes	1	00	2
Tho. Bayly	1	00	2
Wm. Watkis	1	00	2
Mary Crosse	1	00	2
And. Pitchford	1	00	2
And. Socket	1	00	2
Thom. Jackson	1	00	2
Wm. Key	1	00	2
tot.	28	02	16
BESFORD			
Wm. Pate	3	00	6
Joh. Edwards	1	00	2
Rich. Gryffiths	1	00	2
Thom. Pidgeon	3	00	6
Rich. Browne	2	00	4
Joh. Watkis	1	00	2
Wm. Bayly	1	00	2
Joh. Bayly	1	00	2
Roger Roden	1	00	2

	Hearths	£	s.
Wm. Nicholas	1	00	2
Joh. Groome	2	00	4
Tho. Roberts	2	00	4
Wid. Bayly	2	00	4
Wm. Peplow	1	00	2
Rich. Mountford	1	00	2
Tho. Willnier?	1	00	2
tot.	24	02	08

SLEAPE

	Hearths	£	s.
John Groome	1	00	2
Wm. Groome	2	00	4
Rog. Jones	2	00	4
And. Wilkinson	2	00	4
Rich. Morgan	2	00	4
John Tyther	1	00	2
Tho. Manly	1	00	2
tot.	11	01	02

BASSCHURCH

	Hearths	£	s.
Rich. Palin	1	00	2
Tho. Evason	2	00	4
Franc. Keylin	3	00	6
Tho. Bassnet	1	00	2
Rob. Yates	1	00	2
Tho. Yates	1	00	2
Joh. Millington	1	00	2
Rob. Cotton	2	00	4
Wm. Jones	1	00	2
Rog. Shelvock	1	00	2
Rich. Conway	1	00	2
Simon Ward	1	00	2
Tho. Brytton	1	00	2
Joh. Tidder & Mar. Miller	2	00	4
Edw. Smyth	1	00	2
Sam. Tomkins	2	00	4
tot.	22	02	04

NEWTOWNE

	Hearths	£	s.
Wid. Evans	1	00	2
Wm. Statham	2	00	4
Tho. Calcot	1	00	2
Sam. Scaltocke	1	00	2
Tho. Payne	2	00	4
tot.	7	00	14

EATON

	Hearths	£	s.
Wm. Denston	1	00	2
Hump. Scot	1	00	2
Joh. Scot	1	00	2
Rich. Scot	1	00	2
Sam. Scot	1	00	2
Ed. Bolas?	1	00	2

	Hearths	£	s.
Joh. Rogers?	2	00	4
John. Jeffreys	1	00	2
Peter Brayne	1	00	2
Sam. Mayor?	3	00	6
Robt. Bayly?	3	00	6
Fran. Allen?	1	00	2
Tho. Cheshire	1	00	2
Morgan Davies	1	00	2
tot.	19	01	18

PRESCOTT

Tho. Cotton	2	00	4
Tho. Gough	1	00	2
Susan Gough	1	00	2
Wm. Tydd–?	1	00	2
Tho. Harri–?	5	00	10
Elizab. Cl–?	1	00	2
Tho. Shel–?	1	00	2
tot.	12	01	4

WALFORD

George Clive, Esq.	10	01	00
Sar. Grafton	2	00	4
Wm. Payne	2	00	4
Wm. Cotton?	1	00	2
Joh. Punch	1	00	2
Tho. Gittins	1	00	2
Edw.? –ill?	1	00	2
tot.	[illegible]		

LITTLE NESS

—-? Donne?	4	00	8
Tho. Browne	4	00	8
Rich.? Gittins	2	00	4
–? Wolfe	2	00	4
Joh.? Higley?	2	00	4
Rich. Wolfe	2	00	4
Henry Shelvock	1	00	2
Humph. Morr?	1	00	2
Joh. Reynold	1	00	2
Ed. Wooto–?	1	00	2
Rog. W—?	1	00	2
Joh. P—?	1	00	2
Joh. Br —?	1	00	2
Dav.? Pa–?	1	00	2
Sar. Or–?	1	00	2
tot.	25	02	10

ADCOT & MILFORD

George Banyster	6	00	12
Joh. Browne	2	00	4
Tho. Browne	1	00	2
Joh. Jeffreys	2	00	4

	Hearths	£	s.
Joh. Gregory?	1	00	2
Joh. –-ley?	1	00	2
tot.	13	01	6

FENEMEARE

	Hearths	£	s.
Ed. Tomkins	2	00	4
Wm. Reve	3	00	6
Joane Tomkins	2	00	4
Joh. Cheshire	2	00	4
Tho. Lovett?	1	00	2
Rich. Basnet	1	00	2
Arth. Trevor	1	00	2
tot.	12	01	4

EYTON

	Hearths	£	s.
Wm. Husband	2	00	4
Ed. Thomkis	1	00	2
Tho. Thomkis	1	00	2
Rich. Tydder	1	00	2
Rich. Treaver?	1	00	2
Rich. Wolley	1	00	2
tot.	7	00	14

PETTON

	Hearths	£	s.
Mr Wilbraham	10	01	00
Mr Chambre	3	00	6
Arth. Hincks	5	00	10
Joh. Dod	2	00	4
Rich. Key	1	00	2
Tho. Davys	1	00	2
tot.	22	02	4

BAGLEY

	Hearths	£	s.
Wm. Nonnely	1	00	2
Joh. Jones	1	00	2
Adam Yardley	1	00	2
Thomas Daws	2	00	4
Tho. Davies	1	00	2
Edw. Reynolds	1	00	2
Hump. Bayley	1	00	2
Rich. Whottall	2	00	4
Joh. Bayley	2	00	4
Mary Reynolds	2	00	4
Joh. Finch	1	00	2
Tho. Brookfeild	1	00	2
Joh. Cartwright	1	00	2
Ed. Bromfeild	1	00	2
Wm. Jenkin	1	00	2
Mary Bickley	1	00	2
tot.	20	02	00

	Hearths	£	s.
STANWARDINE IN YE WOOD			
Robert Corbet, Esq.	15	01	10
Geor. Hudson, cler.	6	00	12
Arthur Wooly	2	00	4
Grif. Edwards	1	00	2
Sam. Reve	1	00	2
Tho. Harrison	1	00	2
tot.	26	02	12
STANWARDINE IN YE FEILD			
Mrs Atcherly	3	00	6
Wm. France	2	00	4
Tho. Higley	1	00	2
Edw. Vaughan	1	00	2
Ann Lee	1	00	2
Geor. Griffiths	1	00	2
Rich. Smyth	1	00	2
Rich. Abbot	1	00	2
John Anthony	1	00	2
Joh. Pridden	1	00	2
Tho. Maya	1	00	2
Arthur Lonslow	1	00	2
Roger Early	1	00	2
Rich. Lee	1	00	2
tot.	17	01	14

Shropshire Archives Report for 2014

By MARY MCKENZIE, Team Leader, Archives

Service review and changes to opening hours

Budget reductions introduced for the financial year 2014/15 required a major adjustment in staffing and functions at Shropshire Archives. Inevitably this meant a reduction in the service's opening hours. A public consultation took place from February to March 2014 on a range of options based on opening 20 hours a week, a reduction of 10 hours from the previous opening hours. The new hours were introduced in April 2014 and generally accepted by customers though concerns were expressed about the limited searchroom opening from 10am–2pm when original documents could be seen, and this is currently under review.

Shropshire Volunteering Projects

The two volunteering projects funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Arts Council England – Volunteering for Shropshire's Heritage and Heritage Heroes – continued their successful progress through 2014. By the end of 2014 volunteers had contributed 7,586 days across the archive and museums services. Since the projects began in December 2011, they have catalogued over 113,000 records and objects, conserved over 14,000, and digitised over 58,000, thus transforming access to many collections. The task for 2015 is to establish what volunteering in the future will look like within the services once the projects have finished.

Records, archive and museum store

During the year capital funding was secured to convert a warehouse unit to provide a combined record, archive and museum store. This provides a suitable environment for archives storage, providing capacity for the medium term as the stores at Castle Gates are full, and meets PD 5454 standards. It also provides space for the Records Management Service, and for the museum service's archaeology collections.

Shropshire World War One Commemorations

Shropshire Archives worked with a wide range of county wide arts and heritage organisations to develop projects and activities to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the First World War. Almost £200K of funding was awarded from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Arts Council England to support this activity from 2014 to 2016. Projects include new drama productions, music, recreating a trench system, events and guided walks, as well as supporting information online, working with the Imperial War Museum. A dedicated website to bring this activity together was launched at www.shropshireremembers.org.uk

Community projects

During the year Shropshire Archives worked on a number of successful community projects. These included the continuing work, funded by the National Trust, on the papers of Lady Berwick (1890–1972) at Attingham Park

which enhanced research into her First World War activities as a nurse on the Italian Front, and the Oswestry Cemetery project (also Heritage Lottery funded) which researched and catalogued the comprehensive archive that has survived from 1862 and created a website at www.oswestrycemeteryproject.org.uk to bring together the fascinating stories revealed by this research.

   Another project started this year was a Telford & Wrekin libraries project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Our New Town – Celebrating the History of Telford New Town. The project created an outline catalogue for the very large Telford Development Corporation collection, as well as digitising selected items which are accessible online and on table sized screens at the new Southwater Library in Telford Town Centre. In 2014 Pentabus Theatre Company were successful in securing a Business Archives Council Cataloguing grant which allowed us to catalogue and digitise their archive collection as part of their 40th birthday celebrations.

Events and Friends

In 2014 the Friends' programme included the biannual Discover Shropshire Day, which continued its successful format with a fascinating range of talks on subjects as varied as The War Memorials of Shropshire, and Fulke Greville, the biographer of Sir Philip Sidney. In the summer the Friends organised a series of visits to some of Shropshire's most fascinating houses, including Walcot Hall and Loton Park, which also proved popular. A History Day in Much Wenlock to celebrate the completion of cataloguing work on the Much Wenlock Borough collection completed the year's programme.

Accessions

Accessions received during 2014 have included:

Shropshire Charity Commission papers, 19th–20th century (8796, 8896, 8956)
Records of Oswestry Girls' High School, old girls' society, 1962–79 (8805)
Lawley parish records, 1940–2011 (8807)
Malinslee parish records, 1969–2009 (8808)
Hollinswood parish records, 1976–94 (8809)
Shifnal, Edward VI deed, 14 Feb 1553 (8810)
Wem and Whitchurch deanery synod records, 1998–2008 (8818)
Sheriffhales parish council records, 1979–2009 (8819)
Acton Round parish records, 1651–1919 (8824)
Monkhopton parish records, 1932–67 (8825)
Morville parish records, 1562–2007 (8826)
Upton Cressett parish records, 1841–2001 (8827)
Aston Eyre parish records, 1901–2013 (8828)
Telford Methodist circuit records, 1861–2012 (8829, 8885)
Bitterley parish records, 1813–2010 (8837)
Hopton Cangeford parish records, 1886–1950s (8838)
Central Midwives Board, register of cases, 1904–24 (8846)
Oxon Church of England primary school records, 1922–94 (8852)
Astley parish council records, 1896–2008 (8854)
Burwarton school and Loughton school records, including Cleobury Mortimer estate rental, 1903–94 (8857)
Meole Brace garden and allotment club records, 1994–2007 (8858)
Muriel Tipton collection, including material relating to Shrewsbury Flower Club, 1900s–2000s (8863)
Deeds relating to property in Ditton Priors and Middleton, 1666–1883 (8868)
Berrington parish council records, 1934–96 (8869)
Buildwas parish council records, 1895–1990 (8870)
Longden parish council records, 1991–2012 (8871)
Pentabus Theatre Company records, 1973–2013 (8872)
Research papers of David Jenkins of Market Drayton, 1980s–2000s (8873)
Harlescott and St. John's Hill, Shrewsbury Methodist church records, 1902–2001 (8874)
Archdeacon of Salop, correspondence and papers, 1983–2003 (8879)
Myddle and Broughton parish council records, 2010–12 (8880)
Shawbury parish council records, 2010–12 (8881)

Pengwerne, Shrewsbury, Freemasonry chapter records, 1920–2000 (8883)
Sentinel garden suburb, Shrewsbury business records, 1919–69 (8887)
Lilleshall parish marriage register, 2005–12 (8888)
Survey of property in the parish of Dawley and Wellington, 1840 (8892)
Tithe map of Wigwig, Harley and Homer, Much Wenlock, 1841 (8893)
Attingham Park adult education college records, 1950s–70s (8895)
Upton Magna glebe terrier, 1750 (8898)
Records of the friends of Shrewsbury Museum, 1982–2012 (8900)
Owen family of Shrewsbury, records, 1840s–1930s (8902)
Baschurch parish records, 19th–20th centuries (8904)
Montford parish council records, 1894–2010 (8907)
Ercall Magna parish council records (8908)
Stanton-upon-Hine-Heath parish council records (8908)
St. Martins parish council records, 1979–2010 (8908)
Records of Shrewsbury and Shropshire and the Marches Methodist circuits, 19th–20th century (8911)
Clive parish records, 1885–92 (8912)
Ludlow team ministry parishes registers, 1815–2013 (8913)
Shrewsbury Technical School for Girls, later Radbrook College, records, 20th century (8914)
Cound parish marriage registers, 1982–2014 (8917)
Records of Newport Bridge Trust and Newport Marsh Trust, 1763–1857 (8919)
Adcote School Old Girls Association records, 1931–2006 (8920)
Records of the Radio Gramophone Development Company, Bridgnorth, 1950s–60s (8921)
Records of the Whitwell family, medical doctors of Shrewsbury, 19th–20th century (8934)
Records of Yockleton Ladies Group, 1974–2005 (8940)
Parish records of Bromfield, Culmington and Stanton Lacy, 1868–1969 (8942)
Records of St. George's primary school, Shrewsbury, 1868–2003 (8943)
Much Wenlock parish records, 1890s–2013 (8945)
Records of Oswestry Operatic Society, 1986–97 (8948)
Marriage register of St. Mary's Roman Catholic church, Much Wenlock, 1996–2004 (8949)
Badger parish council records, 1975–2010 (8950)
Records of Shifnal county primary school, 1953–99 (8952)
Wrockwardine parish records, 1920–64 (8954)
Moreton Say parish records, 19th–20th century (8955)
Photograph albums of the Sankey family of Boreatton Park, 1880s (8957)
Account books of Eyton and Mytton estates, 1806–36 (8958)
Ludlow quaker meeting accounts, 1970–2007 (8959)

Book Reviews

Anthea Toft, *Beneath Safer Skies: a Child Evacuee in Shropshire*. Merlin Unwin Books Ltd., 2014. ISBN 978-1-906122-65-2. 128 pp. £12.00.

This book describes the recollections of an only child who, with her mother, was evacuated during the second world war from the 'bomb alley' of Kent to the safety of Mainstone near Bishop's Castle as paying guests. These recollections are based upon numerous letters between her parents and the author's personal memories in twelve short chapters with an introduction and epilogue.

In 1940 they stayed with a poor and unsuccessful farmer, living in basic conditions at Mainstone Farm. Their experiences were not altogether happy and when the farm was sold up they moved along the lane to the School House where they stayed with the school teacher and her blind companion, Anthea's great aunt Julia. Life in the School House was well ordered and disciplined. Her description of the period spent at both places paints a harsh picture of life in the Shropshire hills. Anthea attended the village school until it became too crowded with evacuees from Liverpool.

For a short period mother and daughter moved to Shipston on Stour before returning in the spring of 1941 to a happier existence at another house in Mainstone – Reilth Farm. The Deakin household was a large and happy one and Anthea blossomed in new-found friendships and country activities. Her account of life at The Reilth is idyllic and she describes in detail the round of daily tasks on a hill farm and in the farm house.

In the autumn of 1942 the separation and loneliness of evacuation convinced Anthea's mother to move back to Kent where she and her husband found a property for the three of them at a farm near Pembury, where once more they enjoyed the pleasures of country living.

The narrative provides a contemporary picture of rural life in the Shropshire hills and in Kent during wartime. But it was the memories of the enchanting Mainstone valleys which eventually drew the author back to live and work in this county.

<div align="right">Patricia Theobald</div>

The Victoria History of the Counties of England. A History of Shropshire, Volume VI, Part 1, Shrewsbury: General History and Topography. Edited by W. A. Champion and A. T. Thacker. Institute of Historical Research, (Boydell and Brewer, 2014). ISBN 978-1-904356-42-4. xii + 330 pp. £65.

The appearance of another volume in the VCH series for the county is, of course, an opportunity for thanks and celebration. It is also a sign that, like the proverbial London bus, we can expect further volumes to appear in rapid succession after the long gap since the appearance of volume X in 1998. These will be volumes 6.2 and then 6.3 which will ensure that the County Town, and its Liberties, will be comprehensively covered. This being so, it is difficult to review the current volume in detail since it has been written to be read in conjunction with volume 6.2, as the numerous footnote references demonstrate. For that reason, I shall concentrate on the project as a whole rather than on the detail of the volume.

The VCH volumes are, of course, meant to be the 'gold standard' in terms of local history. Anyone now researching Shrewsbury will have to turn to this volume first. One expects to find scholarship of the highest quality, and production standards to reflect this: both goals have been achieved, *pace* occasional slips. In the scale of things though, minor errors are just an irritation when weighed against the high quality of writing and production evident throughout. The model that has been adopted for the publication mirrors that of the VCH volumes for

the neighbouring County Town of Chester, published as two volumes in 2003 and 2005. This is hardly surprising given that Alan Thacker had a hand in editing both sets of publications. If the scale of the two Chester volumes is an indication of the overall size of the combined three parts of the Shrewsbury volume then the decision to print as three separate volumes is an understandable one. It is also justified in allowing volumes to appear as they are completed, rather than parking them until the whole set is ready.

The format of the volume unsurprisingly takes a chronological approach to the subject matter, and it is here that the collegiate nature of the writing comes to the fore. The first section on the foundation of the town and its existence to 1200 is written by Nigel Baker, Richard Holt and Alan Thacker, with the first named probably having the greater part of the work here given his recently published account of the archaeological potential of the town. It is in this early period that the greatest advances in knowledge have inevitably been made in comparison with the only other major history of the town, written nearly two centuries ago. The following section, from 1200–1340, has Alan Thacker as its lead author with contributions from Dorothy and Bob Cromarty, drawing on their earlier publication. Also contributing to this chapter is Bill Champion, who carries the full weight of text in the subsequent two chapters and is the lead author with Barbara Coulton and James Lawson in the following chapter, these three chapters taking the narrative from 1340–1780. The last two chapters are sole-authored by Barrie Trinder and take the narrative from 1780 to the end of the twentieth century. Again, this text partly draws on work published elsewhere but it is to be noted that this chapter is far more substantial and thorough than its equivalent in the Chester volume, able as it is to draw on the extensive research carried out by Barrie and others on the development of Shrewsbury and its industrial suburbs during this period. Shrewsbury in this sense is much better served than many other county towns.

Within each chapter, the general format remains the same, providing a history of the political and governmental structures of the town, its economic development, its religious and cultural and social history, and the topographic development of the town. The structure is not meant to be imaginative or ground-breaking but provides what the VCH intends to provide: a clear and orderly narrative that allows those wishing to follow particular themes through time, or to focus on particular issues, an easy way into the volume. This is certainly how the majority of users will access the work, but hopefully once they dip in they will be drawn into exploring more of Shrewsbury's narrative as it is one that is worth following in this easily accessible and readable volume. In this, they will also be encouraged by the numerous illustrations, carefully selected and beautifully reproduced. The line drawings in particular are a model of clarity. While the volume is not exactly a portable format, its language is uncomplicated, although not necessarily for the novice who is unaware of some of the terminology of specific eras: how many these days know what the Readeption of Henry VI was (without using Google!)? The volume is, in a word, authoritative, as it should be given that it will be/has been written by well-practiced and experienced historians.

I am stressing this point because, in the publicity surrounding the launch of this volume, a new means of writing and researching the VCH volumes is being mooted for the county, and indeed for the whole enterprise. This is that the volumes should in future be written by local historians, enthusiasts if you will, who will be guided in their research by experienced historians. This is a seemingly alarming turn of events, brought about by the collapse of the funding mechanism for VCH, which has been a discretionary element of local authority funding that became impossible to justify or sustain. Yet in some senses the new model has already long been in use. It was the method that Barrie Trinder and Margaret Gelling used to use to compile their local histories or place-name surveys respectively. In those days they were called Extra-Mural classes, or Workers' Education Authority groups. Another example is to be found cited in this volume too: Madge Moran's exceptional work in dendro-dating many of the numerous timber-framed buildings of the town (as well as throughout the county), work that is of national importance and which can be seen applied on numerous occasions in this volume to finesse the details of topographic development in the town. Classes like these have now been swept away under the new funding regimes of our universities, a development much to be regretted. It is to be hoped that the spirit of the WEA and Extra-Mural classes can once again be encouraged to flourish in the county to foster more VCH volumes and to spread the undoubted benefit this work brings to the county and to our understanding of England's history. To support the work I would encourage anyone who can afford to buy it to do so, both to foster more volumes in the near future, and of course to furnish your library with an authoritative history of our county town, for the first time in two centuries.

ROGER WHITE

Obituaries

MARGARET JOY GELLING, O.B.E., D.Litt., F.B.A., F.S.A. (1924–2009)
AND
HUGH DENIS GEORGE FOXALL (1911–89)

Hugh Denis George Foxall
Cartographer and Onomastic
(Photograph *c*.1984 by P. A. Stamper)

The stimulating conference held at the Gateway, Shrewsbury, on 25 October 2014[1] to discuss and celebrate Dr. Margaret Gelling's life and work prompts the filling of a gap in these *Transactions*, where an appreciation of our Society's distinguished Vice-President is five years overdue. There have naturally been many obituary tributes to Margaret, both national[2] and international,[3] so perhaps it is appropriate here, in recalling her achievements, to emphasize her fifty years' work on Shropshire place-names. Along with that it is equally fitting – acknowledging an even longer lapse of time – to honour the extraordinary contribution to Shropshire toponymy and historical research made by George Foxall[4] whom Margaret named as her collaborator in the six volumes of *The Place-Names of Shropshire* that have appeared since 1990.[5]

Margaret Joy Midgley read English at St. Hilda's College, Oxford, where the great Anglo-Saxonist Dorothy Whitelock guided her to place-name study. After a temporary civil service job in 1945–6 she found more congenial employment as a research assistant for the English Place-Name Society (E.P.N.S.), working on materials collected by Sir Frank and Lady Stenton for Oxfordshire place-names. In 1952 she married the archaeologist Peter Stanley Gelling, and after the appearance of the Oxfordshire place-name volumes in 1953–4[6] she worked on a thesis on the place-names of west Berkshire, earning a Ph.D. from University College, London, in 1957; three Berkshire place-name volumes appeared in due course.[7] When Peter was appointed lecturer in Archaeology at Birmingham University the couple moved to Harborne where they lived the rest of their lives. Peter died in 1983.

The move to Harborne gave Margaret access to a fine university library, enabling her to continue her research and writing. At the same time – besides accompanying Peter on his widespread archaeological digs[8] – she began to undertake a great amount of extramural teaching and evening lecturing for Birmingham University throughout the midlands. A lecture she gave at the Shropshire Adult College in Attingham Hall in 1959 'led to a request for a session of lectures', after which the group attending them refused to disband – and thus was founded the research group which, from 1961 to 1988, collected the materials for 'a full E.P.N.S. survey' of the county. It is good to record that three who stuck with the group for all that time – George Foxall, John Pagett,[9] and Peter Selwyn-Smith – were at one time or another members of our Society,[10] and it was pleasant also to see Peter Selwyn-Smith, still one of our members, at the October Tribute to Margaret.

After the Adult College closed the research group met in Shrewsbury, first in College Hill House and then in Shrewsbury's Local Studies Library (under Tony Carr), with its large collections of deeds and other primary sources, calendared long before a county record office existed. (The group was magnanimously given privileged access to these sources, and George was able to do some work on them between sessions.) The group worked as a Birmingham University external course, and its failure in 1988 to meet the university's 'new, more rigorous rules regarding numbers enrolling' brought it to an end. Paradoxically that ensured the ultimate consummation of its long years of work, for Margaret was stimulated to stop collecting material and to devote what she called her 'rapidly diminishing store of years' to working them up for publication as E.P.N.S. survey volumes.

George Foxall, Margaret's collaborator, seemed so essentially a Shropshire man that it was surprising to learn that he was born in Pembrokeshire, where his father worked for the W. H. Smith chain of bookshops. Later the family moved to Liverpool. But the Foxalls are a Shropshire family – taking their surname from the hamlet of that name in Claverley parish and hereditarily entitled to the freedom of Bridgnorth borough, which George, late in life, took up, being enrolled a burgess at a dignified ceremony in Bridgnorth town hall.

During the war George served with the R.A.F. in India. Back home he married Joyce, and they lived at 18 Darwin Gardens, Frankwell. George resumed his employment as a county council clerk, eventually becoming chief clerk of the county fire brigade. At some time a departmental turn-out had endowed him with a set of O.S. 6-inch maps covering Shropshire: 'Take them if you want them or they'll be thrown away'. He used them to produce a gazetteer of Shropshire place-names in 1947, initially to help the fire brigade quickly to identify places, possibly remote, to which they were summoned. A revised and enlarged edition (1967) contains *c*.27,000 entries.[11]

At one point in his career George could have become town clerk of Bishop's Castle, but later he felt glad to have avoided that. Shrewsbury had excellent libraries and was the best centre for bus and train travel throughout the county, two things that mattered to him as an avid reader and a keen, non-driving walker who needed good public transport to get to, and back from, long country walks, often taken with his old non-driving friend Stanley Turner.[12]

In 1960 the county council asked London University to revive work on the Victoria County History (V.C.H.), and in 1961 Alec Gaydon and James Lawson began work on the parishes of Condover and Ford hundreds. James, working on Pitchford, had the idea of producing a field-name map by tracing the O.S. six-inch map, making its fields and boundaries agree with the tithe map, and putting the apportionment's plot numbers and historic field names on the tracing.[13] An excellent idea, it proved a good research aid for parish landscape history – but too time consuming for V.C.H. staff to do it for every parish. George, however, was approached and must have appreciated that such maps would subserve the work that Margaret's research group had just begun. So he drew field-name maps for all the parishes in the two hundreds. V.C.H. research subsequently proceeded with two non-topographical volumes, but when work on the Telford area was in contemplation the county editor asked George to undertake more field-name maps. Needing no persuasion, he soon finished the Telford area and then intimated that he would

be happy to 'go on'. With a few meagre expenses (Indian ink, tracing paper, the occasional travel expense, etc.) defrayed from the small V.C.H. budget he 'went on' to cover all Shropshire, tracing from his six-inch maps. The enormity of his labour[14] is best appreciated by imagining the single-handed drawing and labelling of virtually every field in England's largest inland county![15]

In 1980 our Society published George's *Shropshire Field-Names*, illustrated by examples of his field-name maps and still selling steadily.

If it is inappropriate here to evaluate Margaret's mighty contribution to place-name studies, some words from her foreword to George's *Shropshire Field-Names* point to the broad direction she took in her research. Indicating her debt to his maps, which made it possible 'to study field-names as they should be studied, that is, in relation to the pieces of land to which they belong', she observed that, while philological analysis required field-names to be listed alphabetically, the loss of geographical context 'is at once apparent when a philologist...is confronted instead with one of Mr Foxall's beautiful maps. On these the names are seen in relation both to the physical nature of the ground and, since they are linked to significant shapes and assemblages of parcels of land, to the history of the agricultural practices by which the community has maintained itself for a thousand years or more.' Margaret's words highlight the way in which George's two-dimensional 'shapes and assemblages of parcels of land' smoothed the way for her to deal with the third topographical dimension – the 'physical nature of the ground' – and so, for example, to define the distinctive Anglo-Saxon names for hills of differing profiles. Seeing things that way, Margaret steered away from an established preoccupation with 'early' habitative names to concentrate on topographical names, derived from an Anglo-Saxon vocabulary rich in specific terms. As her published work[16] beyond the E.P.N.S. survey volumes reveals, for Margaret place-names show the English landscape as historically exploited and modified by the people who worked it; and topographical names were coined by ordinary people, not (save in exceptional circumstances) by their lords and rulers.

Margaret and George shared some personal characteristics. Both were good gardeners,[17] and neither took to new technology. Margaret kept her materials in shoe boxes not a computer; nor would she consign them to the post. And there was no computer at 18 Darwin Gardens, where Joyce and George's comfortable home had suffered no alteration since it was built. There was never a television set there, and only when Joyce's health began to fail was a telephone installed. But their home was well supplied with books (including plenty of Trollope's novels) and had a fine old wireless set with names like Droitwich and Hilversum on the tuning dial. A visit to Joyce and George combined enjoyment of their hospitality with the pleasure of being behind the times in the nicest possible way.

But new technology – as became fairly clear at the Tribute day – will now play a part in an energetic young team's use of Margaret's materials and George's maps for the completion of the E.P.N.S. survey volumes for Shropshire. A surprisingly early date is predicted for completion. We may be sure that Margaret and George would approve.

Peter and Margaret had no children, but Margaret is survived by her nephew Adrian Midgley, whom the couple brought up from the age of six. Nor did George and Joyce have children, and when George died their house was left – as they had decided together – to the National Trust.

1   'A Tribute to Margaret Gelling': Autumn meeting of the Society for Name Studies in Britain and Ireland.
2   *The Times*; *The Guardian*; *The Daily Telegraph*; *The Economist*; *Nomina*, **xxxii**, 159–62; B.B.C. Radio 4's 'Last Words' programme; etc. An *Oxf. D.N.B.* article was published in 2013.
3   e.g. by Enzo Caffarelli in *Rivista Italiana di Onomastica*, **xv** (2009), 395–6, and in *The Indian Express* (at http://indianexpress.com/tag/margaret-gelling/).
4   Denis *en famille* but George at work.
5   E.P.N.S. **lxii–lxiii**, **lxx**, **lxxvi**, **lxxx**, **lxxxii**, and **lxxxix** (1990–2012).
6   E.P.N.S. **xxiii–xxiv**.
7   E.P.N.S. **xlix–li** (1973–4, 1976).
8   e.g. in Dorset, his native Isle of Man, Cyprus, Peru. He also dug in Shropshire – at Caynham Camp and the Berth: inf. from Ernie Jenks; *Trans. Shrops. Archaeol. Soc.* **LVI**, 1961, 145–8, 218–27; **LVII**, 1963, 91–100; **LVIII**, 1967, 96–100; **LXVII**, 1991, 58–62.
9   *Trans. Shrops. Archaeol. Soc.* **LXXX**, 2008, 213.
10 George Foxall was a member before the war but didn't rejoin afterwards.
11 *A Gazetteer of Streets, Roads and Place Names in Shropshire* (Salop County Council, 1967).
12 Sometimes they were driven out by Mrs. Turner.
13 James's original map survives among the 'Foxalls' in Shropshire Archives.
14 Of love, I feel quite sure. George loved maps.
15 This has been done collaboratively for Herefordshire, a much smaller county.
16 *Signposts to the Past: Place-Names and the History of England* (1978), *Place-Names in the Landscape: the Geographical Roots of Britain's Place-Names* (1984), *The West Midlands in the Early Middle Ages* (1992), and (with the geographer Dr. Ann Cole) *The Landscape of Place-Names* (2000).
17 George and Joyce, with only a small garden, had an allotment in the grounds of nearby Millington's Hospital, where they had good friends among the residents.

GEORGE BAUGH

SYLVIA WATTS, B.A., Ph.D. (1934–2014)

Sylvia Watts
(Photograph by courtesy of Simon Watts)

Sylvia spent her childhood in Chichester, where she developed a love for roaming the Sussex Downs that she never lost. In 1953 she was awarded a State Scholarship and a place at St. Anne's College, Oxford, where she read History. She graduated in 1956 and briefly worked as a research assistant before she married, raised a family and, as the family grew older, taught in primary schools in Wolverhampton. During these years her interest in history was largely latent apart from her insatiable appetite for reading. As her family left home her interests in history re-kindled and she began to research the history of Shifnal, where she then lived, and there followed several books about the town and church. In 1995 she was awarded a Ph.D. from Wolverhampton University on 'The Small Market Town in the Large Multi-Township Parish: Shifnal, Wellington, Wem and Whitchurch, *c*.1535 to *c*.1660'. Sylvia was an excellent mediaeval Latinist and palaeographer, skills that she used in editing the glebe terriers of both Shropshire[1,2] and Staffordshire.[3,4] She also edited the 'Visitation Records of Archdeacon Joseph Plymley, 1792 to 1838,'[5,6] and in 2010 her book on the 'Almshouses of Shropshire'[7] was published, followed by 'A History of Shifnal'[8] in 2013, covering the Bronze Age to the 20th century. During these years she published papers in these *Transactions*, *Midland History* and *Local Population Studies*.

In 2000 she gave an introductory course to mediaeval Latin at the request of the Shropshire Archives and collected together a band of enthusiasts, who refused to go away, and with great fortitude she continued the class until a fortnight before she died. Under Sylvia's direction the group published transcriptions and translations of the Manor Courts of Ditton Priors[9] and the 1561 Survey of the Lordship of Wem,[10] in addition to depositing many transcriptions and translations of documents in the Shropshire Archives. She was a tutor at the Latin and Palaeography Summer School of Keele University for a number of years.

Sylvia was a very modest, self-effacing person, with an incredible focus on whatever task she had in hand, but she was always willing to give freely of her time and expertise to anyone who sought her help or advice. She died peacefully on 11 April 2014, aged 79 years, after a brave battle with cancer.

1   *The Glebe Terriers of Shropshire*, Part 1 (Abdon to Llanfair Waterdine), ed. Sylvia Watts, Shropshire Record Series, Vol. **5**, 2001.
2   *The Glebe Terriers of Shropshire*, Part 2 (Llanyblodwel to Wroxeter), ed. Sylvia Watts, Shropshire Record Series, Vol. **6**, 2002.
3   Collections for a History for Staffordshire, Fourth Series, Vol. **22**, *Staffordshire Glebe Terriers, 1585–1884*, Part 1: Abbots Bromley-Knutton, ed. Sylvia Watts, Staffordshire Record Society, 2009.
4   Collections for a History for Staffordshire, Fourth Series, Vol. **23**, *Staffordshire Glebe Terriers, 1585–1884*, Part 2: Lapley-Yoxall, ed. Sylvia Watts, Staffordshire Record Society, 2009.
5   *The Visitation Records of Archdeacon Joseph Plymley, 1792–1838*, Part 1, Volumes 1–3, Burford, Clun and Ludlow Deaneries, ed. Sylvia Watts, Shropshire Record Series, Vol. **11**, 2010.
6   *The Visitation Records of Archdeacon Joseph Plymley, 1792–1838*, Part II, Volumes 4–6, Pontesbury, Stottesdon and Wenlock Deaneries, ed. Sylvia Watts, Shropshire Record Series, Vol. **12**, 2011.
7   *Shropshire Almshouses*, Sylvia Watts, Logaston Press, 2010.
8   *A History of Shifnal*, Sylvia Watts, 2013.
9   *Ditton Priors Manor Court Rolls*, Sylvia Watts, 1510 to 1614, 2004.
10   *Survey of the Lordship of Wem*, 1561, Vol. **1**, Transcription and Translation; Vol. **2**, The Document, ed. Sylvia Watts, 2012.

Ralph Collingwood

The Shropshire Archaeological And Historical Society

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

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

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

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

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

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

<p style="text-align:center">www. shropshirearchaeology.org.uk</p>

RULES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

12. No alterations shall be made to the Society's rules except by the annual general meeting or by an extraordinary general meeting called for that purpose by the Council. Any proposed alteration must be submitted to the Secretary in time to enable the Secretary to give members at least twenty-one days notice of the extraordinary general meeting. No amendment shall be made to the rules which would cause the Society to cease to be a charity at law.

13. The Society may be dissolved by a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of those present with voting rights at either an annual general meeting or an extraordinary general meeting called for that purpose, of which twenty-one day's prior notice had been given in writing. Such a resolution may give instructions for the disposal of any assets held by the Society after all debts and liabilities have been paid, the balance to be transferred to some other charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to those of the Society.