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CONTENTS

	Page
Chairman's Letter	3
Roy Sheppard, 1936-2011	4
WAS Committee, 2011-12	5
News from the County: Bredon Hill Roman coin hoard	5
News from the County Museum	7
News from the City	8
News from Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum: Thomas Brock bust	9
News from Avoncroft Museum: Avoncroft gives rare shelter an airing	11
Storms Damage Iconic Windmill	12
Ashmolean Museum set to open in Broadway village	12
The Last Prioress of Denny	13
Some Letters of Richard Hurd	14
Recent Publications: <i>The Story of Worcester</i>	17
<i>Life and Industry in the Suburbs of Roman Worcester</i>	18
<i>Roman Gloucestershire</i>	19
<i>Little Malvern Letters</i>	21
<i>John Somerset Pakington: His First 50 Years</i>	21
<i>Having a Drink round Bidford</i>	23
Worcestershire Archaeological Society Excursions Programme, 2012-13	23

A Warm Welcome to New Members:

Sue Bradley, Worcester
Mrs Gillian Clark, Malvern
Mrs Jane Cusworth, Eldersfield Marsh, Glos.
Mr & Mrs N Cutler, Rushock, Droitwich
Paul Hudson, Worcester
Andrew Huntley, Malvern
Mr & Mrs S Lenten, Solihull
Mr & Mrs F McNeil-Watson, Malvern
Neville Taylor, West Malvern

Neither the Committee of the Worcestershire Archaeological Society nor the Editor is responsible for any statements or opinions expressed in the *Worcestershire Recorder*, the authors of the contributions alone being responsible for the same.

Cover Illustration: Airing court shelter from Barnsley Hall Hospital, being re-erected at Avoncroft (see p11)

Chairman's Letter

Firstly, thank you for allowing me to complete my third and final year of office after a break of three years. I owe particular thanks to Nick Molyneux for taking over from me in 2008 at what was personally a difficult time. Nick has been an excellent ambassador for the Society in the wider world of archaeology and heritage. His lectures have revealed his scholarship and his excursions have taken us to places we would not easily have seen.

It is very encouraging to see the growing popularity of the Society reflected in the increased membership and excellent attendances at lectures and field trips. We have enjoyed a splendid series of winter lectures and are about to embark on a busy excursions programme with something to suit most tastes and the autumn study week in Sussex. Your Committee works hard to make this happen but we also rely on a band of volunteers who, while preferring not to take part in the formal work of the Committee, help the Society in so many other ways. We owe them a great deal.

It is perhaps worth reflecting that the Society's purpose is to promote the study of the county's archaeology and history; it does this through publication, field visits and its lecture programme. Over a century and a half we have evolved from an antiquarian body associated with ecclesiastical architecture to a wider interest covering archaeology and local history. It seems to me that this wider role of supporting archaeology and local history across the county is a particular strength, and if we develop ways of working with other organisations that share our interests then everyone will benefit. As an example, we will be supporting the Worcester Festival by sponsoring part of an archaeological display with associated events in the City Museum in August.

This summer is also significant – not just for the Olympics and the Queen's Jubilee – but for the long-awaited opening of the Hive. This will be an innovative facility bringing together the Archive and Archaeology Service, as well as the County and University Libraries. We wish all the staff involved well in this exciting venture and look forward to not only using the new building but finding ways of supporting the staff in their excellent work. Discussions are in progress over the future housing of our book and journal collections, currently held in the Peirson Library at the St John's campus. Access (with photocopying by staff) will continue there until June. As soon as we have news of the new arrangements we will provide details on our website (worcestershirearchaeologicalsociety.org.uk). Meanwhile we have benefited greatly from the generosity of members and friends who have given us books for the library. Donors include the executors of the late Nellie Copson, Andrew Harris, Michael and Anna Meredith, and Peter Walker. We have also been acquiring recent publications in the Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society Record Series, while some glaring gaps in the Worcestershire Historical Society volumes have now been largely filled.

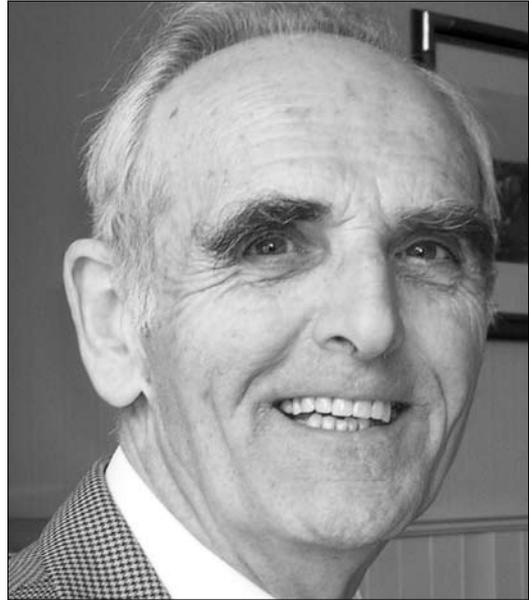
It is with great sadness that I have to report the death of Roy Sheppard who was our excursions driver for so many years and, in recognition of the high regard in which he was held, was made an honorary member of the Society some years ago. A full tribute to Roy by Brian Ferris appears in this newsletter (see p4).

Stephen Price

Roy Sheppard, 1936-2011

Reminiscences

I joined the Society about 1989, and already at that stage Audrey Pettigrew was utilising Roy to arrange her excursion programme. Some people thought that this was an unusual or even unsuitable arrangement, but when I took over as Excursions Secretary about 1999 I very soon discovered the advantages of dealing with Roy. For a start, he knew our members and understood our needs. His knowledge of the road systems both in England and Northern Europe was unrivalled, and he was well versed in the mysteries of toilet stops and coffee breaks, both of which are at the heart of any successful excursion.



I soon discovered that a successful excursion required a reconnaissance and, although Audrey sometimes used to do these on her own, I was unable to do so and we evolved a system where Roy and I would go out for the day in his car, have lunch out, and check the route and make the arrangements. I learned some of the mysteries of coach driving, such as turning space, parking space, road camber, narrow road hazards etc. Roy enjoyed driving, so it was no hardship for him, and we enjoyed each other's company and became good friends.

It was Roy and Audrey who first introduced the idea of excursions abroad. Audrey stood up one day and put out the idea of a few days to visit Chartres; I was quick to follow this up with encouragement, and as a result we set off in 1992 to visit Rouen, Monet's Garden, and Chartres. Unfortunately, on this trip at one hotel half the members went down with food poisoning as a result of eating the fish pate. Luckily I managed to escape. We had difficulty in reaching the Chartres hotel, I believe because a low bridge prevented the coach entering the city at the chosen point. It was late in the day, but Roy patiently drove around and eventually we got there. Roy did not speak French, but Audrey had taken the precaution of inviting a French-speaking friend to join us en route.

This holiday was considered a success, so in 1993 we went to Bruges, also visiting Ghent. The following year we were abroad again, this time to Bayeux and Mont S. Michel. This was a good holiday also, but there was rather a lot of driving, and it was memorable for me for two unfortunate happenings. Firstly, in the hotel Roy slipped in the bath and bruised himself badly, to such an extent that he had difficulty driving; so a relief driver was sent out from England, and Roy left us early. The second event was the curtailment of our time at Mont S. Michel; we were instructed to return to the coach earlier than planned, because we had to call at a shop to collect a pair of spectacles left behind by a member earlier in the day. Seeing that the Mont S. Michel part of the trip was my prime reason for going in the first place, I was not at all pleased at this decision, and can truthfully say that had I been in charge I would never have agreed to this change. So we were told to return half an hour earlier, and reluctantly I dragged myself away, but I didn't hurry, as behind me were two or three ladies from our party who were bent on visiting toilets before boarding the coach. So I returned alone, ten minutes after time, and was greeted with a loud telling-off from Audrey. 'You're very late', she protested, but I didn't care because I knew there were others who would be even later. The ladies eventually arrived and

got aboard, and nothing was said about being late, so I felt unduly miffed and it just shows how careful you have to be in handling a group.

Roy also helped me with driving on a few other occasions which were nothing to do with the Society. He helped me with driving visitors around the Cotswolds, to Ludlow etc, and even took a lady back to Yorkshire who couldn't manage the trains. He was a good, kind man who helped us all in many ways, often above the call of duty.

Roy was born in Stoulton on the Pershore Road; he pronounced this name as 'Stowlton', so perhaps that's how it should be. He worked for a bank but took up coach driving as a sort of paid hobby. In later years he drove mainly for Aston's, doing the school runs etc, but he avoided societies like football clubs and preferred the more sedate company of ourselves.

Brian Ferris

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News from the County

Bredon Hill Roman coin hoard

In June 2011 Jethro Carpenter and Mark Gilmore discovered the largest hoard ever to be found in Worcestershire, 3,874 Roman radiates dating from 244-82. Soon after the hoard was reported to the Portable Antiquities Finds Liaison Officer, archaeologists from the Worcestershire Archaeology Service excavated a small trench centred on the find-spot. The aim of the excavation was to establish the archaeological context of the hoard. In particular, the team wanted to establish whether the hoard had been buried in open ground, like most hoards, or in a settlement of some kind. The team also included both the metal-detectorists who found the



hoard, as well as the Portable Antiquities Finds Liaison Officer and the Documentation Officer of Museums Worcestershire.

The excavation established that the hoard of 3,874 coins dating to the period 244-82 was deposited about a century later on, in or after the mid 4th century, in what was or had been, a substantial settlement, potentially a villa (in the modest, Romano-British, sense of the term). Although the trench measured only 3m by

3m, it produced evidence for eight phases of Roman activity, including three phases of building. The excavation also produced 14 more coins and significant quantities of pottery, building materials, and animal bone.

The earliest features found in the trench were the stone foundations of half-timbered buildings. The first foundation was sealed by a deposit of soil and flat stones, interpreted as a surface. That deposit was sealed by another one. The artefacts (including one coin) found in these deposits date from the 2nd century to the late 3rd century. The second foundation was cut through these deposits and sealed by soils containing earlier artefacts. Two postholes and two stake-holes were found at this level; they may represent a timber building. These features were sealed by a soil containing late 3rd or 4th-century pottery and two late 3rd-century coins. The latest man-made deposit was a layer of soil and rubble containing late 4th/early 5th-century shell-tempered ware. The pit for the hoard was dug through this deposit or the soil that formed above it. The soil contained the latest coin found in the excavation – a nummus of c355-361; further nummi of this date have since been recorded from the site.

The coins in the hoard have been given the term radiates by modern academics due to the radiate crowns worn by the emperors depicted (we do not know the name of the coins in antiquity). The radiate was supposed to be a high value silver coin, worth two denarii. In reality, in the five decades prior to 270 (a time of civil war and economic stability), the radiate became heavily debased, dropping from 50% under Caracalla to 1% during the Gallic Empire, a break-away empire from 260-74, when two mints were producing millions of coins a week. Around 70% of the hoard is issues of the Gallic Empire.

The Bredon Hill hoard terminates with coins of the emperor Probus, who ruled 276-82. Probus lifted restrictions on the production of wine in Britain; previously there was a hegemony of wine and grain production in Gaul and the Agri Decumates. After decades of warfare this hegemony was waning, and this indicates the beginnings of a century of prosperity in Britain. Hoards which terminate with Probus are seen to reflect the beginning of an agrarian boom, and the south-west of Britain becoming an essential 'grain basket' for the Empire. The discovery of the hoard and data compiled by the Portable Antiquities scheme suggest that this 'grain basket' included parts of Worcestershire. In contrast to the decline of coinage at site finds in the West Midlands, sites in south Worcestershire produce a number of coins issued by the House of Valentinian, who ruled between 364 and 378. This is seen as an indicator of relative prosperity in Britain at a time

when the majority of the Roman Empire was suffering from civil war, economic instability and political upheaval.

Since the discovery the hoard has been declared treasure, and is currently being catalogued by both Eleanor Ghey of the British Museum and the Finds Liaison Officer. The two finders have since discovered further artefacts from the site, including a Roman seal box, copies of 3rd-century denarii and a number of brow brooches. The hoard discovery, excavation and subsequent finds provide a tantalising glimpse into the site, which geophysics and subsequent research will hopefully expand upon.

A small selection of the hoard and some of the finds from the excavation were displayed in Worcester Museum and Art Gallery late last year; over 3,400 members of the public visited the exhibition. The hoard is due to be valued by the Treasure Valuation Committee in the spring, and Museums Worcestershire will then have four months to raise that sum, to reward the finders and the landowner. Local fund-raising is essential in the process to keep one of the most important discoveries from the county in Worcestershire. Funding for conservation and interpretation is also required so that the hoard and the site can be further researched to illuminate the last decades of Roman Worcestershire.

Further information can be found at <http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/449259>; <http://finds.org.uk/blogs/westmidlands/the-bredon-hill-hoard-the-process-from-discovery-to-present/>; www.museumsworcestershire.org.uk

Richard Henry
Finds Liaison Officer

News from the County Museum

In the Autumn 2007, Edition 76, of the Worcestershire Recorder I reported the discovery in 2005, in a field at Honeybourne, near Evesham, of a 17th-century silver seal matrix by Mr Neil Barlow, a local metal detectorist. In the Autumn 2010, Edition 82, I further reported the finding of the missing trefoil handle and its acquisition by the County Museum after processing through the Treasure Act (Treasure number 2008 T597).

In this second article I also mentioned that the finder had done further research on the Weoley family, to which the seal's arms belonged at the time of its manufacture. He discovered that a David Weoley, born in 1584, moved to London in 1606 and became Master of the Worshipful Company of Founders in 1640. His coat-of-arms (that on the seal matrix) still hangs in the Hall of the Company, and as Master he gave them a 15th-century silver-gilt cup from the collection of King Henry VIII that is still used by the present Liverymen.

Shortly after writing that article I was contacted by Andrew Gillett the clerk to the Worshipful Company of Founders at Founders' Hall, Cloth Fair, London. He asked if it would be possible to have several silver copies made of the two pieces as they would have looked when new and undamaged – one for the Founders Company, one for the finder, and one for the County Museum, the whole cost to be met by the Founders Company. The internationally known silversmith David Hart of Chipping Campden was contracted to carry out the work and in November of 2010 I took both pieces to his studio at the Chipping Campden Guild. From there we travelled

to a specialist mould maker at the Priory Workshops in Kingham, Gloucestershire, who created a rubber mould of the two pieces joined together. From this David Hart made the copies in silver. The museum's copy is now with the original at Hartlebury and both can be seen by appointment (please contact the writer by email at dkendrick@worcestershire.gov.uk).



The delay in writing this article was caused by the Founders Company inviting me and the finder Neil Barlow to a presentation lunch in their Hall in the spring of 2011. I was unable to attend but it was agreed that the surprise for the finder should not be spoiled by his having read about the silver reproduction before his copy was presented in such a magnificent setting.

The County Museum is most grateful to the Master, Clerk and Liverymen of the Worshipful Company of Founders for their generous gift.

D.J.Kendrick

Collections Officer, Worcestershire County Museum at Hartlebury Castle

News from the City

By the time you read this, the Asda store at the centre of the Lowesmoor development will be open and the Hive will have welcomed the public in for the first time (though it doesn't open for business until July). In both cases the results of the archaeological programmes will take a while to reach full publication, but many elements of the sites' heritage are, or will be, accessible to visitors. In the case of Lowesmoor, now the St Martin's Quarter, these include the surviving buildings of the former vinegar works. Historical interpretation and artworks will follow. Parts of the site are still being built, so access to remains of the Grainger porcelain works and the former infirmary in Silver Street will be delayed. At the Hive, history runs through the whole site, from the line of the city wall, through delineation of former buildings in the paving, and use of materials excavated on site, such as Roman iron slag and decorative terracotta fragments, to the display of artefacts and objects inside the building. Close to the main entrance will be the reconstructed remains of a Roman stone building, probably a kiln (see *Recorder* 80 for a picture of this as excavated).

Fort Royal has been the centre of attention again, as the City Council starts work on a new Heritage Lottery Fund bid. The previous bid (see *Recorder* 75) failed partly due to insufficient

understanding of the heritage and history of the park, though earlier periods had been covered by a desk-based assessment. To remedy this, a historical study has been commissioned; the work, which is still underway, has brought out the complex history of negotiation, land assembly and philanthropy which brought the park into being and has shaped its development. A detailed topographical survey of the whole park, including the visible earthwork remains of the Civil War fort, has also been produced, and will help to inform further work on the fort and associated defensive earthworks.

The South Worcestershire Development Plan process continues, and work is underway to assess sites which may be allocated for development. This has included desk-based work, geophysical surveys and evaluation of sites on the southern and eastern fringes of the city. Within the city, there have been building surveys in Lowesmoor (the former Berwick Hotel), and at Shrub Hill (buildings of the Vulcan ironworks).

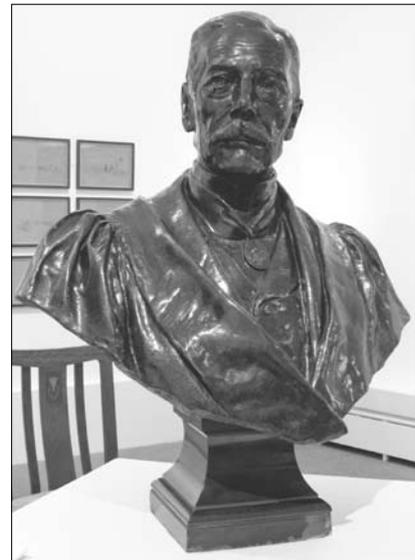
James Dinn

News from Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum

Missing Thomas Brock bust recently found

In the summer of 2011 we were preparing objects for an exhibition at Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum called Edwardian Elegance. Whilst working in the stores of the County Museum at Hartlebury we came across the bust of a very elegant Edwardian gentleman in a corner of the store that had only recently been cleared. It soon became evident that this was the bust of Sir Douglas Galton (and not Sir Edward Elgar as we had first thought!) sculpted by Sir Thomas Brock, and the conclusion to a search that had been ongoing for many years.

In the last years of the 19th century, Sir Thomas Brock was commissioned to produce a bust of the late Sir Douglas Galton. To our knowledge, three were made. A marble version is in the possession of Leeds Museums and Galleries at Lotherton Hall. The other two remained in the County of Worcestershire. One is retained by the family and a third was unveiled at The Shire Hall in June 1902 where it remained on display in the Judge's Lodgings until the 1980s.



Bust of Sir Douglas Galton in the Edwardian Elegance exhibition at the City Museum in 2011

The City Museum was contacted by a member of Galton's family some ten years ago in an effort to locate the Shire Hall bust, but by this time its whereabouts were a mystery. The research into the location of the bust has taken us to museums within the county, the region and also to The Henry Moore Foundation, Leeds Museum, the Tate Gallery and many other art institutions. It was Garston Phillips of Worcester City Museum who realised that this mystery Edwardian gentleman was in fact the bust that we had been looking for. On closer inspection of the store its plinth and name plate were located which confirmed that the bust was indeed Sir Douglas Galton. Quite rightly, Galton found his way into our Edwardian Elegance exhibition and now has pride of place in our new permanent museum exhibition at the City Art Gallery and Museum. These last few months have seen him visited by some of those who were searching for him,

including Lord Sandys of Ombersley, members of Galton's family and our original enquirer, Neville Billington.

Sir Douglas Strutt Galton was born in 1822, the son of John Howard Galton of Hadzor House, Worcestershire, and lived at Himbleton. He was educated at Rugby and obtained a commission in the corps of the Royal Engineers in 1840, but is best known for his achievements in the field of civil engineering. He was secretary to the Royal Commission set up to investigate the properties of iron for railway structures, and became Government Inspector for Railways and later Secretary to the Railway Department of the Board of Trade. He was a leading authority on the subject of submarine telegraphy and a member of the Army Sanitary Committee, giving advice on London drainage and sanitation of military hospitals following the Crimean War, amongst other things. He was a Fellow of the Royal Society and was awarded the C.B. in 1865 and K.C.B. in 1887. He died from blood poisoning in 1899, at the age of 77, and is buried in Himbleton churchyard. The People of Worcestershire commissioned the Shire Hall bust in recognition of the achievements of this remarkable man. He is also remembered in a stained glass window in the north choir aisle of Worcester Cathedral, made by James Powell & Sons in 1906.

Sir Thomas Brock, born in the City of Worcester in 1847, was one of the City's best-known artists and a leading sculptor of his age. He worked as an apprentice modeller for Kerr and Binns Porcelain Works after training at the School of Design in Pierpoint Street. Brock completed his education at the Royal Academy School in London whilst working in the studio of John Henry Foley. Brock took over this studio following Foley's death in 1874, and it was from here that he completed many of his greatest works, such as 'The Black Prince' and 'The Titanic Memorial'. So celebrated was his work that his studio was visited by Queen Victoria, Edward VII and George V. His work 'A Moment of Peril' sat in the centre of the nave of the Worcestershire Exhibition of 1882 at Shrub Hill Engine Works. This magnificent bronze was purchased by the nation and is now in the care and ownership of the Tate Gallery.



A Moment of Peril at the 1882 Worcestershire exhibition

Local examples of Brock's work include the statue of Queen Victoria which stands in the forecourt of Worcester's Shire Hall, the accomplished statue of Bishop Philpott at Worcester Cathedral, and two large works in Kidderminster: Sir Rowland Hill in Vicar Street and Richard

Baxter who stands outside St Mary's Parish Church. Museums Worcestershire also hold three of his works: the busts of Sir Charles Hastings and Sir Douglas Galton, which are currently on display at the City Museum, and the Earl of Dudley which is currently in store. His crowning glory, however, was the 'Victoria Memorial' outside Buckingham Palace, which led to his knighthood in 1911.

Deborah Fox and Garston Phillips,
Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum

News from Avoncroft Museum

Avoncroft gives rare shelter an airing

A historic Edwardian garden pavilion, which has stood on the site of the former county lunatic asylum in Bromsgrove since the early 1900s, is being given a new lease of life. Preserved as part of the redevelopment of the Barnsley Hall Hospital site into a housing estate, the structure, which is known as an 'airing court shelter', had become a target for persistent vandalism.

Recognising the building's historic value, Avoncroft Museum stepped in and, together with assistance from Solihull-based Kier Construction, a rescue plan was set in motion. Despite residents' best efforts, the shelter was proving difficult to maintain and its future was hanging in the balance. Avoncroft put forward a rescue plan and, thanks to support from Kier Construction and three local charities – the George Cadbury Trust, the RD Turner Trust and the 29th May 1961 Trust – we are now in the process of relocating it piece by piece to Avoncroft.

A key feature of mental institutions, airing courts were areas designed to provide open-air exercise for patients. At Barnsley Hall Hospital they were landscaped grass areas, enclosed by railings to ensure the patients didn't escape; each court contained an octagonal shelter to protect patients from the elements.

The shelter we're moving was in the airing court for male epileptic patients. Although a simple structure, it's important because it tells us a lot about the changing attitudes to hospitals and the treatment of mentally ill patients in the early 20th century. Unlike their mid-Victorian predecessors, the Edwardians saw fresh air and exercise as beneficial, rather than threatening, to health. There couldn't have been a greater contrast between the Barnsley Hall Hospital and the types of institutions described by Dickens but, despite being modern, light and airy when it opened in June 1907, it was still a place where people who had treatable disorders such as epilepsy were confined away from their families and society.

In partnership with Kier Construction, Avoncroft is now dismantling the shelter so it can be moved approximately four miles to the Museum's open-air site at Stoke Heath, Bromsgrove. The painstaking process requires the careful stripping of the roof tiles, removal of the timber roof structure, dismantling of the internal wooden partitions and bench seating, plus removal of the eight supporting cast iron columns.

Once re-erected, the shelter will provide a resting point for visitors on the way to the top of the bank above the Museum's ice house, where an observation and orientation point will be established as a further phase of this project.

The original plan had been to re-erect the building immediately but, following advice from regional ecology conservation consultancy Middlemarch Environmental, plans have been delayed to protect the Museum's colony of great-crested newts, which will only emerge from hibernation in the warmer weather.

Whilst the re-erection of the main structural elements of the shelter will be undertaken by Kier Construction, the subsequent painting and restoration will be carried out by volunteers. The Museum needs to raise a further £15,000 to complete the project. The shelter will be re-erected in time for Easter, but complete restoration and opening to the public will be in late summer 2012.

Storms Damage Iconic Windmill

Staff at Avoncroft had a dramatic start to the year when they returned to find the Museum's iconic windmill damaged by high winds during the New Year storms. One of the windmill's sails had been snapped off, and the broken part had pierced the roof of the windmill's lower section, causing further damage.



We have managed to claim the insurance for replacing the broken sail but, as they come as a pair, we are fund-raising for its partner. So far we have had some very kind donations from members of the public following the coverage on Midlands Today, Central News, Radio BBC Hereford and Worcestershire and in the Guardian and Daily Telegraph newspapers. We have also received a grant to cover some of the costs and currently have an application in to The Association of Industrial Architecture for a grant to cover the remaining costs.

We are hoping to have the windmill back in working order by June, depending on the outcome of the grant bids. If anyone would like to donate towards this restoration fund, all gifts would be very welcome.

Rachel Shepherd

Ashmolean Museum set to open in Broadway village

The Ashmolean Museum in Oxford is to open an outpost in a Worcestershire village this autumn. Tudor House, one of Broadway's finest 17th-century buildings, is being transformed into an independent museum. John Keil, Tudor House's owner, has offered the property on a long-

term lease. The project has also been boosted by a capital grant from Worcestershire County Council. Furniture, objects, paintings and textiles from the Ashmolean's reserve collections, as well as works from the private collection of the Keil family, will go on display in six rooms of the house. There will also be a gallery space dedicated to rotating exhibitions of works by local artists. 'The museum will recreate the original interior, furnishings and styles of the house, ranging from the 17th to the 19th centuries', said a spokeswoman for the Ashmolean. A major refurbishment of the building will be led by staff from the Ashmolean's curatorial, design and conservation departments.

WAS welcomes the initiative to use Tudor House at Broadway as an outpost of the Ashmolean Museum, giving the opportunity for more people to see and enjoy the museum's outstanding collections. The Society also welcomes the fact that this important historic building will be accessible to the public and a valuable addition to the museums in the county.

The Last Prioress of Denny

In the church beside Coughton Court lies the tomb of Elizabeth Throckmorton, 'last Abbess of Denye'. Why is she here? What is her story?

Denny Abbey still stands amid flat fenland a few miles north of Cambridge – it had a varied monastic history but from the mid 14th century was a house of Franciscan Minoreesses, the Poor Clares. It is impossible to know what drew Elizabeth Throckmorton to join this particular Order, especially as it was a good hundred miles distant from her home at Coughton. We do know, however, that she was abbess of the convent by 1512, so presumably she had joined the house some years before.

Elizabeth came from a family devoutly religious and dedicated to the church. Their home, Coughton Court, lay just into Warwickshire but was in the Worcester diocese. Her grandfather had been nationally important as Chamberlain of the Exchequer; her brother, Sir Robert, died on pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1518, having overseen the rebuilding of the church beside his home. His son, Sir George, became prominent in the 1530s as a minister to King Henry VIII, a perilous role, particularly as he advised against the break with Rome. Amazingly he survived. Later Throckmortons were involved in the supporting the 'old' religion in the eponymous plot of 1583 and after that the Gunpowder plot. They owned extensive lands in Worcestershire as well as in Warwickshire.

Elizabeth must have been born sometime before 1472, the year in which her father, Sir Thomas, died. Thus by the time Henry VIII began planning his attack on the monasteries with the Visitation by his Commissioners and the Valor Ecclesiasticus in 1535, she would have been at least in her early sixties and four years later, when Denny was dissolved, around seventy. For most monks and nuns, losing their long-time home must have been a terrible and unwelcome shock but at least the abbess had another home to which she could return. Taking two other nuns with her she travelled back to Coughton Court where there was plenty of room for the exiles, especially as her nephew had been busy enlarging the house for several years. There, reputedly in upstairs rooms overlooking the neighbouring church, the three women carried on the religious life as best they could. They continued to wear their habits and as a later Sir George described: 'Prescribed to themselves the Rules of the Order as far as it was possible in their present situation, where their whole employ was attendance in the oratory and work at their needle'.

As well, they occasionally joined in with the family life, but never if there were strangers present. It seems that Elizabeth brought with her the dole gate from Denny Abbey – this hinged wooden panel, carved with her name and title, *abbatiss*, was once set within the monastic gate and through it doles of food or clothes would have been passed to the needy. It can still be seen at Coughton, where it may have been fixed on the door to the nuns' apartments as a symbol of their separation from the household's secular life.

From all this Elizabeth Throckmorton appears as a strong, determined woman. Other telling evidence hints at a strict, perhaps authoritarian, character; for when the King's Commissioners visited Denny Abbey in 1535 they reported, and it could be biased, that six nuns 'weeping ... kneeling upon their knees and holding up their hands ...instantly desired to go forth'. On the other hand the abbey received many legacies in its last years so it must have remained a house of good repute.

There is other interesting evidence about Elizabeth Throckmorton's character. She obviously had an intelligent enquiring mind, for she valued books. We know of one of her volumes which survived the Dissolution, a work of William of Nassington, written in English in rhyming couplets and called *Speculum Vitae*. Her name is written in it, followed by that of a former friar who was one of the Commissioners who received the surrender of the abbey and obviously carried her book away. A decade earlier, rather surprisingly for a woman with such a conservative religious background, Elizabeth appears to have risked acquiring one of Tyndale's books when she 'desired to borrow' from one Humphrey of Monmouth, a copy of Tyndale's translation of Erasmus' *Enchiridion Militis Christiani* (the Christian Soldier's Handbook). Monmouth, a rich London cloth merchant, is known as a Lollard and Lutheran sympathizer, and a financial backer of Protestant writers on the continent. In 1528 the authorities caught up with him and he was 'clapt up in prison' for distributing Tyndale's works. Rather unnecessarily he implicated the abbess in his wrongdoing, saying that she had requested the *Enchiridion* from him, but she seems to have gone unpunished.

Elizabeth lived on at Coughton with her companions for eight years, faithful to her calling. She died at last in the winter of 1547 and was buried in the chancel of the church, in a vault with her two friends. Above her tomb, her devoted nephew placed this inscription which can still be read today:

Of your charity pray for the soule of Dame Elizabeth Throckmorton the last Abbas of Denye and aunte to Syr George Throckmerton knight who decessyd the XIII day of Januarye in the yere of oure lord god Ano mccccxlvii who lyeth here tumulate in thys tombe on whous soule and all chryssten soules Jhesu have m'cy. Ame'

Vivit post funera v'tus

Margaret Goodrich

Some Letters of Richard Hurd

In 1984 over 100 letters from Richard Hurd (1720-1808), bishop of Worcester 1781-1808, crossed the Atlantic to the University of Yale. They had been purchased at Sotheby's and are now among the magnificent collections of the Beinecke Library, where I was able to study them in October 2011.

The letters are all written to Hurd's close friend Thomas Balguy (1716-1795). They met at Cambridge, where Hurd was at Emmanuel and Balguy at St John's. The letters begin in 1749, when Hurd was aged 29, and continue until 1792. Balguy also became a clergyman, ending his career as archdeacon of Winchester. He was buried in the Cathedral, where a handsome monument can be seen. Had he not been in poor health, he would have succeeded William Warburton as bishop of Gloucester in the same year (1781) that brought Hurd to Hartlebury.

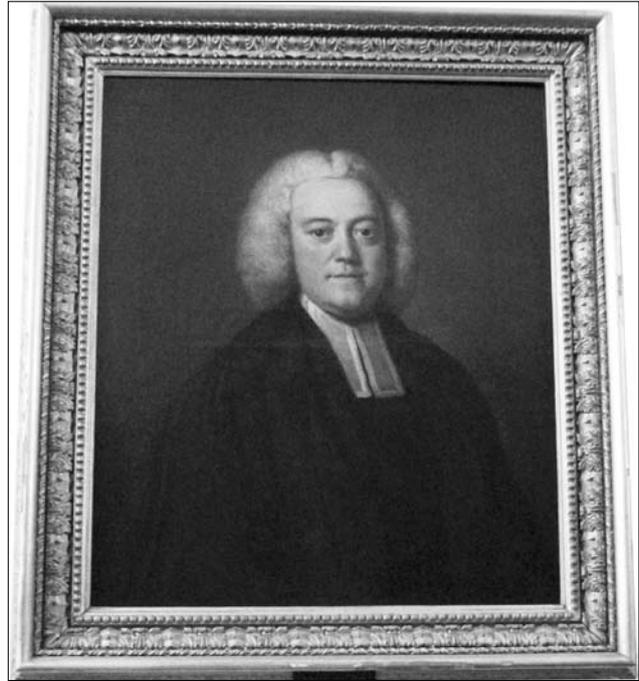
The letters up to 1762, edited by Sarah Brewer, were published by the Church of England Record Society in 1995. Extracts from some of the later ones were transcribed by Francis Kilvert (uncle of the diarist) in his *Memoir of the life and writings of the Right Rev. Richard Hurd*, 1860. Balguy was unmarried, and when Kilvert saw the letters they were in the possession of a relative, the Rev. J.T. Allen, Vicar of Stradbroke in Suffolk. They have not been studied in detail since.

Hurd was a splendid letter-writer, as Sarah Brewer's edition makes clear. The later letters show no falling off in his style, display the warmth of the friendship between the two men and give fascinating details of Hurd's career and character, as well as of his often strong opinions. In

1767 he wrote in some excitement to announce his appointment as archdeacon of Gloucester. 'I must desire you to communicate some part of your knowledge & experience to me, & especially to let me know what books it will be proper for me to read on the subject ... Believe me always your affectionate friend & brother The Archdeacon of Gloucester' (30 Sept 1767). In 1774 he was made bishop of Lichfield: 'I have now kissed hands and have nothing more to do... Lichfield is worth above £1800 a year' (9 Dec 1774). He was less enthusiastic about the time he had to spend in London as a result: 'The malignity & folly of fashion are not to be imagined. I have spent 3 tedious nights in what afforded me no information & gave me much pain' (11 Nov 1775). He was, however, given comfortable accommodation at Kew, and taught two of George III's sons: 'The young princes ... are extremely promising' (7 June 1776).

After Warburton's death in 1779 Hurd, a trustee of his will, had some trouble with the widow over disposal of his possessions: 'One knows not how to manage with this woman ... I desired to see the Bp's manuscripts. She sends me the contents of them, from w'ch I can judge nothing' (6 March 1780). Hurd first directed a catalogue of the books to be made and sent to 'Payne and one or two more of our Great Booksellers, & the best price that can be had to be taken for them' (18 August 1779). Eventually, of course, he bought all the books himself, for £350, and had to build the Hurd Library at Hartlebury Castle to accommodate them.

The letters written from Hartlebury are of particular interest to us. 'At length I am come to this place', he wrote on 16 July 1781. 'It is large and handsome, and will be an agreeable residence



*Portrait of Dr Thomas Balguy by William Hoare
in the Hurd Library*

when the house is thoroughly cleaned, and repaired, and furnished.’ A few weeks later: ‘The worst is, there is not a book here, nor any repository for those I have at Gloucester. This, I doubt, will put me on the expence of building’ (6 August 1781). Several letters record the progress of building in 1782, and on 2 August 1783 he announced: ‘I am busy arranging my books in the new Library (w’h by the bye they will not half fill) ... The room itself is quite finished, & more than answers my expectations’. The Balguy collection includes a letter from John Butler, bishop of Oxford, who visited Hurd the following year: ‘The Bishop’s new Library is a very considerable improvement, and everything else was so comfortable that I hastened away, lest I should lose my relish for the more humble pleasures of Cuddesdon’ (5 August 1784).

Other letters shed an entertaining light on Hurd’s character, which was not as prim as some of his critics have suggested. Balguy’s cousin, Sarah Drake, kept house for him in Winchester. On 13 May 1769 Hurd wrote: ‘Pray give my respectful compliments to Miss Drake. I interest myself much in her new Gown, & yet you have not said one word of it’. He recorded the royal visit to the castle in 1788: ‘The honours done me were extraordinary, & you will wonder that my weak head did not turn with them’ (1 Sept. 1788). He had further spats with Warburton’s widow, happily resolved some years after her marriage to Martin Stafford Smith, when she ‘has been wonderfully good to me just now in assisting me to get a housekeeper’ (29 April 1785).

He was extremely annoyed with Joseph Priestley for presuming to send him a copy of his *History of the corruptions of Christianity* in 1782. ‘Priestley’s nonsense is not to be wondered at. But his impertinence in sending it to me & calling upon me to read it shews him to be out of his mind’ (8 Feb 1783). Hurd did not keep the book. He loathed most ‘Scotch writers’ and had a particularly low opinion of Boswell, duly recorded in his commonplace book at Hartlebury. After the publication of the *Journal to the Hebrides* he wrote: ‘It shews what conceit & self-sufficiency, acting upon folly, can do’ (13 Oct 1785). The Boswell papers are also in the Beinecke Library and it is a happy irony that Hurd’s comment on the *Journal* now lies not far from the original manuscript of it. In the same letter he showed an interest in linguistics: ‘I could never love chat for its own sake but for the sake of the chatter. Excuse a new word, for I think it is not in Johnson’s dictionary’. It is, of course, but not in the sense Hurd meant; he was confusing it with ‘chatterer’. Johnson’s comment on such an error from a man of whom he had a rather low opinion would have been worth hearing, but luckily he had died the year before.

Hurd was grieved by the death of his old friend Thomas Gray – ‘We have so few persons of any eminence in literature left’ (13 Sept 1771) – and shocked by events in France in 1789: ‘More real suffering may arise in a few months or weeks from the misguided rage of a mob in the pursuit of liberty, than would be felt in ages from the most despotic government in Europe. Half a dozen wretched victims were found in the Bastile; and most of them perhaps the victims of their own vices or follies. The Bastile is destroyed: but who can count the number of those, who are every day wretched out of it ... I do not plead for despotism; but I think some ways of removing it, are worse than the worst that are apprehended from it’ (17 August 1789). It was the French Revolution that converted Hurd from a Whig (according to Dr Johnson’s opinion) to a Tory.

The letters cease in May 1792, three years before Balguy’s death. He was now 78 and blind; Hurd was 72, and would live another 16 years, but one of his last letters, dated 5 Jan 1792, conveys the sadness of old age and final separation: ‘You & I, I suppose, shall be confined for

the rest of our lives to our respective habitations. Indeed where could either of us find a better? I only lament, that we are at so great a distance from each other...’.

It was hard to leave this treasure trove behind; but it could not be better cared for.

Christine Penney

Hurd Librarian

Recent Publications

***The Story of Worcester* Pat Hughes & Annette Leech (Logaston Press, 2011), paperback £15**

How disappointing life has become for the inquisitive local historian who, finding himself in an unfamiliar town, discovers an independent bookshop – a rare breed in itself – only to realise that the ‘local interest’ shelves are full of shallow books, heavily dependent on oral history and 20th-century photographs. Gone, it seems from many parts of the country, are the well-researched parish histories with chronological chapters running from pre-history to the 20th century. Even rarer is the town history which, in the past, was often the life-work of a native whose previous specialist contributions in local journals had indicated the journey to a much anticipated greater work. This is what we have in *The Story of Worcester* (a very modest title), the joint efforts of Pat Hughes and Annette Leech. The latter, we are informed, helped with the late chapters of the book and especially the section on non-conformity. From the outset, it must be said that the book succeeds admirably because of the 35 years Pat Hughes admits to ‘rummaging around in the city archives’. She, and her companion, have a great talent for fitting miscellaneous ‘and sometimes useless’ (her words) information into the grand panorama of Worcester’s history which, unlike many other cities in the West Midlands, is very much an integral part of the story of the nation. Thus, the book proceeds in a chronological fashion, but is much enhanced by striking vignettes of specific locations, individual buildings and the experiences of eye witnesses. The common stream has been merged seamlessly with the grand flow of Worcester’s exciting history. This is a rare achievement.

We are warned in the preface not to expect too much on the early history of the city and the development of the cathedral as an institution. Instead, we are soon meeting the traders working in their houses, via the rentals and cartularies of the many religious institutions in the medieval city. Good use is made of recent archaeological work, gleaned from transitory reports and SMR material to reconstruct the town plan of the city, and even the Cathedral receives some appraisal. Soon we are into the early modern chapters where Worcester’s Reformation is brought down to the human level via the Bailiffs’ List, the Council Order Books, the Six Masters archive and much else. Everything is thoroughly footnoted for future research. The academic secondary sources have all been read and absorbed but many revisionist hobby horses have been left behind, and the story is brought alive by individual portraits such as the persecution of the Protestant apothecary, John Davis – available, it seems, on the internet. Once again we are introduced to the latest changes in the housing stock and more often than not a craftsman is mentioned and even the source of his materials. The book reinforces the value of probate inventories for the local history of this period. One of the principal themes of the book is to chart the development of the building trade in Worcester, and particular attention is paid in each century to developments at the waterworks just below the Severn Bridge, the Guildhall, the Trinity, the gaols and the Cathedral, especially the ebb and flow of canonical houses in the precinct.

In the preface the authors are reticent about the Civil War but, in the event, this substantially understates one of the best chapters in the book. The story is told with great gusto but each episode is illuminated with new research and unexpected connections. The concept of the 'Faithful City' is quietly challenged and we are introduced to the godly households to be found in the parliamentary enclave of Newport Street. Any royalist sympathies are further thwarted by the portrait of Prince Maurice's profligate lifestyle at the expense of the community. A similar enriched contextual framework is provided for the battle of Worcester 1651. Those miscellaneous researches, denigrated in the preface score again and again, and the rich tapestry of Worcester's past is embroidered with many new picaresque sketches.

After the Restoration of Charles II Worcester was still in crisis with the Sham Plot, food riots and continuous religious foment. Incidentally, we learn exactly where Worcester's catholic chapel was to be found where James II attended mass in 1687. John Noake got it wrong. There is a good section here on how the poor were housed and excellent illustrations are used exploiting the considerable collection of early watercolours in the City Art Gallery. Logaston Press are to be congratulated – and the artists - for their excellent reproductions, making even the most desperate slum look desirable from a 21st century perspective.

There is a change in perspective for the 18th century chapters, with the focus firmly on the polite society that developed as a result of Worcester becoming the cultural capital of the Severn valley. There is much about the fabric of the city and the present author, who spent a little time on this topic in the 1970s, found much that was new and interesting. The commercial community is not neglected, and Annette Leech makes her biggest contribution here with an excellent chapter on the involvement of the non-conformists in trade, industry, science and medicine.

There is no slackening of impetus in the last quarter of the book, which takes us into the 19th century. The court records of the shire and the city take us into crime and punishment and eventually to the gaols. This is conventional territory but again there are brief detours that develop new avenues. We discover, for example, that the women transported from Worcester to Botany Bay in the late 18th century did rather well in their challenging environment. The impact of the Municipal Reform Act heralds a chapter on shops, artisan dwellings, suburban expansion and new churches. The Guildhall comes back into focus and we learn that in 1873 George Gilbert Scott –no friend of baroque architecture –wrote to *The Builder*, condemning the council's proposal to demolish it. Finally, in this last section of the book, public health, education and transport are given a thorough airing, followed by a brief postscript on the 20th century. Even if we had not guessed it already, the authors find Worcester 'a delightful place to live' and they urge their readers (and governors) to remember the past when they look to the future. They have provided the perfect handbook.

David Whitehead, Hereford

Life and Industry in the Suburbs of Roman Worcester ed Simon Butler & Richard Cuttler, Birmingham Archaeology Monograph Series 8. £34. iv+140 pages; illustrated throughout in colour and black and white

This monograph brings together the results of four excavations and evaluations, one near St Martin's Gate and three in The Butts, undertaken between 2000 and 2004. Two of the sites were investigated by Mike Napthan Archaeology while the other two were examined by Birmingham Archaeology.

The four sites lie to the north and northeast of the area regarded as the core of Roman Worcester, but the results suggest that they were occupied and used, if not intensively, during the Roman period. Although there was limited evidence for actual structures, the backfill of a well found at 1 The Butts contained building debris including *tesserae* and painted wall plaster of late 4th-century date. The debris indicates that there was a substantial stone building nearby, and that some of its rooms were heated. The re-use of architectural mouldings in the construction of the well show that there had been an earlier stone building within the vicinity, perhaps of late 1st or 2nd-century date.

All the sites produced a large amount of Roman slag, and at that near St Martin's Gate some smithing debris was also retrieved. However, no evidence for the actual production and working of iron was found. The evidence for ironworking in Worcester in the Roman period is discussed and the evidence from these sites compared and contrasted with that from Deansway and sites elsewhere.

The bulk of the monograph is taken up with finds analysis, particularly pottery and environmental evidence. The site at 14-24 The Butts produced a large amount of late Roman pottery, albeit from a post-Roman hollow way; as one of very few assemblages of its date to be found in Worcester, it is described and discussed in detail. The environmental material from the same site, which came from cores taken from the waterlogged deposits at the bottom of a well seven metres deep, is also dealt with in detail, and compared with evidence from other sites in Worcester and further afield.

The monograph concentrates on the Roman period. However, there are hints that these sites were unoccupied from the late 4th century until the post-medieval period, although evidence for activity in the intervening period may have been removed by later truncation of the deposits. The intensity of use of these sites in the Roman period does not appear to have been high (the environmental evidence suggests waste ground not far away), but the accumulation of 'dark earth' in the post-Roman period and the sites' location outside the boundaries of the medieval city show a contraction in the size of Worcester, and that it did not cover the same area until comparatively recently.

While the conclusions will be of interest to those seeking to learn more about Roman Worcester, the monograph will be of most use to those working in Roman pottery analysis or environmental studies.

Christopher Guy

Roman Gloucestershire Tom Copeland (The History Press, Stroud, 2011)191pp, 91 b/w and 28 colour illustrations

Roman Gloucestershire is a very appealing subject, and one which Tim Copeland clearly knows thoroughly. The author has taught at the universities of Bristol and Gloucestershire, and the book follows the logical sequence which would be expected of a lecture course – indeed, it appears to be based on course notes, adapted for a wider audience. However it does not always succeed in reflecting the author's evident knowledge and enthusiasm well, and can be very frustrating to use. For the last 30 years, Alan McWhirr's *Roman Gloucestershire* has been the main introduction to the subject, and Copeland acknowledges his debt. This volume is altogether more lavish. Copiously illustrated, the book can also draw on a mass of new

archaeological work, and many important sites and recent excavations are introduced. This is, however, not a guide to visiting Roman Gloucestershire, though there is a short section on visible and accessible sites.

Gloucestershire contains two of Roman Britain's most important and well-researched towns – the *colonia* at Gloucester and the possible provincial capital at Cirencester. The county is also well known for the concentration of lavish villas in the Cotswolds, perhaps the forerunners of the more recent country houses. Recent archaeological work has thrown much new light on the conquest period, and on the small towns and other rural settlements.

Modern counties, or even historic counties, have little meaning in the Roman period. The author is therefore right to bring in selected sites in neighbouring counties, such as Saxons Lode, Ryall, Worcestershire, the Malvern potteries, *Ariconium* in Herefordshire, or the North Oxfordshire Grims Ditch, but some important sites in historic Gloucestershire, such as the Kings Weston villa (now in Bristol) are omitted. To a Worcestershire reader, the richness of many of the sites in Roman Gloucestershire does of course stand in marked contrast to the apparently much less wealthy Worcestershire, in spite of the impact of recent excavation.

The book is organised quite conventionally, starting with a section on discovering Roman Gloucestershire, continuing with the late Iron Age and conquest periods, themes such as towns, villas and rural settlement, and concluding with the end of Roman Gloucestershire. There is a chapter on religion and another on evidence for individual people. Along the way, some more challenging concepts are introduced, such as tribalism, Romanisation, and the vagaries of discovery and use of archaeological techniques.

However, there are many difficulties in using the book, and it seems in many ways to be an unreliable guide. The author has not been well served by his editor, and there are numerous spelling mistakes, especially of names – Curio for Corio, Dubonnic for Dobunnic, Western-under-Penyard, Droitwitch, Tewksbury and Malverian. Ermin Street appears as Ermine Street, while the 'small town' of Wycomb is variously given as Wycombe, Wycombe near Andoversford and Wycombe (Syreford). There are also several mis-transcriptions of Latin – *die familiars* for *dei familiares*, *temelos* for *temenos*, *Genii Cucullati* for *Genii Cucallati*. The index is very poor; many sites and subjects are not indexed at all, while others are wrongly referenced. The text flows well (though there are occasional paragraphs which read like a first draft), but this is partly achieved through not referencing either sources or illustrations within the text. The former are covered in a very selective reading list at the end, though this will not always lead the reader to the source they are looking for – try to search for the published source for the possible Cirencester theatre (if correctly identified, one of only five known in Britain), and you will be pointed towards several published reports on the town, but with no indication as to which one (if any) might contain this site. Other sites mentioned are not covered by any reference in the reading list. While the black-and-white illustrations are usually close to the relevant text, there is no way of linking the colour plates to text, as they are grouped in a single block. With only one exception, the illustrations are taken directly from other sources, with the result that they often do not illustrate the text well. Several are repetitive or superfluous, but Burrow's early 20th-century illustrations and Philip Moss's reconstructions of Gloucester stand out as particularly good.

All in all, *Roman Gloucestershire* seems uncertain of its audience. It is not well referenced enough to be useful to students, while there is some very technical material which may not

be of interest to the general reader, and which is not always fully explained. The book has the makings of a good and readable introduction to the subject, but is let down by its numerous flaws. It may be better to wait for a second edition.

James Dinn

Little Malvern Letters I: 1482-1737 ed Aileen M. Hodgson & Michael Hodgetts, Catholic Record Society Series 83 (Boydell & Brewer, 2011) £45. A 25% discount is available to WAS members until 30th June 2012. Quoting the offer code 11446, orders can be made by phone 01394 610600, fax 01394 610316, email trading@boydell.co.uk or at www.boydellandbrewer.com. Postage £3.00, free for online orders.

In 1534 John Bristow and his community of seven Benedictine monks surrendered Little Malvern Priory to the Crown. John Russell I, d. 1540, of Bedwardine and Elmley Castle was granted a 21-year lease of the priory. This was in recognition of his services as Secretary of the Council of the Welsh marches, with its headquarters at Ludlow Castle. Eventually it was granted outright by Queen Mary to John's son, Henry Russell I, d. 1558, for some £420. The furnishing of the former priory's domestic buildings are provided by an extraordinary probate inventory of 1575 as Document 36; an inventory of the church is 34. This included two small bells, 'one not our own'. At the Dissolution there were five, weighing about 2¼ tons and worth some £45. Three old copes were of 'coarse gear', as were two vestments and an alb. The one small cross (for the altar) was of copper.

The Letters of the title relate primarily to John Russell I's nine successors, the last being Elizabeth (1685-1744), who married Thomas Berington, d. 1743. There is a valuable introduction which provides biographical details and some analysis of the estates, which had changed greatly since the original grant to John Russell I. The printed documents are mostly from manuscripts in the Worcestershire Record Office, originally calendared by Margaret Henderson.

The final documents, 199 and 200, are the Recantation of Mr Pollet, who describes himself as 'Late Missioner and Popish Emissary in Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Flintshire, &c. and Popish Confessor and Chaplain to the Roman Catholick Families at Hill-End, at Malvern and Blackmore Park, and others'; and 'Jacobite Verses on the White Rose'. Four appendices relate to the Prior's Hall; an 1871 RCHMss Appendix on the library of Charles Berington; items from the Berington Collection exhibited at the WRO in 1958; and Lawsuits of 1607-8. The indices are extremely useful. The Catholic Record Society is to be complimented on a splendidly produced volume, and the editors, though sadly Aileen Hodgson did not live to complete the volume, on a scholarly work which will be of great interest to students both of Recusant history and of the county in the 16th and 17th centuries.

Joe Hillaby

John Somerset Pakington: His First 50 Years by Andrew Harris (available from the author at andrewharris1@mac.com for £12.50 including post and packing)

The archives of the Pakington family, Lords Hampton, form one of the most extensive and rich collections held by the Worcestershire Archive Service. However, not a great deal has been published on the family's history; in 1936 E.A.B. Barnard wrote an article in the Society's *Transactions* on the earlier years of the family; in 1975 Humphrey and Richard

Pakington published privately a book on the family; and the father of the present Lord Hampton in 1986 published an article on the life of 'The First Lord Hampton' (John Russell, 1799-1880) in our *Transactions*. In 1986 Lord Hampton said of him: 'He achieved some distinction as a politician'. Now Andrew Harris, who is already known for his extensive researches into the life and times of the Vernon family of Hanbury Hall (amongst many other projects), has produced the first of a projected two-volume major biography of this Worcestershire worthy who, it might be thought, has not attracted the attention his achievements merit.

This volume is clearly the result of extensive research, not just in the family archive itself, but in many other collections, such as the Quarter Sessions of Worcestershire, the records of Parliament and contemporary newspapers. The question such a book raises has to be whether John Pakington's life merits such attention, and if so how Andrew Harris persuades us of his importance. The account of his early life would not initially appear to support this – he comes across as a fairly predictable 19th-century member of the landed gentry, primarily interested in his own status and importance (getting involved in what might be the last duel fought on Worcestershire soil) and following a fairly predictable round of house parties, visits and shooting parties (he appears to dispose of immense quantities of game birds). However, Mr Harris cleverly develops and documents a growing sense of duty which led Pakington to take a leading role in the county magistracy and bodies such as the Droitwich Board of Guardians, then to parliamentary ambitions which resulted in him holding (after some abortive initial efforts) the parliamentary seat of Droitwich from 1837 to 1874. Once in Parliament he took his duties very seriously, sitting on Committees and being recognised as a significant personage in the Tory party, and ultimately (in a story to be told in the forthcoming second volume) achieving ministerial office.

Mr Harris does much more than record the events of Pakington's life. He sets his many political and local interests in a wider historical context, with accounts of such topics as the New Poor Law, the Andover Union Scandal, the Corn Laws debates and many other relevant topics. Nor does he ignore his personal life, and the tragedies that led to the early death of two beloved wives before his final third marriage, as well as accounts of his children.

This is a most impressive achievement, covering both the local and the national stage, at a time of great social and political change, and Mr Harris is to be congratulated on the range of his scholarship. There is a great deal of detail, and at times the range of names and topics can seem overwhelming. However, Mr Harris is meticulous in explaining who everyone is and how they all relate to each other, and useful appendices covering the outline of Pakington's parliamentary activity and a basic family tree help. Occasionally the amount of detail from the surviving diaries can threaten to overwhelm the narrative, but overall the volume is very successful in engaging our interest in Sir John and justifying his importance and interest. The promised second volume will see an account of his ministerial activities when he reached the pinnacle of his career, culminating in his being raised to the peerage following his defeat as MP for Droitwich. When completed these two volumes will be significant not just for the account they give of this particular man and his family, but also for the light they throw on a wide range of significant topics for the history of 19th-century Worcestershire.

The volume, which is published by the author, has been produced to a very high standard by the Orphans Press and is copiously illustrated throughout with a wide range of relevant images, and the writing is clear and precise. It is completed by a useful index, although a bibliography

of sources would also have been helpful, particularly given the impressive range of Mr Harris' researches. It can certainly be highly recommended.

Robin Whittaker

Having a Drink round Bidford Dr Richard Churchley, whose lecture on 'Industry in East Wores before the Railway Age' was much enjoyed last November, has brought out the first in a series of booklets on the history of local pubs. This one deals with those in 'Drunken Bidford' and surrounding Warwickshire villages: Binton, Exhall, Temple Grafton, Salford Priors, Wixford. Price £4, it is available from the author, Bidford News or Salford Priors Post Office. The booklet traces lost hostelries and the history of pubs still in existence from documentary and photographic evidence. Future booklets will discuss the pubs of Studley, Feckenham and Inkberrow and surrounding villages. To contact Richard Churchley, phone 01527 892361, email rachurchley@totalise.co.uk or visit his website: www.churchley.org.uk.

Mystery Solved

Peter Walker writes that the bench and screen at Combe St Nicholas in Somerset illustrated from the watercolour in the Society's collection in the last issue of the *Recorder* (84, p21) is at Haddon Hall, Derbyshire. It moved from Somerset sometime after 1905; a dealer in Devon sold it in the 1920s to the Marquis of Danby who took it to Haddon Hall in Derbyshire. Its history, including excellent photographs of it being moved to Haddon in a horse-drawn wagon, is set out in an article entitled 'The History of the Combe St Nicholas Settle' on the parish website www.combestnicholas.org.uk (follow the link from the History page on this site).

Worcestershire Archaeological Society Excursions Programme 2012

To book or for further details email Excursions@worcestershirearchaeologicalsociety.org.uk

Thurs 19 April. Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway. Day trip by car

We will travel on both sections of the restored 'foot of the Cotswolds' railway, hear a talk on the line's history and visit a working signal box.

Thurs 10 May: an evening visit to the **Old Bishop's Palace**, led by Frank Bentley

An opportunity for those who were unable to go last year, but many of whom will benefit from prior knowledge gleaned from Frank's lecture on the Bishop's Palace last September.

Thurs 24 May: evening visit to **Feckenham**

A designated Conservation Area, the village probably grew around a royal hunting lodge. For a long time up to the 19th century it was a major centre for the local needle and fish hook manufacture. After a short talk members will be free to explore the varied architecture.

Thurs 7 June. Arts & Crafts in Bromsgrove: a study day led by Christopher Pancheri & Jennie McGregor Smith

The Bromsgrove Guild was established in 1898 and produced a remarkable output of fine craftsmanship until 1966. We will visit some of the key sites associated with the Guild as well as examples of their work in churches, schools and private houses.

Thurs 14 June: evening visit to **Pershore Abbey** with supper in St Andrews parish centre

Like Tewkesbury, Pershore Abbey became the parish church after the Reformation. There are many similarities, but Pershore has its own tale to tell including rivalry with Westminster Abbey.

Tues 10 July: a day trip to the Lacy Borough of **Ludlow**, led by Joe Hillaby

First we will see the original parish church at **Stanton Lacy**. At Ludlow we will visit the castle, c1070, with its Norman gate-tower keep, circular chapel, perimeter wall etc; the great market; the parish church with its late medieval stained glass; and the borough gates and wall.

Tues 31 July: an evening visit to **Wychbold** and **Elmbridge** churches, led by Tim Bridges

St Mary de Wyche, Wychbold, completed in 1888 for the Droitwich salt magnate, John Corbett, contains some fine glass including a window by A.J.Davies of the Bromsgrove Guild. **St Mary, Elmbridge**, is partly Norman, but rebuilt in the 19th century. Furnishings include 17th-century communion rails from the former Catholic chapel at Purshull Hall.

Tues 14 August: an afternoon visit to **Birtsmorton Court** and Church

A guided tour of this spectacular half-timbered moated manor house of 13th-century origin but mostly of late 16th-century date. We will also visit the gardens and Decorated church. Refreshments will be provided.

Wed 22 August: day trip to **Kentchurch Court**, led by Michael & Jennie Goode

The house, dating back to the 14th century, was modernized by John Nash in 1795. We will have a conducted tour by the current owner, Jan Lucas-Scudamore, and be free to wander around the grounds. An afternoon Herefordshire 'Church crawl' will look at local rood screens etc.

Wed 12 September: Welsh Spas, led by John Harcup

A visit to what remains of the Victorian spas of central Wales – Llanwrtyd, Llangammarch and Llandrindod Wells – with a look at the Central Wales Railway which brought visitors, to include a signal box, viaducts and hopefully, depending on the summer timetable, a short rail trip.

6-Day Archaeological Study Trip to Chichester and Portsmouth Area, 1-6 October 2012

Led by Michael and Jenny Goode and based at the Best Western Beechcroft Hotel in Felpham. En route we will have a guided tour of Avebury, with time to visit to the Museum. Highlights of the week will include the Weald and Downland museum of buildings, Chichester Cathedral and town, Fishbourne Roman Palace, Uppark, Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. On our return we will visit Winchester Cathedral and The Vyne.

Cost £450 including dinner, bed and breakfast, entrance fees and guides; no single supplement. Non-members welcome at an additional £20 pp, to include Society membership for the year.

For your diary! 30 September to 5 October 2013

6-day study tour to explore historic **Suffolk**, led by Michael & Jenny Goode. Cost around £475.

Items for the next issue should be sent to the Editor, Caroline Hillaby, at The Roughs, Hollybush, Ledbury, HR8 1EU, tel 01531 650618, email recorder@worcestershiresarchaeologicalsociety.co.uk by **1 September 2012**.



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