

Worcestershire Recorder



Newsletter of the
WORCESTERSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



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A Warm Welcome to New Members

Miss Lauren Beardsley
Mr Don Bradley and Mrs Jane Guinery
Mrs Rosemary Chidgey
Mrs Toni Demidowicz
Mr Colin and Mrs Jacquie Hartwright
Mrs Judith Smart
Mrs Jane Tinklin
Mr John Williams and Ms Heather Ken

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Cover illustration: Aerial view of the main excavation area on the Broadway Flood Alleviation Scheme 2016-2017 ©AerialCam and Worcestershire Archaeology (see p22)

Chairman's Letter

It seems hardly possible that I have already reached the last Chairman's Letter for the *Recorder*: by the time you read the next issue, the AGM will have elected a new Chairman. They say that time goes quickly when you are enjoying yourself, or perhaps it just goes more quickly as you get older, but I certainly have enjoyed being able to contribute in a small way to the business of the Society, and I have felt honoured to have been chosen to do so. However, an organisation like ours is nothing if it isn't a team effort, and I have been supported for three years by capable, willing and hard-working officers and committee members, all of whom are volunteers with other things, like jobs, children and other commitments, to cope with. In that context, we were of course immensely saddened by the death of our Treasurer, Garth Raymer, in June. An appreciation of his contribution to the Society can be found on page 4. Paula Wittenberg, already a member of the Society, has been co-opted as Treasurer until the AGM, and she is most welcome as a new member of the team.

In July I was very pleased to be able to represent the Society at the opening of the new Worcestershire Archaeological Society Gallery at the County Museum at Hartlebury Castle. The creation of this new facility, which plugs a gap in the coverage of the county's past, was made possible by a generous grant from Severn Waste Services, which we as a Society were able to apply for and administer on the museum's behalf. Becoming a grant-holder in this way was something of a departure for us, but with a very satisfactory outcome. And the final excursion of the summer programme, which took place only a couple of weeks ago, gave an opportunity for members to visit the new gallery, as well as the Museum's Collections Centre. As previously reported, we have also been the recipient of a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund for a test-pitting project at White Ladies Aston, undertaken by looked-after children and supervised by our colleagues at the Archive and Archaeology Service. The final report on that project has now been completed, and we hope that further work of this kind will follow.

To continue the theme, the first lecture of our new season was given by the well-known member of Time Team, Professor Carezza Lewis, on her test-pitting work in East Anglia, and was attended by our largest audience for some time (see p22). We used the large hall at the Royal Grammar School on that occasion, but for the rest of the season will again be using the school's Lecture Theatre. A varied and enticing programme has been devised by our Programme Secretary, James Dinn. I hope that those members who have experienced talks in the lecture theatre over the past two years have appreciated the undoubted improvement in visibility and audibility over our former home at St George's hall. But the current venue has its drawbacks: parking is not as good, access for the less-abled is more challenging, and as a place for social interaction over a cup of coffee and a biscuit it scores very low. We think the experiment of trying a new place was well worth it, but we are still looking at alternatives, and may be able to report further by the time the AGM comes round in March.

Meanwhile, Volume 26 of the *Transactions*, for 2018, is being printed as I write, and will be distributed before Christmas. The Editor, Robin Whittaker, has been doing this invaluable job for a long time, for which the Society should be, and is, deeply grateful. He has indicated that he would not be averse to handing the task over to a successor in the not too distant future. Perhaps the most desirable scenario would be for a candidate to share with Robin the task of preparing the next Volume, due in two years' time, so as to provide as seamless a transition as possible. Volunteers and suggested candidates welcome!

Suggestions for next summer's excursions programme would also be welcome. Ginny Wagstaff, who has been doing the administration for the past summer, has volunteered to

continue in the role, so all that is now needed is ideas about where to go. We would be only too happy to receive ideas, and, even better, offers to organise an outing. You don't need to attend any meetings, or get involved in the collection of money; you just have to have the idea, contact the venue and make the arrangements for the visit, of course including coffee, tea and cake at the appropriate times. Please get in touch: 01984 578142, or 07866 703100, or bob.ruffle@gmail.com.

Bob Ruffle

Garth Raymer

At the end of June we were shocked to hear the news that our Treasurer, Garth Raymer, had succumbed to a heart attack. He had been a member of the committee since 2013, and took over as Treasurer in 2014. He was a natural choice, given his experience and expertise in accounting, and we were not disappointed. But he was more than Treasurer, he was an all-pervading wise influence on our deliberations in all sorts of ways, and I was personally very pleased that we had the benefit of his membership. It was no surprise that, when many of us attended his memorial service in Pershore Abbey, which he loved and of which he was also the Treasurer, it was filled to overflowing with people who wanted to remember him with affection and gratitude for a life well lived.

It is a melancholy task to have to write about a much-loved colleague who is sadly no longer with us, and all of us will have our special memories of Garth. Somebody at the memorial



service said that he could never be accused of impulsive decision-making, but his opinion was always worth waiting for. As far as the Society was concerned, he took a special interest, apart from his duties as Treasurer, in excursions, and arranged a number himself. He was a great help in managing the grants which the Society has recently received for the new gallery at Hartlebury, and for the test-pitting project at White Ladies Aston, where this photograph was taken in October 2017. He was supportive of setting up the Research Grant Fund, and the committee has resolved to rename it the Raymer Fund in his memory.

For my own part, I will remember him as a fellow mature student at the University of Worcester. He completed a part-time degree in Archaeology in 2012, and we graduated on the same day. I could not have guessed then that he would become a valued colleague in a different context, and I will always be glad that he was willing and eager to contribute actively to the Society's life. He will be greatly missed, but happily remembered.

Bob Ruffle **Chairman**

Welcome to new Treasurer, Paula Wittenberg: the Society is fortunate to have her

Paula is a Chartered Accountant with over 30 years' experience, who currently works for a firm of accountants in Hallow. She has been interested in history and archaeology for many years, and joined the Society when she moved to Worcestershire in 1997.

News from the County: Ice Age Worcestershire

The summer of 2018 saw the culmination of our Lost Landscapes of Worcestershire project. Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service (WAAS), in partnership with Museums Worcestershire and The Hive, received Heritage Lottery Fund support to deliver events and exhibitions celebrating half a million years of the area's history, from the time our ancestors arrived until the end of the last Ice Age c.11,700 years ago. The Hive also received a grant from Arts Council England for a separate project that involved the creation of an art installation in The Hive. The ACE project included various public events working with artists to explore our understanding of the Ice Age in a more personal and immersive way.

The project was very successful in its aim to promote Worcestershire's Ice Age past, with nearly 3000 people attending the 51 events, 196 children participating in the schools' sessions and well over 30,000 visits to the exhibitions.

Alongside promoting the Ice Age to the public, the project also aimed to conduct research and improve our understanding of Ice Age Worcestershire and the Palaeolithic collections held in Worcester Art Gallery and Museum. The collection in the museum has been conserved, re-packaged and further assessed.



Left: Bison skull before and after conservation

Working in partnership with the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust (H&WEHT), the project also produced a booklet on the County's Quaternary geology and the evidence of the people who made a home in these harsh and dynamic landscapes. The geological information is not new, but until now it has been held in disparate and specialist resources. Now it is available in a single, accessible booklet integrated with the archaeological information (contact WAAS or H&WEHT for details and to obtain copies).

The project finishes in November and the final task of the Project Officer, Robert Hedge, is to pull together a research framework for the County. This will be a short document highlighting the areas that would benefit from further research, including both geological deposits and archaeological collections. This will be publicly available and used to inform development management, e.g. minerals planning, collections management and to provide justification for future research projects. This project is now coming to an end but we will be looking for further grant funding to conduct fieldwork and investigate the research priorities identified.

Emma Hancox, Deborah Fox and Robert Hedge

News from the City

The former Barbourne filling station site has been reported on before, when a desk-based assessment of the site collated several 19th-century newspaper reports of discoveries of human remains during building works at Spreckley's Brewery. The site has now been evaluated, with three trenches dug in the relatively limited areas not affected by underground fuel tanks. Unfortunately no remains which could be associated with the late medieval execution site were found, with only a substantial and roughly contemporary cobbled surface and very few finds.

The remains are deeply buried and the impact of the new development will be very limited. The Royal Worcester Porcelain development has now reached King Street, within the medieval city walls. This is an area which never formed part of the core porcelain works, but was used for car parking and other ancillary uses, following demolition of all the buildings in the early 20th century. Remains of early post-medieval buildings were found, but of greater significance was a length of the medieval city wall, surviving below the rear wall of what is now the Berkeley Homes sales suite, originally St Peter's infants' school. This was previously recorded in the mid 1950s, when the building was extended to form the staff canteen for the factory; the foundations survived in good condition and are to be preserved below the new housing development. The buildings are to be converted for their fourth use, and have been recorded.

A watching brief on Sansome Street (the site of the now-demolished Tobys Tavern) has revealed late medieval or early post-medieval remains, perhaps associated with tile manufacture. This site is just outside the city walls and in an area where there is documentary evidence for tile making.

Proposals for refurbishment and alterations at 27 St John's have added this building to the list of medieval survivals in the St John's suburb. The building was listed because of its late-18th-century brick frontage and what was thought to be 17th-century timber-framing on the side elevation. Internal inspection revealed a 15th-century timber-framed building, originally of two storeys with a gable to the street. The clasped purlin roof with wind-braces can be compared with several other late medieval houses in Worcester.

Recently part of the roof of the canal wing of the Commandery was stripped and retiled. During the work, 21 late-medieval stamped tiles were recovered. All the stamps could be matched with stamps previously recorded on the garden wing, as well as several from St Cuthbert's Chapel. Archaeological discoveries are well represented in the St John's arts and heritage trail, which has recently been completed. A mile-long trail links sculptures of a pear and an apple in Cripplegate and Pitmaston Parks with six plaques at key locations in St John's. The artworks were produced by Planet Art (Julie Edwards and Ron Thompson), who worked with the local schools to develop the ideas. The plaques illustrate aspects of local history, including the Bull Ring, local shops and trades, and Ernie Payne, Olympic gold medallist in cycling. One plaque covers the Civil War, while two are specifically archaeological, covering the excavation of post-medieval tannery remains (on the sports centre site) and the discovery of a Roman-conquest period trading settlement (now under Sainsbury's car park). The trail was funded by Sainsbury's as part of their supermarket development. A leaflet on the trail can be picked up from Worcester TIC or St John's Library.

James Dinn

The supposed Medieval Bridge Chapel at Bewdley and its local contemporaries

The aim of this article is to provide a follow-up to my request for information concerning the location of the Bewdley bridge chapel in a previous edition of the *Recorder* (97, 2018, p.16-17), thereby correcting some errors concerning this site and to provide a county list of other related monuments. This ongoing research is being undertaken as part of a national survey of bridge chapels and related monuments due to be published in 2020, along with an online site gazetteer (details will appear in a subsequent edition of the *Recorder*).

Severn Bridge, Bewdley (SO78777538) and its chapel: an update

On 31 August 1336, a ferry across the Severn at Bewdley was mentioned in an inquisition post-mortem concerning the dower lands of Margaret, widow of Edmund Mortimer; it was worth 13s 4d and an easement was worth 10s (Flack, appendix; TNA C135/45/22). Construction of the first bridge between Bewdley and Wribbenhall probably started in about 1447 (Burton, 6), and it may have been located near the present bridge in line with Load Street (Buteux *et al*, 6). Its construction was probably linked with Richard, Duke of York obtaining a grant of a weekly market and an annual fair for Bewdley on 9 December 1446 (*Cal Chart Rolls, 1427-1518*, 72).

This bridge was possibly destroyed or at least damaged in October 1459 when the Lancastrians captured the town after the Battle of Ludford Bridge. Subsequently, on 26 November 1459, the masonry from Bewdley Bridge was granted by Henry VI to Worcester for the repair of its bridge, gates and walls (*Cal Pat Rolls Henry VI, vol 6*, 528). On 26 May 1460, the king granted the 'keeping of the bridge and ferry of Bewdley', which had been recently seized from rebels, to a yeoman-harbinger of the royal household (*CPR HVI, v6*, 587-88). This grant implies that some sort of bridge was in operation; perhaps it was a footbridge with timber walkways spanning the broken-down masonry arches. In c. 1479-80, William of Worcester recorded the existence of a timber bridge at Bewdley (Harvey, 331). Exactly when construction of a replacement stone bridge started is uncertain, but it was apparently still unfinished on 4 February 1484, when Richard III donated 20 marks to the project (*Cat Harleian Ms 1808*, 290, item 1687). Leland (c. 1538-45) described a bridge with 'great stone arches' which had been recently rebuilt or repaired, but did not mention a chapel (Chandler, 371). Habington also mentioned Bewdley's 'faire bridge of stone ... with a gate-house', but made no reference to a bridge chapel (Amphlett, 531).

Part of the medieval, five-arch Severn bridge was washed away in 1795; the remainder was demolished in 1800 after its replacement had been completed (Barrett, 86). The present bridge was built during 1798-9 by Thomas Telford, some 60m north of its predecessor (*British Listed Buildings Online: ID 156638*, Burton, 30). The press described the new bridge as 'made passable' in early November 1799 (*Bath Chronicle* 7 Nov 1799; *Oxford Journal* 9 Nov 1799) but it was not officially opened until September 1801 (Barrett, 87).

All 19th-century and later references to a bridge chapel at Bewdley must be viewed in the context of the Hayley MS, an account of Bewdley's history probably written in the 1770s (Jordan, 9) and cited by both Prattinton and Burton. Hayley recorded a local tradition that the oldest building in the town was a 'corner house a little above the bridge-end'. He had 'heard it called St. Anne's corner' and speculated it may once have been a chapel. St Anne's church at the top of Load Street (rebuilt in 1748), was a medieval chantry chapel and subsequently served as a chapel of ease attached to the parish of Ribbesford until 1853, when it became the town's parish church. Hayley also mused that the medieval bridge may have had a chapel 'not far from [St Anne's corner] and perhaps nearer to the foot of the bridge'. Antiquarian Dr Peter Prattinton

expanded on Hayley's thoughts with further speculations; and in 1851 it was 'said there was an ancient chapel at the foot of the bridge, which was dedicated to St Ann' (Noake, 128). By the time Burton wrote his *History of Bewdley*, Hayley's conjecture had become a 'tradition' that a particular building 'nearly opposite the Saracen's Head [now no. 5 Severnside South]' had been the bridge chapel and was demolished in 1798 as part of the waterfront redevelopment linked with the construction of Telford's bridge (Burton, 16). More recent authors have presented the same information without mentioning that the chapel's existence was hearsay (e.g. Barrett, 82; Houghton, 98; St Anne's chapel Worcs HER WSM08160 & WSM08161).

It has also been assumed that '1000 tiles ... ordered from Worcester' in 1650 were for repairing the bridge chapel (Simkins, 315, citing Prattinton). This almost certainly refers to an entry dated 1649 in the account book of the Bewdley Chapel and Bridge Wardens (1568-1664) regarding 11 shillings paid for 'half a thousand of Worces'r tile' (WRO ref BA8681/236(i), p.629). The building that they were intended for is not recorded, but the chapel referred to in these accounts was the former chantry chapel, on the site of the present parish church (St Anne's). The accounts make no reference to a bridge chapel.

In conclusion, there is no reliable documentary evidence for the existence of a bridge chapel in Bewdley; all references to it are based on Hayley's conjecture and a subsequent misinterpretation of other evidence.

Chapel Bridge or Droitwich Bridge, Droitwich (SO 8144 6996)

Droitwich Bridge was described by Leland in c. 1538-45 as a bridge of 'four stone arches... and at the nearer end of this bridge was a fine new timber chapel' (Chandler, 515). It functioned as a parochial chapel of St Peter's, Droitwich so remained in use after the closure of the chantries in 1547. Habington (died 1647) recorded 'the chappell on bryde, thouroughe which passethe (a thing rarely seene) the Kinges' high-way.' He also described the stained glass within the chapel (Amphellett, 485). It appears from Habington's description that by the early 17th century the bridge roadway (Bromsgrove Road) passed through the centre of the chapel, the reading desk was situated on one side and the congregation on the other. However, Morriss (202) offers an alternative explanation suggesting that this chapel was built above rather than on either side of the roadway. In about 1763 the chapel was removed and a new one erected, but this was already in ruins when Nash saw it c. 1781. The brick-built chapel seen by Nash was subsequently demolished and its material reused to build 'Chapel House' on the road to the railway station (Houghton, 62).

Droitwich bridge chapel is also mentioned in a poem 'The Tale of Thomas Thrift' by George Griffith. One Saturday, Thomas a Droitwich tradesman goes to the Worcester Hop Fair and gets drunk; he then rides home:

*Thrift now reached the bridge that strides,
Across the Salwarpe's modest tides,
Where the old chapel kept the way,
A beacon both day and night,*

At this moment a violent thunderstorm started and Thomas was thrown from his horse. He then took shelter from the storm in the chapel and fell asleep in the pulpit. The following morning, he was woken by the choir singing during Morning Service and jumped up. The congregation immediately scattered in alarm at this apparition.

Redstone, ferry hermitage (SO 8144 6996)

On the west bank of the Severn to the east of the village of Astley are a series of interconnected, medieval, rock-cut cave dwellings known as Redstone Rock, which included a hermitage, close to the site of an important medieval ferry across the Severn. Protection was granted for the brethren of the House of Redstone (*Radestone*) in 1260, implying the existence of a community of hermits, who presumably ran the ferry. On 6 February 1563, the former hermitage was granted to Cicely Pickerell and her heirs, and a piece of greensward called Arnell's Plecke belonging to it was granted to Edward Grimston and others in 1576–7. Some of these rock-cut dwellings were occupied until the middle of the 19th century (Simkins, 231-32).

Stanford Bridge, Stanford on Teme (SO 7150 6577)

Nash (367) recorded an inscribed brass plaque on Stanford Bridge: 'Pray for Humfrey Pakynton esq. born in Stanford, which payde for the workmanshepe, and making of this brygg, the which was rered and made the first day of May, in the first yere of the rayne of kyng Edwarde the VIth'. Pakington's timber bridge was completed on 1 May 1547, but Nash incorrectly dated this event to 1548 (Edward VI's first regnal year ran from 28 January 1547 to 27 January 1548). Humphrey Pakington of Chaddesley Corbett died in 1591. By Nash's time Pakington's Bridge had been replaced by a three-arch brick and stone structure, but his plaque had been transferred to the new bridge (Nash, 367). Placing plaques on bridges asking people to pray for the soul of the builder or sponsor before the Reformation was not unusual, but this late date is unusual, as is also the fact the word 'soul' is omitted from the text, reflecting the impact of the Reformation on doctrine.

Stanford Bridge was rebuilt in 1797 and 1905, and in 1971-73 a new structure was built along the previous one. The 1905 ferro-concrete bridge has been retained as a footbridge and reuses part of the abutments of the 1797 phase (Brooks & Pevsner, 601; Simkins, 341).

Bruce Watson (contact: johnwatson111@talktalk.net)

Thanks to Nigel Saul for the 1336 reference concerning Bewdley ferry and to Lizzie Hill (Bewdley Hist Research Group) for identifying the chain of assumptions regarding references to a bridge chapel there.

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Jacob Lord Astley versus the ‘Boofkins’, and the Burning of (?)Castlemorton Church, 1646

In his very useful *Churches of Worcestershire* Tim Bridges, referring to the south arcade of St Gregory’s, Castlemorton, remarks, ‘the arcade itself, like the spire, was rebuilt in the 17th century, when the church was rebuilt after Civil War damage. Some of the funds for these repairs were raised from the sale of materials from the demolished bell tower at Worcester Cathedral’. How and when did this ‘Civil War damage’ occur?

By 1645 the Civil War was going against the Royalists, particularly after they lost the battle of Naseby on 14 June. In the Royalist county of Worcester a crucial event was the capture of Evesham on 26 May 1645 by Parliament forces from Gloucester under Colonel Edward Massey¹, and the transfer from Warwick to Evesham of the Parliament committee for recovering the county². After this disaster the Royalist high command in Worcester found its grip on South Worcestershire increasingly hard to maintain. On 11 November 1645 some South Worcestershire countrymen met Parliament representatives from Evesham on the slopes of Bredon Hill, and agreed with them to pay no more contributions to the King, and to form an army to help Parliament to gain control of the whole area. Other, larger, meetings were held, and the irregular army was soon in being.³

This infantry army, boosted by Parliamentary cavalry, was used to besiege two new Royalist garrisons in South Worcestershire, at Leigh Court and Madresfield Court⁴. The Exchequer accounts submitted by people who had to accommodate and feed them free of charge show that they were in January 1646 at Powick, Newland and Mathon during the ‘leaguer’ (siege) before Madresfield (the troops at Mathon, who also included some troops from Herefordshire, may have gone against nearby Leigh Court), and often refer to ‘quartering the countrymen’⁵, though the besieging forces also included cavalry belonging to the committee at Evesham and other forces from Gloucester and Herefordshire⁶. The officers included Colonel William Lygon (whose family actually owned Madresfield), Captain Talbot Badger and Captain Abraham Michelburne. Leigh Court soon fell, having (probably) been set on fire by its garrison before they abandoned it⁷, but Madresfield was a trickier proposition.

On Christmas Day 1645 a new Royalist supreme commander (for the counties of Worcestershire, Shropshire, Herefordshire and Staffordshire) arrived in Worcester. Lord Astley (Sir Jacob Astley, 1579-1652) immediately set about bringing some order into the confused situation he found. On 4 February 1646 (the date is in the Royalist newspaper *Mercurius Aulicus*, under a report of 10 February) he relieved Madresfield and defeated and dispersed the forces besieging it (whom the newspaper calls ‘Boofkins’)⁸. Some of them, it would seem, fled south across Castlemorton Common, pursued by Astley’s cavalry, and it appears likely that a band of them tried to defend Castlemorton church (though Castlemorton is never named in the contemporary accounts), part of which the Royalists then set on fire. As Castlemorton is some eight miles from Madresfield, those who defended the church, if that was the church they defended, were almost certainly from the cavalry rather than the infantry component of the Parliamentary force.

Apart from contemporary newspaper accounts (both Royalist and Parliament newspapers), the main source for what happened is part of a letter written by Ralph Goodwin⁹, MP for Ludlow, 1624-44, who was writing to Prince Rupert. It is likely that Goodwin had come to Worcester with Lord Astley. He is frequently mentioned in the diary and papers of the Worcestershire Royalist Henry Townshend, but never before 1646. It seems likely that Rupert (to whom he

became secretary in 1645) had sent him to Worcester, so that he could have reliable information about what was happening there, and Goodwin would play an important part in the negotiations leading up to the surrender of the city in July. In his letter of 7 February 1645-6¹⁰ he told Rupert that ‘the Enemy is active in every place, but heere wee live as if possest by a lethargy’.

But it is an earlier passage that seems to be relevant to the present investigation ‘The Lo(rd) [Astley] is returned and, after the reliefe of Maxfield [Madresfield], pursued the Rebels and



tooke two pieces of Ordnance; some of them got into a church and maintained the Steeple until they were fired out’. The ‘Steeple’ was probably the western tower and spire of Castlemorton church.

Left: Castlemorton church. Note recessed stone spire

The ‘two pieces of Ordnance’ were two siege guns sent by Col. Morgan, the Governor of Gloucester (he had succeeded Massey). *Mercurius Veridicus* states that, with these guns, Lygon ‘hath played upon [the house] four or five days’. We may also compare the account in another Parliament newspaper (the *Perfect Passages*) for February 11-18, 1645-6: ‘the Countrey Forces ..., four Parishes associated, had got two guns from Gloucester and besieg’d Matchfield House ... and made some batteries and we had nigh 1000 men there, but Sir Jacob Ashley was going to relieve Chester, and

hearing it was taken wheeled about and raised this siege, in which we lost some 30 men in drawing off ... The enemy came upon the countrymen with almost 200 horse and foot of Sir Jacob Ashlyes, the lord Molineuxes, Sir William Vaughans and Major General Gradyes’. Much of this has the ring of truth. It is known that Lord Astley was hoping to raise the siege of Chester, and the hope was that Astley’s force would combine with an army from Ireland. Chester, however, surrendered on 2 February 1645-6. It is also known that Astley had Vaughan and Molyneux, both dashing cavalry commanders, with him (Colonel Henry Grady was a professional Irish soldier, serving with Vaughan). The figure of some 1000 men is probably accurate. Even with what happened to the guns the account in *Perfect Passages* is a plausible one: that one gun ‘was got off safe to Maisemore [in Gloucestershire]’ and the other was ‘throwne into a ditch’. Astley did not wish to be slowed down by the guns he had taken.

Not merely is Castlemorton in roughly the right position to be the church defended by ‘the Rebels’ (though there are other possible candidates), but it is known to have been badly damaged in the Civil War. In 1647 Parliament decreed that the former bell tower (the Clochium or leaden steeple) on the north side of Worcester Cathedral should be demolished and the money raised by the sale of the materials (mainly lead and Irish oak) used for the repair of certain almshouses in Worcester and of the churches of St. John’s in Worcester, Dodderhill and Castlemorton, burned by ‘the Enemy’ (the Royalists)¹¹. The value of the materials was estimated as worth £1200 but the sale only realised £617 4s 2d. And after other claims had been settled, only £180 remained to be divided between the three churches, £80 each for Castlemorton and Dodderhill, £20 for St. John’s.

After the Civil War the south arcade of Castlemorton was reconstructed, the spire and altar rails rebuilt. Some of this rebuilding work was done in 1683-4 (dates which occur in inscriptions). However, some work was done in the (?)1640s. FH Cheetham wrote in the *VCH*, 'At this date [c. 1647] it would seem the arcade of three arches with a half arch at the west end was rebuilt with wide pointed arches, possibly owing to a threatened or actual ruin of the building'¹². Churchwardens' Presentments of 1662 and 1664 show that much rebuilding had already taken place; that of 18 July 1664 states that 'Our Church was burnt in the Late Rebellion, but rebuilt, and every yeare much done towards the completing of it'.¹³

Jacob Lord Astley, having raised an army of some 3000 men, was forced to fight a battle at Stow on the Wold on 21 March 1645-6. He was defeated by numerically superior Parliament forces. After the battle he is reported to have said to the victors, 'You have now done your work and may go play, unless you will fall out amongst yourselves'.

Madresfield finally surrendered, after a second siege, in June 1646.

Don Gilbert

I am grateful to Steve Howick of Castlemorton for much help.

¹ On the context of the capture of Evesham see Ronald Hutton, *The Royalist War Effort, 1642-46* (2003), 173-8.

² On the Parliamentary committee for Worcestershire see RN Dore (ed.), *The Letter Books of Sir William Brereton, ii (18th June 1645-1st February 1646)* Record Soc Cheshire & Lancs, vol. 128 (1991), App vii (pp. 564-6).

³ For the Bredon Hill initiative see Hutton, 189. The irregular army of S Worcs was, in some respects, like the 'Clubmen' who appeared here and elsewhere earlier in the year (see Hutton, ch 15). But they were mostly neutrals.

⁴ On these garrisons see my articles in *Worcs Archaeol & Local Hist Newsletter* 39 (1987), 3-8; 40 (1988), 1-3.

⁵ TNA, SP 28/187, SP 28/188.

⁶ The order to reduce the two garrisons had come from the Committee of Both Kingdoms in London, dated 24 January 1645-6. They told the Worcestershire committee to supply '500 horse and foot' for the operation which would also involve Col. Morgan's forces from Gloucester, and Col. Birch's from Herefordshire. See Cal State Papers, Dom S, 1645-47, 323-4. The infantry supplied by the Committee were almost certainly the South Worcestershire 'countrymen'. Col. Lygon was the overall commander. One newspaper account (BL, Thomason Tracts, E. 322 (34), 17 Feb 1645-6) says that Astley came to Madresfield from Herefordshire, which helps to explain how he took Lygon's forces by surprise.

⁷ On the fall of Leigh Court see WALHN 39 (1987), 5.

⁸ For Astley and the 'Boofkins' see BL, TT E. 322.2, fol. 82. The word 'boofkin' is not in the OED, but presumably indicates a cross between 'booby' and 'bumpkin'. The newspaper says it was a 'country expression'.

⁹ For Goodwin see <https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1604-1629/member/goodwin-ralph-1658>.

¹⁰ WA Day (ed.), *Pythouse Papers* (1879), no. 24, pp. 23-4. On Madresfield see also Brereton's 1646 Letter Book (ed. Ivor Carr & Ian Atherton for Staffs Record Soc, vol. 21 (2007)), 43, 260-61.

¹¹ John Noake, *Monastery and Cathedral of Worcester* (1866), 390-1. On the bell tower, *TWAS* 25 (2016), 214-5, and for a 1672 engraving which (anachronistically) shows it, Malcolm Atkin, *The Civil War in Worcestershire* (1995), 126. The engraving shows the Cathedral as it was in 1646.

¹² A Brooks & N Pevsner, *Worcestershire* (2007), 214-16; *VCH* iv, 49-53 (esp. 51-2). There are no burial records surviving for 1629-48 (*VCH* iv. 53). An archaeological investigation conducted in autumn 2012 by Felicity Taylor and Colin Harris for Church and Site Archaeological Services found many small pieces of human bone in pits under the tower. The Archaeological Report suggests (pp. 29-30) that these came from the churchyard, but ultimately 'may have come from disturbance to the floor' of the church when the south aisle was rebuilt in c1647. I am grateful to the authors of the Report for permission to refer to and quote from it.

¹³ Worcs Archives, BA 2289/ 5B.

The Victoria County History is about to start work on Cradley

The research and writing on Colwall now nearly complete, the Herefordshire VCH Trust are down to final bits of research and editing of the text with the aim that the book will be published

in late 2019 after it has been through peer review etc. Therefore our thoughts are turning to the next parish which will be Cradley. We are in the process of advertising for an editor who will work on the complicated material such as the manorial descent and deal with material at the TNA, but we would also like to get more volunteers involved. We had a successful meeting in Cradley in late September where we have hopefully recruited half a dozen volunteers.

I suspect some of you are wondering what this has got to do with Worcestershire, as Cradley is Herefordshire. However, we will be researching a small area of Worcestershire because to ensure everywhere is covered and nowhere is omitted, the VCH standardise on the parish and county boundaries as they existed in the late 19th century and the date used is prior to the creation of West Malvern. Therefore, we will be covering a small section of modern West Malvern within Cradley principally the area around the Outdoor Education Centre and Birches Farm. Indeed, our initial research has identified that there were some cottages owned by the parish that were described in the parish records as being on North Hill.

Our preliminary trawling of archive indexes etc, suggest there are almost as many records in the HIVE as there are at Herefordshire archives so lots of research can be done without much travelling. If you are interested in getting involved in research or writing, then please get in touch with Jonathan Comber who is looking after things until an editor is appointed. He can be contacted by e-mail to Jonathan.Comber@easynet.co.uk or at 49 Old Hollow Malvern WR14 4NP (No, this wasn't part of Cradley!)

‘Deerhurst, Pershore and Westminster Abbey’: The Deerhurst Lecture, 15 September 2018.

Dr Richard Mortimer, formerly archivist to Westminster Abbey, delivered the 35th Deerhurst Lecture in the atmospheric surroundings of Deerhurst Church. His talk re-examined the circumstances in which the estates of Deerhurst and Pershore Abbey, seemingly complete in the late 900s, had, by the time of the Conquest, come largely into the hands of Westminster Abbey and St Denis, Paris. Dr Mortimer, by meticulous analysis of charter sources, Domesday Book and chronicles, offered a new hypothesis as to the chain of events that led to this situation. He stressed that, at this far remove, it could only be an hypothesis, but he felt it explained various features of the situation in a more satisfactory way than some other existing theories.

To concentrate on the Pershore situation, he examined the ‘traditional’ view of how the lands described in King Edgar’s charter of 972 to Pershore Abbey (considered by Finberg to be authentic, but by Dr Mortimer possibly not to be so) came to be split between Pershore and Westminster by the time of the Conquest. The story (partly based on a lost chronicle of Pershore Abbey seen by Leland in the early 1500s) is that the wicked earl ‘Delfer’ (clearly Aelfhere, ealdorman of Mercia) despoiled the Abbey of its lands but that his heir Odda of Deerhurst, from shame at this, wished to restore the lands, but that on Odda’s death without heir the lands came to Edward the Confessor who used them to help endow Westminster Abbey. Dr Mortimer showed why much of this story did not hold together. Aelfhere was indeed not friendly to the religious houses associated with St Oswald, bishop of Worcester, but perhaps mainly through resentment at their spheres of influence which clashed with his rule as Ealdorman of Mercia. The bishop of Worcester’s triple hundred of Oswaldlow, a ship soke created in the 960s, was one such exempt area and it may be that Pershore Abbey’s lands, also 300 hides, might similarly have been a ship soke, that is one which bore the obligation to supply a ship and crew for the king’s navy. Therefore, Aelfhere’s fabled hostility to the churches associated with the

reform movement of the mid-900s might well have been as much political as religious. (Williams, in an article in *Anglo-Saxon England 10*, also throws doubt on whether Odda was related to Aelfhere at all).

By analysing patterns of tenure of various estates within the overall Pershore holdings Dr Mortimer showed that, whilst Odda was clearly a friend and patron to Pershore, he may well not have had extensive holdings of their earlier lands at all. Instead Dr Mortimer pointed the finger at Danish friends of King Canute, particularly Earl Hakon, who, amongst other titles, was made earl of Worcestershire in 1018. He considered he was the most likely candidate between 972 and 1066 to have despoiled Pershore Abbey of much of its land. Hakon's widow was exiled by Edward the Confessor, and by this means Edward had already acquired these lands and thus they were available to him to use in endowing Westminster.

This does scant justice to the sophistication of Dr Mortimer's argument, but it will be published in due course when the full details will be available. I have also not gone into Dr Mortimer's conclusions as to the way the smaller Deerhurst estate, possibly an earlier royal estate linked with Tewkesbury, got split between members of the family of Aethelweard of Wessex, including Earl Odda, in the eleventh century and the role of Abbot Baldwin, a close friend of Edward the Confessor, in the acquisition of some Deerhurst lands by St Denis in Paris.

Robin Whittaker

Recent Publications

A Roman Villa and other Iron Age and Roman discoveries at Bredon's Norton, Fiddington and Pamington along the Gloucester Security of Supply Pipeline, Tim Allen, Kate Brady and Stuart Foreman, Oxford Archaeology Monograph 25 (2016) £15

Roman villas are extremely rare in Worcestershire, in sharp contrast to neighbouring Gloucestershire. The site at Bredon's Norton described here, unknown before the work began, brings the total known in the county to a probable four. Two have long been known about (Bays Meadow, Droitwich, and the less certain example at Britannia Square, Worcester), while the fourth (Childswickham) was also discovered during a pipeline project. No doubt there are more to be found, some of them among the many Romano-British sites already identified but not investigated in detail. A note of caution is certainly needed here, as what was excavated at Bredon's Norton was a bath-house, probably but not certainly associated with a villa, rather than the villa itself. It is telling that the word 'villa', although in the report title, does not appear in the summary.

The Bredon's Norton site is one of three excavated along the pipeline route from Strensham to Coombe Hill in Gloucestershire. The other two sites described in the report (Pamington and Fiddington) are in Gloucestershire, east of Tewkesbury.

Investigation at Bredon's Norton has fallen to an unusually large number of different archaeological organisations and individuals. Initial geophysical survey was commissioned by Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service from an amateur geophysicist, Richard Hart, some time before the pipeline. A desk-based assessment was produced by ARCUS. Evaluation comprised extensive geophysics by Phase Site Investigations and trenching by Cotswold Archaeology; Oxford Archaeology undertook the excavation, and there was a further geophysical survey by Stratascan. The pipeline works were overseen by Wessex Archaeology.

Although intensive activity was identified at the beginning of this sequence, it was not until the excavation that the nature and importance of the Roman buildings became clear.

The Bredon's Norton site lies at the foot of Bredon Hill. In the middle to late Iron Age there was a settlement here, indicated by pits, a clay-lined pit (?for water heating), Malvernian pottery, oven material and a single burial, all set in ditched enclosures. There were changes to the location of settlement in the late Iron Age to early Roman and mid-Roman periods. The partly-excavated early Roman curvilinear or penannular enclosure is surely a roundhouse, though the excavators are wary of this interpretation.

In the late Roman period (250-410 AD) there was a major change in the nature of activity on the site. A substantial building with stone foundations was constructed. Five rooms were within the excavated area, and have been interpreted as a bath complex attached to a villa. One room was sunken and had a stone-flagged floor, surviving almost complete; this is interpreted as a plunge bath. It was large, at least 6m long, and there was a stone-lined cistern set into the floor. The other rooms to the south may be a *caldarium* (hot room) with part of a hypocaust surviving, *tepidarium* (warm room), and perhaps a *frigidarium* (unheated room), while a room to the west would have been the furnace (*praefurnium*).

Wall plaster and box flue tiles were found and the walls themselves may have been of timber-frame construction. Overlying the flagstone floor in the plunge bath were patches of charcoal which seem to have been from a collapsed timber ceiling or roof structure. Other structural clues are provided by a small number of tesserae (though no in situ pavement), and Cotswold stone roof slates in hexagonal and other shapes.

The report suffers from one significant structural problem. Rather than treat the three sites like the different sites they so clearly are, the archaeological description, finds and environmental (including human remains) reports and discussion are merged together. This makes it extraordinarily difficult to disentangle the narrative of the individual sites. Following the introductory section, Bredon's Norton can be found on pp 38-88 (description), 141-151 (human bone), and 183-93 (discussion). The problem emerges more in chapters 3 and 4: BN site appears on almost every page of the finds reports (pp89-139), mixed with the other sites. At least most of the tables and figures have been kept separate. The bulk of the 'environmental' section also relates to Bredon's Norton.

The report is well printed with good use of colour throughout and the price of £15 is a bargain. Unfortunately it had not been fully proofread before printing, and the volume comes with a folder of corrected pages including several tables and one of the geology maps. Neither this nor the structural problems should be allowed to detract from what is a very thorough report and a very important contribution to the Romano-British archaeology of Worcestershire.

James Dinn

SPECIAL OFFERS from Oxbow Books: **20% discount** for WAS members

Clifton Quarry, Worcestershire. Pits, posts and cereals: Archaeological Investigations 2006-2009 Robin Jackson & Andrew Mann, Oxbow Books (2018) ISBN 9781789250114. RRP £30, reduced to £24 for WAS members until Christmas: enter CLIFTON18 at online checkout at www.oxbowbooks.com, or quote over the phone, 01226 734350.

The book will be reviewed in the Spring 2018 edition of the *Recorder*.

The Houses of Hereford 1200-1700 Nigel Baker, Pat Hughes & Richard K. Morriss (Oxbow, 2018) 192pp 29 colour plates, numerous black & white photographs and figures. ISBN 978-1-78570-816-9. RRP £25.00, reduced to £20 for WAS members: enter HEREFORD18 at online checkout at www.oxbowbooks.com, or quote over the phone, 01226 734350.

As the publicity for this long-awaited volume states, ‘The cathedral city of Hereford is one of the best-kept secrets of the Welsh Marches. Although its Anglo-Saxon development is well known from a series of classic excavations in the 1960s and 70s, what is less widely known is that the city boasts an astonishingly well-preserved medieval plan and contains some of the earliest houses still in everyday use anywhere in England.’ This handsome volume addresses this anomaly by presenting the results of over 30 years of field recording and documentary research into the medieval and post-medieval secular buildings of Hereford.

The introduction by Nigel Baker sets the context of the 24 buildings chosen for more detailed study in later chapters. This is neatly summarised by three double-page maps which define the survival of historic buildings in the city, their date and the historic neighbourhoods (commercial city, cathedral city and inner historic suburbs). In the next two chapters, covering medieval and post-medieval houses, documentary historian Pat Hughes and historic buildings investigator Richard Morriss present their findings on each of the 24 buildings. In the last chapter all three authors draw together conclusions about the topography and building types found in the city before 1700.

The inter-disciplinary approach has proved to be highly successful. Pat Hughes gives us the historical background to each property and Richard Morriss the architectural evidence. The discussion section then sets out the correlation between the two approaches and in many cases demonstrates some remarkable findings. To my mind the best example comes from one of the canon’s houses: ‘Documentary, structural and dendrochronological evidence all converge to show that 20 Church Street is a building of the late 1320s. Stylistically, it has features (the ogee-arches to the windows and the crown-post roof) consistent with that period. Dendrochronological dating is consistent with the documentary evidence, indicating a felling date between 1321 and 1371 and in 1328, the Cathedral Chapter decided to replace the two small canonical houses in Caboche Lane with one large building.’ Pat Hughes’ indefatigable research has thrown new light on some of Hereford’s most spectacular historic buildings. At the Bishop’s Palace, an outstanding late-12th-century wooden aisled hall, the re-discovery of architect Philip Hardwick’s 1841 plans attached to the contract and schedule of remodelling works ‘indicate the concern that Hardwick felt for the ancient structure and the care he displayed towards it.’ At the Old House, a richly decorated timber-framed survival of part of Butchers’ Row and now a museum, John Jones re-emerges from the archival record as the debt-ridden butcher living in the house with a drunken blaspheming wife whom he could not control, a far cry from the sober citizen an earlier writer, Alfred Watkins, envisaged. There are also many insightful comments about the source material. For anyone pursuing the history of a canonical house Pat warns that there is the disadvantage of no title deeds but the advantage of being able to trace the transfer to the canon in the Bishop’s Register.

The authors acknowledge that the 24 buildings chosen for study represent only a very small proportion of the city’s historic housing stock, with over-representation of buildings associated with the upper echelons of society. For the post-medieval period many of the best timber-framed houses can be linked to the office-holding urban elite, sometimes merchants and tradesmen (for example the former Farmers’ Club building inside the walls in Widemarsh Street built by Thomas Church, a wealthy dyer, in 1617-18 and the old Conservative Club in

East Street with its spectacular panelled and plastered first-floor room created by the Vicaries family whose wealth came from brewing). As a counterbalance we are introduced to the workplace and home of pewterer Francis Trapp at the corner of East Street and Little Capuchin Lane and a modest 1½ storey two bay timber-framed building outside the walls in Widemarsh Street described in 1650 as ‘newly erected’, built by carrier John Jones. Only through the meticulous work of the authors in identifying the precise homes of the population and analysing their socio-economic status is it possible to appreciate these wide variations in the living conditions of the inhabitants of the city.

The architectural descriptions and analysis were written by historic buildings expert Richard Morriss who has carefully chosen apposite line drawings of elevations, sections, plans and details to illustrate the essential structural features. These are supported by 29 colour plates and numerous black and white photographs. It is a pleasure to see such high-quality draughtsmanship combined with some very convincing axonometric reconstruction drawings. As the book is intended for the general reader as well as the specialist, a helpful glossary is included and guides us through what must appear initially to be a strange world where girding beams, voussoirs and scarf joints are in common parlance!

Much of the survey and documentary work on Hereford’s buildings had been commissioned in the 1970s and 1980s as part of recording and listed building casework in advance of development. These reports form the archive of ‘grey literature’ which was put together in 1996 in typescript form as ‘The Secular Buildings of Hereford’ for the use of officials involved in conservation and the planning process. Ron Shoesmith and the City of Hereford Archaeology Committee recognised the importance of this resource and were determined to publish the work properly but were faced with drastic cuts to local government services which decimated the archaeological service. In 2008 staff from Historic England were able to resurrect the project which had now completely stalled, and commissioned the authors of this volume to work towards publication. Congratulations are due to all those who believed in the project and persisted with it.

This is a major contribution to the study of urban buildings in the West Midlands. It adds to the corpus of detailed studies of urban and rural buildings published by Historic England since 2000. The studies of Sandwich, Bristol and Kent have become essential additions to anyone seriously interested in vernacular buildings. As a Worcester resident one cannot but hope that the time may come when an equivalent publication drawing together the field surveys and reports making up the Historic Environment Record for this city and more dendrochronology might be brought together with the research undertaken many years ago on the streets of Worcester by Pat Hughes and Nick Molyneux in a companion volume to Hereford’s.

Stephen Price

A copy of this book is in the Society’s Library and is available for consultation at the Hive.

Two new books from Amberley Publishing:

50 Finds from Worcestershire. Objects from the Portable Antiquities Scheme by Victoria Allnatt (2018) RRP £14.99, online from <https://www.amberley-books.com> £13.49, incl p&p.

The Introduction to this book, one of a series, explains that the 50 objects were chosen to illustrate typical finds ‘come across on a day-to-day basis’ as well as rarer finds, some declared

treasure. The author must have had fun choosing them from the thousands on the Portable Antiquities database! There are also introductions to the Worcestershire landscape and to each of the seven periods: Palaeolithic to Neolithic, with 4 items; Bronze Age, 5; Iron Age, 6; Romano-British, 13, with maps showing the distribution of coins and brooches in the county; Early Medieval, 6; Medieval, 6; and Post Medieval to Modern, 10.

The objects are presented in chronological order, starting with a flint hand axe thought to be over 500,000 years old. Each entry includes Record ID, dating and location of the find, followed by a detailed description and comments as to significance. Despite the ‘50 Finds’ of the title, the majority of entries include additional objects for comparison and/or amplification,



mostly also from Worcestershire. No 7, for example, compares a probable Bronze Age amber bead with a probable Roman one. Iron Age artefacts include miniature items identified as votive offerings and five gold *staters*, amongst our earliest known currency. Coins feature in all subsequent periods, including a very rare silver *denarius* of c286-293, an uncommon gold *tremissis* of c650-660, a very rare silver penny from the reign of Edward the Confessor,

Left: Roman folding knife handle in the form of Venus. Courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme

and late-12th-century short-cross silver pennies. The final chapter has items as varied as a child’s miniature cauldron, a silver dress accessory and hair pin, Elizabethan counter and gold coin, a cannonball, silver seal matrix and medal, trade tokens showing three black pears, and a First World War Victory medal, featured on the cover. For the website www.finds.org.uk/database.

Evesham’s Military History by **Stan Brotherton** (2018) RRP £14.99, online from <http://www.amberley-books.com> £13.49, incl p&p.

Though less than 100 pages long, this pocket-sized book manages to encapsulate the key periods of Evesham’s military history in an easily read story. The book is profusely illustrated with maps and photographs, many in colour, which in a number of cases draw the reader’s attention to existing features in the town which reflect that history. Whilst the author accepts that the book is not a definitive or comprehensive military history, it has been produced to prompt the reader to explore the history of Evesham more closely. A number of sources are mentioned in the text but a separate reading list would have been useful.

Acknowledging that little is known about the early military history of the town, such as the Viking raids on the Abbey, or the castle which once stood at the western end of Bengeworth Bridge and perversely was also used as a base for attacking the Abbey and destroying property in the town, the book majors on four key periods of military history: the Battle of Evesham in 1265, the impact of the English Civil Wars of 1642-51, and the two World Wars on the area.

The prelude to the Battle of Evesham, the one-sided and brutal battle itself, the aftermath, including the mutilation of Simon de Montfort's body, and the burial of his remains in the Abbey, are succinctly described in the book. The chapter on the impact of the English Civil Wars on Evesham draws heavily on the research and writing of Malcolm Atkin. The strategic importance of the town on the route from London to the Midlands, the key river crossing point here, is drawn out in the text and its defensible nature within the loop of the River Avon is clear from the map included. Evesham was occupied and reoccupied by both sides a number of times during the first phase of the war, King Charles and his forces staying there twice. During his second visit he made a written appeal to Parliament suggesting that armies on both sides should be disbanded in order to 'make Our People secure and happy'. The offer was not accepted and Parliamentary forces successfully assaulted the town in May 1645 and garrisoned the area thereafter.

The impact of the First World War on Evesham was no different to many other towns in Britain. Volunteers and, later, conscripts went off to war, many not returning or coming back with severe injuries. The loss of manpower resulted in a reduction in food production, which, important as Evesham was to feeding the nation, led to higher prices and increased hardship for the families left behind. Land Girls and German POWs, as elsewhere, were consequently sent there to help. Evesham provided an emergency hospital at Abbey Manor, later expanding to take in Chadbury House, to help treat the wounded. The final peace celebrations, including the placing of a presentation tank in Abbey Park, are well illustrated, as is the later unveiling of the substantial war memorial in the same park. The chapter on the Second World War includes the arrival of the BBC Monitoring Service to Wood Norton, details of the construction of anti-invasion defences around the town, the formation of the Home Guard and nearby Auxiliary Units, as well as some of the Air Raid Precautions arrangements. The presence of RAF airfields in the area and the provision of a hospital for its casualties, and the resting places of some of those who died are also covered. Food production for the nation was again an important aspect of the Home Front in Evesham and the surrounding area, and the use of Land Girls and POWs (Italians this time) to improve production was repeated. Interesting details are given of some of the home conversions of cars into small lorries, as well as feeding arrangements for the many troops garrisoned in the town. Many other aspects of the Home Front are also described. The eventual peace celebrations are particularly well illustrated with local press photographs of the time.

The remembrance of Evesham's casualties, and the many memorials in the town, not only for the casualties of the two World Wars, but also for Simon de Montfort, are given due prominence at the end of the book. Recent re-enactment of some of the local military history, as well as the permanent recreation of a World War Two encampment near Evesham, known as Ashdown Camp, are also covered.

Mick Wilks

***Section D for Destruction: Forerunner of SOE* by Malcolm Atkin (2017) £25**

Having seemingly abandoned the English Civil War as a subject for his research and writing, Malcolm has been delving into the shadowy world of spies and saboteurs again. Following the success of his last book, 'Fighting the Nazi Occupation', published in 2015, he has taken one aspect of that book, Section D of the British intelligence services, and with his usual diligent research has expanded the subject to fill a further book of over 250 pages of text and 16 pages of photographs. As usual, the book is fully referenced and reflects the wide use of recently released documents held by the National Archive, as well as contacts with family members of

some of the characters involved. As he was researching the book, Malcolm became aware that many documents relating to Section D had been redacted on national security grounds or were subject to data protection. His book must therefore be the last word on this subject for the time being.

The book introduces the reader to the main players in Section D, including many well known names of the British establishment. The Section was formed shortly after the Munich Agreement was signed, and put under the leadership of Laurence Grand, whom I sense is another of Malcolm's heroes of that period. The techniques of sabotage and training regimes established by Grand and his associates are described, and then on a country by country basis, the arrangements put in place for sabotage of the Nazi regime, including the recruitment of agents, provision of materials and weapons, bribery, spying and black propaganda in neutral countries, as well as those eventually occupied by the Nazis, or under threat of invasion, including of course, Britain. Even the USA was not immune to Section D attention.

Against a background of distaste of such ungentlemanly warfare by both the Foreign Office and some factions of the War Office, Laurence Grand and his staff developed the techniques of sabotage and recruited agents. Many of his staff and the techniques were then conveniently transferred to SOE when it was formed in 1940. Malcolm concludes that while its work was unpopular with many factions of the British establishment, Section D deserves more recognition for its efforts, the effect of which, for good or evil, are still being felt today.

What is Malcolm going to do next? I am privileged to know that he is working on a book which he intends will dispel the mythology and distortion of the facts that surround the British Home Guard, and attempt to undo the harm done to its reputation by post-war authors and the media, including television producers, who follow the entrenched and generally derogatory trend, which is not helped by the continuing popularity of the Dad's Army series of comedies. It will, as usual, be impeccably researched. Watch this space!

Mick Wilks

St Mary's Church, Little Washbourne

Another of the ten former Worcestershire parishes now within Gloucestershire (see *Recorder* 92), this delightful church was a chapelry of Overbury and is now part of the Beckford group of parishes. In a beautiful setting, its mid-12th-century date, Pevsner notes, is 'revealed by the W wall, with its original shallow buttress and stringcourse and one Norman N chancel window'. It retains traces of 13th-century and later wall paintings, and has 'very interesting' late 18th-century fittings, including an 'elegant' altar table, panelled box pews, and remarkable pulpit with stylish inlay. It has no electricity.



As Bruce Watson notes in *Glevensis* 46 (<http://glosarch.org.uk/Glev%2046.pdf> pp51-2), Little Washbourne was known both before and after the Reformation as Knight's Washbourne to distinguish it from King's, now Great, Washbourne. The civil parish was transferred to Gloucestershire in 1844, the ecclesiastical parish remaining in the diocese of Worcester. The church was declared redundant in 1974 and is now in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust.



Above: *St Mary's, Little Washbourne interior, showing chancel arch with scalloped capitals, later wall paintings, pulpit, box pews and use of candelabras in absence of electricity.*

Historic England Collection of Stained Glass Watercolours by Elsie Matley-Moore

As Vince Hemingway reported in the *Recorder* 95 (Spring 2017), 55 paintings of medieval stained glass by Elsie Matley Moore were bought by English Heritage Archive, now Historic England, in 2009. On sale by a Gloucestershire Antiquarian Bookseller for more than £2000, they had been offered to The National Trust which refused them and then to this Society which could not afford them. The paintings have now been digitised and made available online at <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/archive/new/matley-moore/>.

Dates for your diary Saturday 17 November

An exciting programme of talks is lined up at the University of Worcester's St John's Campus: from WAAS staff about excavations and projects that we have been running, and also by guests from other archaeological units and research groups who will share their own work and discoveries in the county. Price £22, the first increase for 5 years, includes tea and coffee. Bring your own lunch, or the refectory should be open.

Worcestershire Archaeology Day talks will include:

Excavations at Bredon and Offenham

Worcestershire Farmsteads

Digitisation of the Charles Archive

The Aldington Beaker and related finds

Test-pit discoveries in White Ladies Aston

Origins of Worcester revisited

Whinfield collection of glass slides

and Fascinating Finds of the past year.

To book: <https://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/LibraryEvents/EventDetails.aspx?id=565> or return booking form with a cheque payable to Worcestershire County Council.

Worcestershire Archaeological Society Lecture Programme

Time Team celebrity **Professor Carenza Lewis** opened the 2018-19 lecture programme on 17 October with a stimulating talk on ‘**The Black Death and Beyond: Discoveries from Archaeological Test Pits**’, subtitled ‘101 uses for a dead pot’, in the course of which she referred to Mick Aston as a ‘contrary old sod’. A keen community archaeologist, locally Carenza was involved with the ‘Small Pits, Big Ideas’ project in White Ladies Aston run last year by WAS and WAAS.

A member of the Medieval Settlement Research Group, Carenza has used test pitting in East Anglian villages to investigate the development of rural communities, in the process giving over 10,000 young people the opportunity to participate, and exploring the lives of children in the past. It was interesting to see how the test pits track the movement of settlement over different periods. The decision to split the medieval era into pre and post Black Death revealed the dramatic impact of the epidemic: a 76% decrease overall, with 90% showing a decline, agricultural areas being most affected. Another interesting find was the apparent avoidance of areas of Roman settlement by later inhabitants.

As the Chairman commented, we went from one extreme, the tiny test pit, to the other, one of the largest excavations carried out in this county in recent years. On 8 October **Richard Bradley** gave a fascinating account, ‘**The broad view: investigations on the Broadway flood alleviation scheme**’, of the excavation and watching-brief work carried out by Worcestershire Archaeology between 2016 and 2018 on behalf of the Environment Agency, which merited a double-page spread in *Current Archaeology*. They uncovered a large multi-period site, which extended even beyond the area shown in the cover photo, with at least 8000 years of activity. Discoveries included scatters of Mesolithic to early Neolithic flint debris, a complete Beaker and associated grave goods (but no body), a Bronze Age to Iron Age farmstead represented by a series of roundhouses and large enclosure ditches, Roman gullies and enclosures, multiple burials and post-built buildings, Saxon finds and the remains of medieval agriculture. Human remains showed the transition from Bronze Age/early Iron Age crouch burials to the supine position customary in Roman period.

29 October **Palfrey: The Man, the Collection and the Conservation**
Rhonda Niven (WAAS)

Harold Palfrey was born in Stourbridge in 1880 and lived there for most of his life. As a businessman and councillor throughout his life, he was passionate about the history of his local

area and built up a substantial private library relating to archaeology, botany, folklore, history, industry and theology. On his death in 1962 he left behind thousands of books, pamphlets, deeds, documents, maps and prints relating to Worcestershire and the Black Country by Worcestershire writers and printed in the county. These were gifted to the county and formed a significant foundation for the local studies section of the Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service.

Today the Palfrey Collection is secured behind glass on level 2 of the Hive, but is fully accessible during archive opening hours and offers a fascinating array of volumes and pamphlets from across the county and beyond on almost any topic you can imagine.

Feeling that such a significant collection would benefit from a bit of the love and respect it deserves, I have a volunteer project running to produce wrappers for damaged volumes in the hope that eventually they can be conserved and continue to be available for researchers from near and far.

**19 November The Giant Wombat in the Basement, and other stories:
Worcester's Antiquarian Trailblazers
Rob Hedge (WAAS)**

Based on research undertaken for WAAS and Museums Worcestershire's Lost Landscapes project, this talk traces the history of our understanding of the archaeology, geology, and natural history of the Ice Age, and presents the fascinating stories of local characters at the forefront of research. Beginning in the heady days of the mid-19th century we will steer a path through colonial controversies, enlightened ecclesia, humble hand-axe hunters, and trowel-blazing teachers, up to current research and priorities for the future.

**10 December Arthur Henry Whinfield: lantern slide photographer,
archaeology enthusiast, churchman, organ builder.
A centenary reflection on his Worcester life
Justin Hughes (WAAS) and Tim Bridges (Worcs & Dudley HCT)**



Local man, Arthur Henry Whinfield (1862-1917), was president of the Society in 1916. He also played the organ and served as choir master at St John Baptist Church, in Claines, Worcester and in Christchurch, Brunswick, Melbourne. He was also a civil engineer who, from 1903 to 1916, owned Nicholson's Organs (which is still in business today). However, one of Whinfield's key legacies is his collection of over 2,000 photographic lantern slides, 'many of which', according to his widow, Laura Jane Curtler, who donated the photographs to the Worcester Diocesan Church House Trust shortly after his death, 'were taken by himself'.

The slides address a wide subject matter, including Whinfield's travels across four

continents. Courtesy of Tim Bridges, representing the Church House Trust, the lecture will explore Whinfield's keen interest in religious architecture. Justin Hughes, of Worcestershire County Archaeology Service, will present the wider context of the man's interests and motivations which gave rise to the Collection and to his connections in other cultural spheres.

2019

14 January

**From Stonehenge to Easter Island, via Bredon Hill:
Aerial photogrammetry and the deployment of UAVs
for mapping archaeology
Adam Stanford (Aerial-Cam)**

An Archaeology Safari through some of the most fantastic sites from Europe to the southern seas.

4 February

**Homeless, driven out. What next?
Nuns' lives after the Dissolution
Margaret Goodrich**

The Crown's closure of monastic houses was not unprecedented in England but it was the scale of the 1536-40 Dissolution that was new. Every monastery was closed; the monks and nuns were suddenly thrust out into the world. The monks had several choices of occupation ahead of them but what happened to the nuns? From a variety of sources we can piece together something of their subsequent lives. For some of them life went quietly on, for others it took challenging and surprising, if not eccentric, turns.

25 February

**The Celtic place-names of Worcestershire
Professor Andrew Breeze (University of Navarre)**

Worcestershire, rich in many things, is especially rich in Celtic toponyms, including those of Crutch, Dowles, Kersoe, Kyre, Lickey, Malvern, Mamble, Pendock, Pensax, Tardebigge, or Worcester itself, as also the River Severn. They give an exotic or un-English look to maps of the county, but also create problems for place-name scholars. Fortunately, recent work on the vocabulary of early Welsh and related languages allows solutions to many of these forms, thereby shedding light on the archaeology, landscape, settlement, fauna, flora, and other aspects of Worcestershire in the days of the Ancient Britons.

25 March

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Followed by a presentation. Details to be forwarded.

8 April

**The Berkeley Lecture:
Surviving or thriving? New approaches to Worcestershire peasants
in the later middle ages (1200-1540)
Professor Chris Dyer (University of Leicester)**

Peasants have in the past been despised, patronised and pitied. Recent research has led us to treat medieval peasants with more respect and to notice the contributions they made to social development in the long term. Worcestershire is an ideal county for such research, as there is a mass of documents, as well as archaeological and architectural evidence. This lecture will use new evidence and new interpretations to present a positive picture of peasant achievements, while at the same time recognizing the many difficulties and disadvantages that they faced.

Items for the next issue should be sent to the Editor, Caroline Hillaby, email recorder@worcestershirearchaeologicalsociety.org.uk by 1 March 2019.



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