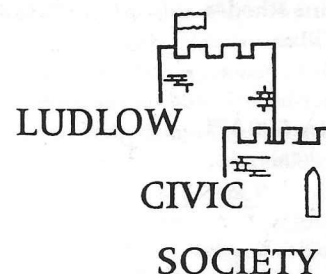


Ludlow Heritage News

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LUDLOW MARKET HALL

Stephen Dornan, in the last issue of *Heritage News*, argued on behalf of what he called a 'concerned, heretical minority' the case for building a new market hall in Castle Square. I, a member of a no less concerned majority, find myself aligned with the great weight of opinion that the obvious, desirable thing to do is to leave Castle Square as open space. If we do that we shall go down to history as a generation with the sense to resist the almost automatic pressure nowadays to put up a building whenever opportunity offers. More importantly, if other times bring other needs the site will still be there and we shall not have queered the pitch of our descendants.

The core of Stephen's argument rests on an almost mystical attitude towards space which, he says ingeniously, 'equals thin air, cheapest and most plentiful of commodities; in itself it gives no pleasure. The containment and disciplining of space does give pleasure, the pleasure of what townscape aficionados call "enclosure"'. . . . The buildings which front the new square are too small and the space dominates them, whereas in an urban context the buildings should control the space.' This is difficult to follow. The buildings, especially the important buildings, now control space in Castle Square as they never did before. The emerging view of the Castle as one walks along High Street is now one of the great sights of Ludlow. The Castle cannot be as impressive from within the town as it is seen from outside, from the west and north, because one has no sense of the size of the rock on which it stands; but within the town the Castle now gains, in my view, precisely because it is seen across a greater space.

In the same sense the Church has a dominance it never had before as can be seen when one turns from Dinham into Castle Square, especially if it is a night when the tower is floodlit. The Church is a witness to much in our national life and it ought not to have to be stalked through the town, as Stephen says, until it is run to earth 'through a narrow passage between the chemist and the off-licence.'

Space, it seems to me, is contained still in Castle Square, but in a bigger, more stimulating and certainly more revealing way. The gain, visually, is palpable.

But there is much more to a town than visual aesthetics. I must confess that I am less of an

admirer of Alec Clifton-Taylor than most people because of this very concentration on the aesthetics of the towns he visited.

Towns are to be lived in; and it is the life that counts. I do not believe that Ludlow has yet come to grips with the implications of this immense bonus of space that has been conferred upon it. Some benefits . . . the seats, for instance . . . are immediately apparent. For many people it is not so much the walking that is the problem when they are shopping; it is the lack of somewhere to rest.

This is a social as well as a physical amenity. One can watch the world go by and walk when one is ready. The Square seems to me to be busier as well and that means that traffic is obliged to move even more slowly than it used to. If we cannot pedestrianise the square we need to give the pedestrian more equal rights with the motor car. That seems to be happening . . . or at least the pedestrians are asserting themselves which is a thoroughly good thing.

We have already had in the Square at Christmas a stage adapted from a trailer and put up by OSCA. There has been a wondrous inflated dragon on which youngsters were able to bounce about. Morris dancing; country dancing for the benefit of all and sundry; band concerts . . . these and other activities are feasible. I cannot envisage the scope, for that will depend on the ingenuity and energy of many people, but I can see the Square becoming a more vibrant place than ever before. At the moment we have to wait and see.

If, by building a new hall, we surrendered this great actual and potential benefit, what should we gain? Stephen Dornan sees a rebuilt market hall, probably considerably smaller than its predecessor and not necessarily of more than one storey, provided that the highest quality of design were obtained and the best (ie local) materials used. These seem to me to be fatal compromises.

A small market hall would be less adequate for its purpose than the old one and, especially if it were single storey, would offer fewer social amenities. As to 'the highest quality of design' I hardly know how that is to be obtained. I imagine that the old, much derided hall, was seen as offering the highest quality of design in its day with materials which provided both a contrast and complement to the buildings around.

AFFILIATED TO THE CIVIC TRUST

I am in some difficulty in commenting on Dennis Flanders's ingenious suggestion of a stone obelisk. I found him, some years ago, lean and weather-beaten, down at Ludford Bridge and drawing Lower Broad Street. I did not know him then and, with a brashness that still embarrasses me, I complimented him on his draughtsmanship and asked if he had thought about joining Ludlow Art Society!

I have to say I do not think the obelisk a particularly good idea. As Mr Flanders's own drawing in the last issue of *Heritage News* shows, seen from the west it competes disturbingly with the Church and from the east will challenge the Castle.

What then? There remains a need for community facilities, and if there is no last-minute development I suspect Ludlow will come increasingly to rue the opportunities lost on the Clifton Cinema site.

For Castle Square, however, there is no better prospect than to go on as we have been, to seek more ways of using the site and, as we enjoy our unexpected good fortune, to reflect that there is, after all, quite a lot to be said for Victorian jerry-building.

W. E. Hall

We also include below a letter from one of our readers on this subject.

LUDLOW MARKET HALL – II

Space in the centre of a town is normally a costly asset, since it can be had only by foregoing the profits of building. The Square as it now is, whether as an open space or as an open air market, 'looks right' and is an asset to be preserved for the future. It is certainly not an 'ill-defined prairie'.

There is no reason why the Square should be 'suburbanised', as your correspondent seems to fear. Far more alarming and permanently damaging to the beauty of Ludlow would be the prospect of an unsuitable building, whether a Georgian pastiche or a modern design unrelated to its surroundings. Future citizens of Ludlow would have no cause to be grateful to those who want to build on the Square now.

Ludlow people, generally speaking, seem to approve of the Market Square as it is. Let it not be destroyed by building.

David Baron

LUDLOW CIVIC SOCIETY

Full details can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary:

Mrs Jeanne Rhodes
1 Cliff Villas
Ludford
Ludlow
Shropshire SY8 1PL
Tel. Ludlow 2006

We are pleased to be able to give some publicity to the work of the younger generation in Ludlow. It is, after all, into their hands that the care of Ludlow will fall.

All Ludlovians will, we are sure, be most interested in the following production:

A group of students from the Third Year of Ludlow School will be featured in a forthcoming BBC Schools Television programme filmed last autumn at Cold Weston deserted village site. The programme, to be transmitted on 6th and 8th June, will also include coverage of Nurdy Bank Hill Fort and an area of ridge and furrow near Heath Chapel. The programme, dealing with the historical landscape, is one of a series.

A book to accompany the programme will be available. Contributors to this include Tim Lomas and Michael Wise of Ludlow School.

FURTHER TOPICAL MATTERS

During the autumn we were privileged to have two excellent speakers on Ludlow during the troubled periods of the Wars of the Roses and the English Civil War. Members who attended these lectures will doubtless be delighted to gain further insight into both these topics in the following articles.

Geoffrey Hodges, who gave us such an in-depth account of the manoeuvring which led to the Rout of Ludford Bridge has kindly contributed an account of the the struggle for power during the whole of this period – with the addition of family trees of both the Royal and local families involved to assist those without detailed knowledge of this period.

The Fred Reeves Lecture, given by David Lloyd on the Civil War was also an entertaining evening, and members heard of the visit to Ludlow by Prince Rupert on a recruiting campaign.

John Lamb, a member of both the Civic Society and the Research Group – has found a letter sent to the town Bailiffs by Prince Rupert, Count Palatine of the Rhine, Duke of Bavaria and Cumberland, Earl of Holderness, Knight of the most noble order of the Garter, General of all His Majesty's horse forces whatsoever and General of the Counties of Worcester, Salop, Chester, Lancaster and the six Counties of North Wales, detailing the method by which Ludlovians should be taxed. This has been transcribed into modern English, and we have received permission to reproduce the letter here.

It is interesting to note that tax commissioners are, even today, appointed by central authority – the Lord Chancellor – on the recommendation of those Commissioners already serving. Does nothing change?

To the Worshipful the Bailiffs of the town and liberties of Ludlow.

The great inequalities heretofore used in the assessing and collecting the payments of the County, coming to our notion and knowledge, occasioneth us to endeavour the prevention of having any payment or money raised for His Majesty's service by our command in that unequal way, and to have the same done which we doubt not but will be effected if you and the Country will not be wanting to yourselves. for which purpose we have appointed certain Commissioners, together with yourselves, to cause that apportion of the sum of £6,000 which is to be paid out of your town and liberties by information upon oath, to be duly and indifferently taxed upon the several inhabitants of the said town and liberties thereof. and for the better proceeding therein and to the intent the said assessment may be made with all possible indifference. These are therefore in His Majesty's name, to charge and command you, that forthwith upon receipt hereof, you cause speedy notice of warning to be given to 20 of the most substantial, honest, and men of best integrity, and knowledge of estates and conditions of every of the inhabitants within every ward or division within the said town and liberties thereof. to appear before yourselves and the rest of the said commissioners in the town hall of Ludlow upon Saturday the second of March by nine of the clock in the forenoon. To the intent that a convenient number of the fittest of them may be chosen out of every ward or division within your said town and liberties to assist you and the said commissioners, by information upon their oaths, for the taxing and assessing of the several inhabitants of your said town and liberties justly, truly and indifferently attending to their estates and conditions. Further we require you that for the better information of yourselves and our said Commissioners in the premises you have ready in writing, fairly written, the said day and place, the names of every inhabitant of your said town and liberties, every particular ward, hamlet village and township by itself. Fail not in the full and punctual performance hereof, as you and either of you will answer the contrary at your utmost peril. Given under our hand and seal the 23rd day of February Anno Domini 1643.

You are to take notice that if there be any failing in the performance of what is required, then we shall immediately levy the fine of your town and liberties required of some of the most sufficient inhabitants of the same in a full double proportion in respect of such their contempt.

Signed,

RUPERT

THE SUCCESSION

These five years resolved the crisis which had arisen from Henry VI's failure as a king; his incompetence was the main cause of the Wars of the Roses. His masterful Queen, Margaret of Anjou, seized the initiative from Richard, Duke of York, and worked to control the kingdom from the Lancastrian power base in the Midlands. In 1456 she moved the court to Coventry, and turned an invasion of South Wales by the Marcher Yorkists into a political triumph over the Duke of York. Some of his followers were pardoned, like the Herberts and Vaughans. Others were fined and imprisoned, like the Devereux, James Baskerville and John Lingen. South Wales was firmly in the control of Jasper Tudor, the king's half-brother, who was Earl of Pembroke and uncle of the future Henry VII. When the royalists advanced on Ludlow in 1459, the Marcher Yorkists signally failed to come to the Duke's aid, with the sole exception of Walter Devereux of Weobley. The result was the humiliating Rout of Ludford Bridge (12–13 October).

The Yorkist recovery the following summer was possible because the Earl of Warwick, York's nephew, controlled Calais; Warwick, his father the Earl of Salisbury, and cousin Edward Earl of March, had fled there after Ludford. After their defeat and capture of King Henry VI at Northampton (10th July 1460), the Yorkists set up a government under the puppet Lancastrian King, and showed no sign of wanting to give the throne to the Duke of York. Orders were sent to Sir William Herbert, his half-brother Roger Vaughan, Walter Devereux, James Baskerville, Richard Croft and other Herefordshire gentry. When York finally emerged from his refuge in Dublin, he moved southward through the Marches, and according to one source was urged by the Marcher gentry to demand the crown. He received no support in this from Salisbury, Warwick or his own heir, Edward Earl of March, whatever Shakespeare may say.

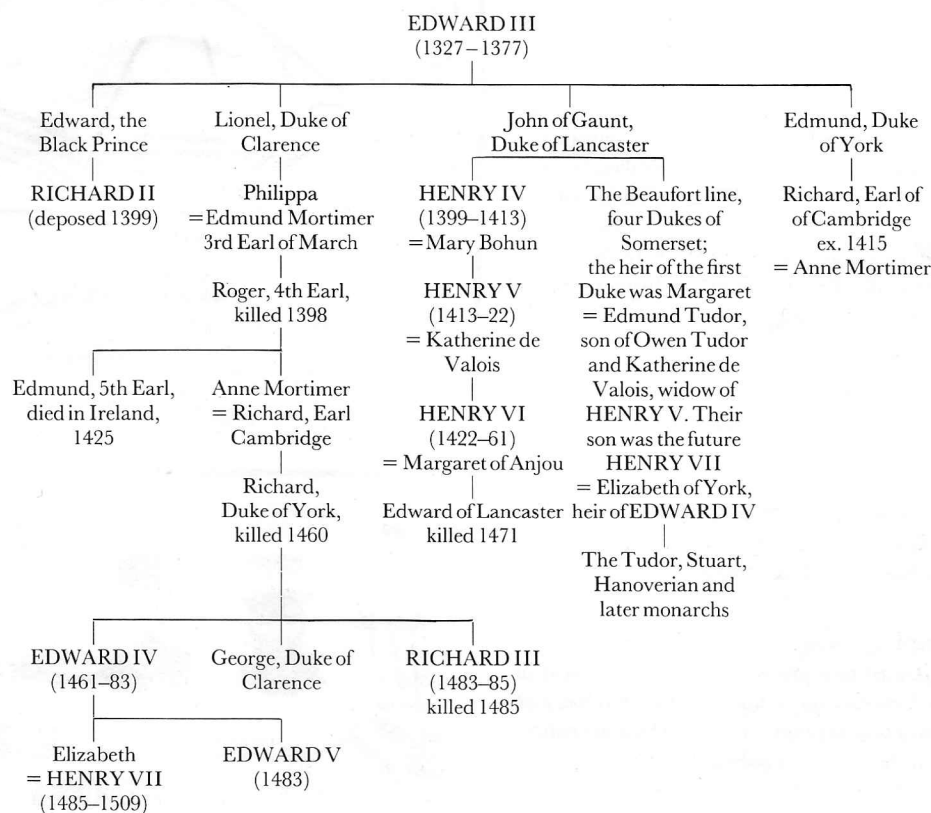
The Parliamentary Act of Accord, whereby he was made Henry's heir, was inevitably rejected by the Queen and her supporters, as it disinherited her son. They were technically rebels, but had been marshalling large forces in the north, which were much too strong for York, Salisbury and their army, which was annihilated at Wakefield on 30th December 1460.

Warwick and Edward were now heads of their respective families. Warwick was in charge of London, the government and the King. Edward spent Christmas in Shrewsbury, his plain duty being to counter any move against the Yorkist heartlands around Ludlow and Wigmore by Jasper Tudor, who was certain to advance sooner or later from his main base at Pembroke Castle. Edward had with him the men who had invaded South Wales in

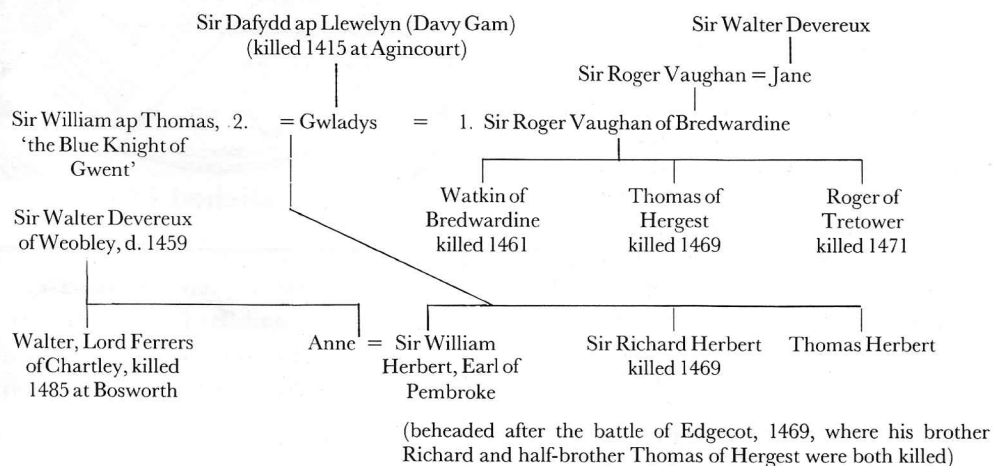
STRUGGLE IN THE WELSH MARCHES 1456-1461

THE HOUSE OF PLANTAGENET AFTER EDWARD III

Reigning kings are in capital letters



THE DEVEREUX, HERBERT AND VAUGHAN FAMILIES



Note: Walter Devereux the younger, William and Richard Herbert, and Roger Vaughan of Tretower are named as being present at Mortimer's Cross; Thomas and Watkin Vaughan may well have been also.

1456, but had failed the Duke of York in 1459; he had all the charisma which his father so significantly lacked. When Jasper's advance finally began, probably late in January 1461, the Yorkists were ready for him. The inference is that Jasper was badly delayed by the belated arrival of French, Breton and Irish reinforcements under James Butler, Earl of Wiltshire and Ormond, though this is entirely conjectural. We know very little indeed for certain about the campaign and battle of Mortimer's Cross, whereas the Rout of Ludford Bridge is thoroughly described in the London chronicles and in the subsequent Act of Attainder against York and his followers, passed by the Coventry Parliament in November 1459.

Two things are certain about Mortimer's Cross: it was a shattering defeat for the Lancastrians, and the parhelion (a meteorological phenomenon of three suns) was seen before the battle. The day was most likely St Blaise's Day, 3rd February, which is expressly given by three well-informed writers: the Milanese ambassador to the French Court, writing only five weeks later to Duke Francesco Sforza, a Yorkist chronicler who explains that it was seen on the day before the battle (Candlemas), and by William Worcester who gives lists of the principal participants on each side.

Afterwards Edward went to Hereford, where he had Owen Tudor and some other prisoners beheaded; he was in no hurry to join Warwick in London, which was in a state of growing panic at the approach of an enormous plundering horde from the north, under the Queen, Duke of Somerset and the Earl of Northumberland. This effectively distracted the attention of London from events in the Welsh Marches. A vivid and dramatic sense of fear is conveyed by the letters of Italian merchants and others in the Milan State Papers.

Warwick was badly beaten at St Albans on 17th February, a real battle, the first in 1455 having been little more than a large-scale brawl between the retinues of two groups of magnates. Warwick had been running the country successfully through the puppet King, who was now recaptured by his own side. There was now no alternative but for Edward to take the throne, which he duly did on 4th March.

Warwick no doubt did all the stage-management, but Edward owed little else to his cousin. He had proved himself a much better soldier, and was enthusiastically supported both by the Londoners and the Marchmen, many of whom had come up to London with him at their own cost. There can therefore be little doubt that all who could do so accompanied him to the north, and were with him on 29th March at Towton, where the Queen's army was bloodily defeated in the biggest battle of these wars. The heir of the Mortimers was now King indeed.

Geoffrey W. T. Hodges

MEREDITH & VENABLES LUDLOW

We are indebted to a lady of Ludlow for the following account of working in the town during the early part of this century. Unfortunately, she does not want her name divulged – however we hope this will be the start of a series of memories in Ludlow. We thank her very much and trust other older Ludlovians will be prepared to follow suit.

Early in the present century Meredith and Venables were the principal dressmakers in Ludlow. Their business extended way beyond the town and well-to-do farmers' wives regularly travelled into Ludlow to visit the firm's premises on the north side of Market Square. There, in the ground floor shop they could buy materials for dressmaking at home, or be measured for clothes to be made on the premises. Occasionally the firm's dressmakers would measure and fit customers in their homes, boarding schools in the vicinity took advantage of this service. Those were the days – before the and during the first World War – when there was no plentiful supply of newly-made clothes, to be bought and worn straight from the peg.

At the top of Meredith and Venables, unseen by the customers down below, was a large dressmaking room that stretched from the front to the back of the building. It was there the work done that fashioned the appearance of the ladies of Ludlow when they went to church on Sunday. The dressmakers who created this 'Sunday best' worked at a long table that ran the length of this upper room. There, armed with materials fetched first thing each morning from the shop below, all carefully recorded in a book, they measured and cut, stitched and ironed; and on the customer's next visit the finished garment would be ready for trying on.



Photograph by Peter Bartlett. Costume kindly on loan to Ludlow Museum by Miss M. Williams.

It was a busy and bustling room, yet surprisingly quiet considering the number of young women who worked there. Discipline was strict in those days and the older dressmakers made sure the younger ones worked instead of chattering. To a young girl beginning her apprenticeship, the older women were dragons.

There was always plenty to be done and they were kept busy working until six in the evening. One job that was never ending was the constant task of picking up pins that had dropped on the floor. There was a multitude of other simple tasks for the beginner; fetching and carrying anything that was needed and replacing the flat irons that stood warming, when not in use, on the stand fixed to a large stove in the middle of the room. It was essential that the irons were kept continually hot, ready for immediate use. There was little comfort in the workroom and staff working at a distance from the stove were often stone cold.

Reaching the workroom involved an endless climb up a series of stairs from an entrance in Quality Square. It was a route taken by very many Ludlow girls to learn the basic skills of dressmaking. They began by picking up pins, but there was much to learn thereafter until, eventually, they graduated to being permitted to serve a customer in person.

As a Society affiliated to the CPRE we have been asked to reproduce, for your information, an open letter from the President – David Puttnam CBE.

The English countryside will face unprecedented new pressures over the next year or so. I should like to know that CPRE has your particular support for its attempts to ensure that the country's political parties put countryside conservation more securely at the centre of their priorities.

Two prospects are particularly troubling.

First, the future of British farming is now in the melting pot. This will have enormous implications for patterns of land use up and down the country.

Our concern is all the greater because of a second massive change now in prospect for the countryside. This concerns the future of strategic land use planning in England and Wales.

Over the next few months, many conservation organisations, national and local, will be responding to the Government's consultation paper on this matter, *The Future of Development Plans*. My concern is to underline to you the close relationship that exists between *this* issue and the other, broader, question of the future of British farming.

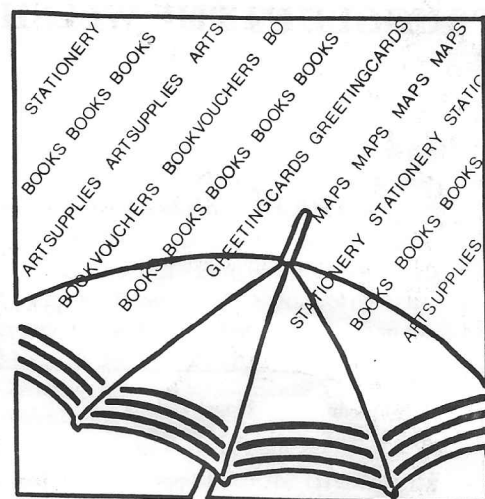
If you share these concerns please write to me – David Puttnam, CBE, President, Council for the Protection of Rural England, 4 Hobart Place, London SW1W 0HY. Knowing that we have your personal backing will strengthen us enormously in our forthcoming discussions with Government Ministers and others.

The fact is, ultimately it is *your* local countryside that is at stake.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

David Puttnam



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