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BBC

WOOFFERTON THE EARLY DAYS

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LETTERING IN LUDLOW

IRONWORKS IN LUDFORD

REMEMBER, REMEMBER THE FIFTH OF NOVEMBER

BBC WOOFFERTON THE EARLY DAYS



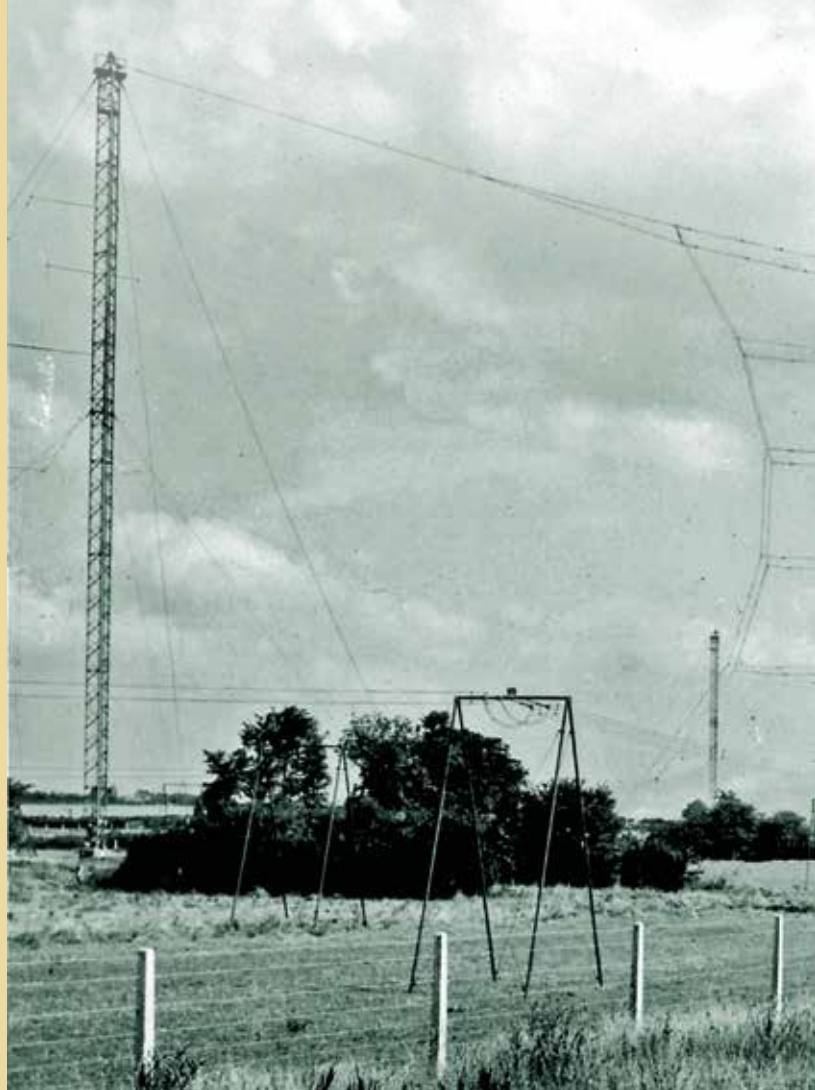
I think we need to open this edition with an acknowledgement of the recent difficult times we have all been through. Now that things are starting to return to a 'new' near normal, we sincerely hope this finds you in good form, and that you and your loved ones continue to enjoy good health.

Once again we present a new look for the Heritage News. While our themed issues, ranging from two Georgian numbers to an issue devoted to the town walls, have been very successful, we still receive articles of interest which would not fit into any themed issue. These articles are the backbone of this publication, and we bring you a selection of such pieces in our newly-designed magazine-style issue, which we hope will give cohesion to what can be quite disparate articles on differing subjects.

In this issue we venture southward across Ludford Bridge to look at the early history of a familiar local landmark, the BBC transmitting station located at Woofferton. On our return to the town, we make a worthwhile detour to Ludford to examine its amazing examples of ironwork. We also take a look at the tradition of November 5th festivities in the town, and at signage in the town, a subject close to many of our hearts. The book review which was revived in our previous issue, will now become a regular feature. So once again I commend to you the latest edition of Heritage News.

Very few structures are left in the Ludlow area which can be traced back to the Second World War. However, look five miles south of the town towards the rise of the hills and a tracery of masts can be seen. Go closer, and a large building can be found by the road to Orleton, surrounded now by a flock of satellite dishes, pointing upwards. The dishes are a sign of the recent past, but the large low building was made for the war-time radio station aimed at Germany.

This little history attempts to tell the story of the British Broadcasting Corporation's transmitting station at Woofferton near Ludlow in Shropshire during the first years of its existence. When and why did the BBC appear in the Welsh border landscape with a vast array of masts and wires strung up in the air? The story begins in 1932, when the BBC Empire Service opened from the first station at Daventry in Northamptonshire. Originally, the service, to link the Empire by wireless, was intended to be transmitted on long-wave or low frequency. But, following the discovery by radio amateurs that long distance communication was possible by using high frequency or short waves, the plan was changed. Later in the decade, the BBC expanded the service by also broadcasting in foreign languages. Although Daventry had a distinguished name in the broadcasting world, it was never technically the best place for a short-wave site, being on a hill and close to a growing town.



Lack of funds had prevented any matching of Germany's lead in high-power short-wave broadcasting. However, the outbreak of war released the much-needed funding, and in February 1941 the first new high-frequency station was opened at Rampisham near Bridport in Dorset. This was equipped with four Marconi 100 kilowatt senders (short-wave transmitters). With an aerial field of fifteen masts and twenty-nine curtain arrays, the station was designed to transmit a strong signal into a service area outside Europe.

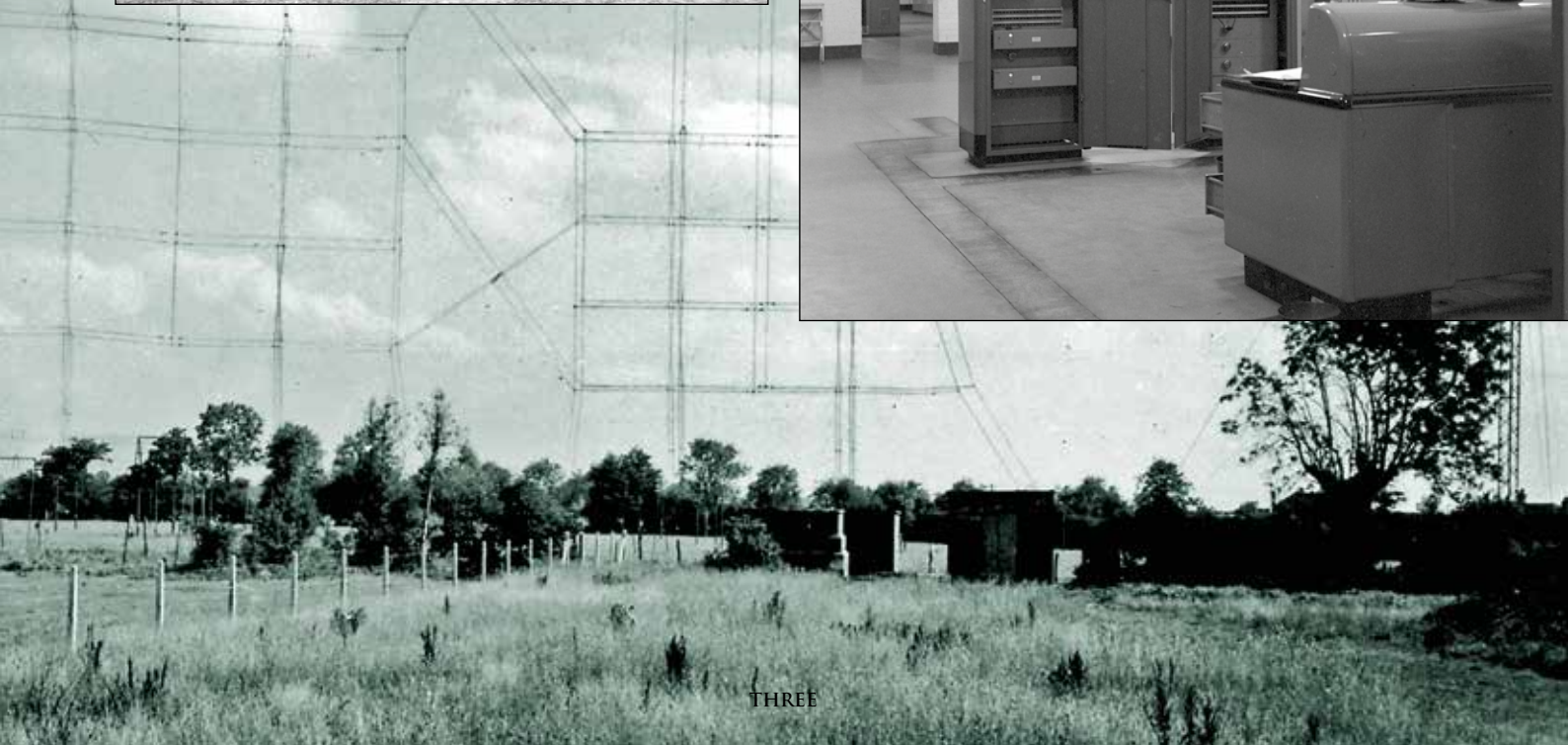
In November 1940, the Ministry of Information informed the BBC that it was their desire to treble the output of overseas broadcasting, especially in foreign languages, and that they were required to make plans for this project. In terms of high frequency transmitting, the BBC decided that eighteen new senders were required in order to fire a signal into occupied France and Germany. A site was needed in the north of England, and two stations, Skelton A and B, were built about a mile apart near Penrith in Cumberland. A third station was required at midway point between Skelton and Rampisham. Thus, the site at Woofferton was chosen, and was designated as OSE10, and was built to house six senders of an American design made by RCA. The obvious masts do not radiate the programmes, there is a complicated double curtain of copper wires between them which projects the signal into the air where it eventually bounces off layers in the ionosphere to reach the receiver on the continent of Europe or beyond.

The actual site chosen was 180 acres of low-lying land which had been a lake in pre-historic times. It had a high water-table and was apt to flood prior to the area being drained. When the snow melted after the hard winter of 1947, the riggers and aerial switching assistants were provided with

fishing waders, and crossing the site became quite dangerous. Likewise, the earth underneath the surface was like quicksand, and this made the construction of the mast bases very difficult. However, it is the damp aerial field with its high electrical conductivity which makes Woofferton an ideal short-wave site. (Fig. 1, the scene outside OSE10 in 1943)

John Richardson, the Senior Maintenance Engineer, arrived on site on Monday 5th October 1942. Trees were marked and felled as the site was gradually cleared for the feeder lines and mast bases to be constructed. The six senders fed their output to a switching tower and thence via long runs of spaced feeders to the switching frames at the base of each curtain array. On 14th November, erection of the feeder system was started, but the erection of the aerials was delayed by the non-completion of the masts, which were held up by a national shortage of steel. The masts were of lattice-stayed construction, with the base resting on a three-inch diameter steel ball. This enabled the mast to be accurately located and moved slightly when the tension in the stays was adjusted to ensure vertical alignment. The masts ranged in height from 150 to 325 feet and, apart from three four-sided masts, they were all triangular. The three-sided 325 feet masts weighed some 21 tons and contained 2,800 nuts and bolts. The base weighed 22 tons and supported a total load of 99 tons when the mast was stayed. In this case there were 9 stays, each set of three being fastened to a concrete base weighing some 64 tons.

The first section of the building was ready for plant installation on 1st February 1943, and by this time, the first of the RCA senders had arrived and were installed. (Fig. 2 shows two of the sender halls with the small doorway.) The front of the building contained the administrative offices and the control room, with the standby generating plant at the opposite end. The main hall, in between, was divided into three separate sections by strong brick blast walls, and had a large span roof supported by heavy reinforced concrete ribs. These ribs were hinged at the centre, and their feet rested on the stout outside compartments containing the power and modulation transformers for the senders. Each external door was protected by a blast wall. All these features were to give some protection against attack from the air.





3

There was some delay before the arrival of the remaining senders on 15th May. During this period, furniture, the emergency 240 volt battery and the essential Gent's clock system were installed. The clock was very important because the BBC had developed a schedule for high-frequency broadcasting which had to be accurate within a couple of seconds to allow for programme-switching and sender-interchange between stations. The remaining senders arrived between 10th June and 17th July. In all, over 180 tons of equipment contained in nearly 600 cases, ranging from 200lb to 3½ tons, were handled in the goods station at Woofferton railway junction, and these then had to be transported to the site and then off-loaded. Installation of the senders went very smoothly. The first sender took 5 men working 10 hours a day some 3 weeks to erect, but the men soon became experienced, and the final sender took 6 men 7 working days. Luckily, no damage had occurred to the equipment on its long journey across the Atlantic from the RCA factory in Camden, New Jersey.

By 31st August 1943, the last of the 15 lattice-support masts were erected. They carried 26 aerials, most of which consisted of two identical curtains each comprising 4 dipoles wide and 4 dipoles high. For maximum flexibility, the groundwork of each array enabled each curtain to be fed with its partner, earthed to stop backward radiation. The arrays were split in two horizontally, so that one half could be fed slightly in advance, which caused the signal to be slewed at an angle to the normal radiation. This was done by the man on aerial switching duties (Fig. 3).

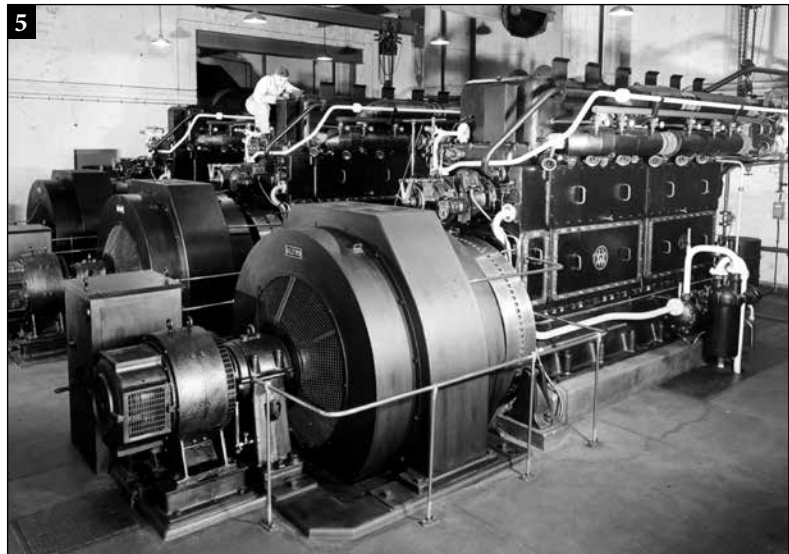


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Owing to the delay in the completion of the aerial system, it was decided to put four senders into service on 17th October. The last two senders went

into service on 21st November, the day after the aerials had finally been completed. These two were senders 85 and 86, the Woofferton units being numbered 81 to 86. As previously noted, the aerials were connected to a large circular frame outside the building surrounding a large switching tower (Fig. 4), with six levels, one for each sender. An interlocked motorised arm could be driven round from inside the building to select one of seven outlets. This enabled each of the six senders to have any seven arrays connected to it, but if one array was in use by more than one sender, an operation called 'biffing' (short for bifurcation) was performed. The feeder from each array could be selected on the outside ring to one or more levels of the tower. All these operations were performed with the sender off-power, and a strict system of key interlocks, tallies and a written log had to be followed to ensure the safety of personnel.

Staff who were drawn from all parts of the BBC began to arrive at the station on 7th October. A 26 seater coach was hired from Primrose Motors in Kingsland to bring staff in from Leominster via Orleton. From July 1945, Ludlow became the base town and a shift bus was hired from the Corvedale Motor Company.



5

The engineer in charge of day-to-day operations was Laurence Frederic Ivin who had worked his way up through the engineering ranks of the BBC, having joined the Corporation way back in 1928 at Daventry. The station was supplied from the local electricity board's 11 kv system, but three Harland and Wolf 750 bhp supercharged diesels were installed as standby. They could provide 1.5 MW, which was more than enough as the maximum demand for the station was 900 kw. Throughout the spring of 1944 the EIC and staff battled to get the diesels working correctly and by 18th May this task was mainly accomplished. (Fig. 5, Diesel Maintenance Mechanic, Fred Goldsmith, on top of his beloved engines.)

Due to the worn-out nature of generating plants and a general shortage of coal in the winters following the Second World War, a great strain was placed on the public electric generating sector. In order to help the situation, BBC stations such as Woofferton were instructed to carry their own load on standby diesel for certain periods of the day. From October 1947 to May 1948 the diesels carried the station from 0800 -1200 hours. Fred Goldsmith, the diesel mechanic, was fully occupied keeping the engines operational!

The RCA 50 kw senders were not designed for rapid wave-changing, because the original factory configuration was two RF units with a common modulator. This enabled the spare RF unit to be wave-changed, while the other RF unit was in use. Popular rumour, which is not supported by any evidence, was that the spare channels were actually shipped but lost at sea when the freighter was sunk by a German U-boat. However, spares for the transmitters were difficult to obtain and it was a case of make-do-and-



mend with what materials were available. By this time, almost everything in Britain was rationed or available only with special permits. Even U2 torch batteries for the Aerial Switching Technical Assistant were impossible to obtain locally and had to be specially ordered. The station was in continuous use twenty-four hours a day, and not all of the operational staff were men. Some women were employed at Woofferton. A 1944 visitor recalls seeing 'a tiny brunette in a fur coat standing on tiptoes, tuning a sender with the meter being higher than her head'. (Fig. 6, a scene in the control room, August 1944.)

Shortly after D-Day, flying bombs known as V-1s began to be fired towards London, causing severe casualties. Eventually, radar-controlled guns firing radio-proximity fused shells, together with souped-up fighters, gained mastery of these pilotless aircraft. These were followed by the more advanced V-2 rockets. Very little was known about their guidance system, but more was found out when a stray test shot of a V-2 landed in neutral Sweden. When the wreckage was examined, it was found to be fitted with a radio-guidance system. A secret and high level British committee was formed to work out counter-measures to this threat, which was soon expected to be in operational use. The Big Ben committee decided to use high-powered short-wave transmitters to jam the guidance system of the rocket. On 18th August the BBC was requested to release transmitters for this purpose. On 28th August a party of Royal Air Force technical personnel arrived at Woofferton and the station was closed down. Removal of the RF sections of the recently-installed senders began immediately. The operations book for 26 Group RAF notes that, by 19th September, two RCA units, S81 and S82, modified for jamming, were operational at the Government Communications Centre at Crowborough, in the middle of the Ashdown Forest.

The procedure was to detect the firing of the V-2 rocket at a receiving station on the south coast, and by landline sweep the drive to the modified RF unit of the RCA sender and jam the required frequency. However, the examination of many wrecked V-2 rockets failed to find any remote radio control, and, in fact, a sophisticated type of gyro-stabilised inertial guidance system had been used by the Germans, which was totally self-contained and unjammable. The radio equipment which had been found on the crashed rocket in Sweden was completely experimental and was never used on

operational V-2 rockets. When this fact was realised, the RAF lost interest in the ex-Woofferton senders, and eventually orders were given that they should be returned and re-installed.

Post-war, the plan had been for the station to be closed down from 1947, but the Soviets' sudden closure of surface travel to the Allied sectors of Berlin caused both the BBC and the Voice of America to continue the radio war of words. In 1962, after the construction of the Berlin Wall, the station was refurbished with six new Marconi transmitters. There was another big automation exercise in the 1980s, and finally Woofferton had ten senders in an opened-up hall of large proportions. (Fig. 7, S86, the last remaining RCA sender, in 1977, not long before it was scrapped.) The Woofferton transmitting station is the UK's last remaining public service short-wave broadcasting site. Woofferton is now owned and operated by Encompass Digital Media, being one of the BBC's assets which were handed over as part of the privatisation of the World Service in 1997. Later, another phase of automatic short-wave senders was acquired, and various satellite links have been operated. Woofferton still speaks to the world after 77 years.

Jeff Cant



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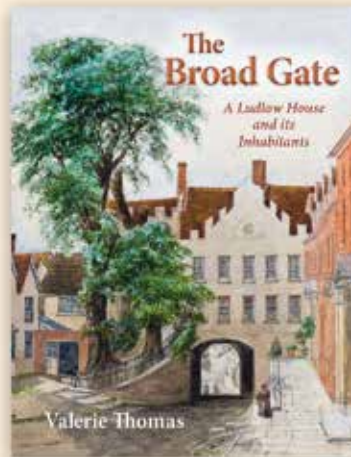


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LETTERING IN LUDLOW

I trained as a graphic designer and typographer long before computers took over, and as a life-long devotee of the art and craft of lettering, I seek out the vernacular, hand-painted letter wherever I go. In a world where everyone has instant access to fonts on their PCs (and therefore thinks they know all they need to know about letterforms), I'm concerned that the appreciation of a noble tradition of hand-rendered craft lettering may soon be over. It is, pun intended, a sign of the times that my computer spellcheck prefers 'songwriter' to 'signwriter'. In these days of mass-produced versions of what were once hand crafts, it's reassuring to see some examples surviving in Ludlow. So, with our enforced leisure time these days, it's worth a wander round town to spot them.

From traditional painted fascia boards to moulded or cast letters, here's a brief introduction to some of those that have caught my designer eye. It's a bit of a game for me to check whether the letters are hand-rendered, but visible guidelines and slight variations in form give them away. Easiest when two letters are near to each other – like this lovely example on the gate of the Rose and Crown pub where you can compare the slight variation in the letter E of 'BEER', and clearly see the ruled guidelines. (1, 2)

Some other traditional businesses of Ludlow have retained their premises and their lettering. A favourite of mine is Poyner's (3) in Broad Street, which, in its delightful resistance to the modern world, proves to me that a fine painted letter is an enduring pleasure.

Rickards (4) has splendid brass lettering set into the marble flagstone at its entrance and lovely gilded lettering above the door (5). On the other side of the Bull Ring, Boots continues its trade housed in its original building, and retains its charming mosaic tiled logo (6).

D.W.Walls maintains its delightful frontage (7), with a combination of elaborate fairground lettering with the traditional stripe shadow, and gilded and painted letters on glass. Here, all manner of hand-drawn signs sit happily alongside each other (8, 9, 10).

Tim Smith enlightened me about the hand-rendered sign over his Mackenzie and Smith workshop (11). Les Price painted this lettering to match the letterform he had used on the Cat's Whiskers shop, long since gone from Lower Broad Street. Happily,

Les's business is still operating from Craven Arms. Another fellow, still 'in the trade' as it were, is Scott Hill, who a few years ago was commissioned for his steady hand by Trevor Lloyd to update the Bookbinding Workshop fascia in Old Street (12), and a beautiful job he made of it. Scott (13) produced a curve to the B of Bookbinding in a single movement which was a joy to behold.

Scott Hill also executed the modest Bindery Shop fascia (14) below which, above the door, some ghost lettering suggests a previous occupant. Ghosts abound through the lettering: on the Castle Bookshop (15) in the Market Square, Stanton Stephens pointed out to me the traces of lettering in his windows above the door, reminding us in their shadows that his shop was once a chemist's. More ghost lettering can be seen above number 30 Corve Street where the building was once, if you can trace the outline of the letters here, the Temperance And Commercial Hotel, an establishment which presumably appealed to all tastes (16, 17).

I'm intrigued by Smith & Co (18), deciding that the very top of the of the building in King Street was worthy of their immortalisation. Cream-coloured brick straight letters form the



MITH and the S and ampersand alongside are painted, the curves being too trickie for the brickie. Smith & Co refers to the grocery business of Gaius Smith, who, in the late 1800s had shops at both 42 Bull Ring and 6 King Street, before moving to Nos 9 and 10 King Street, the gable of which is what is seen here with his company name. He also served as Mayor of Ludlow from 1898-99, and was one of the founding Trustees of the Zion Methodist Chapel in New Road. Smith & Co's name liveth for evermore and I wager will

be up there until the building itself shall fall.

Ludlow Period House Shop (19) once had overtones of fairground shadowed letters until that fascia too changed (20), but personally I have to tip my designer cap to Simon Holloway for choosing Johnston's London Underground letter as its replacement (21). Simon also has a small collection of old painted fascia boards upstairs in the shop, and this one for Fitzjohn and Co, a Ludlow business, is a real gem (22).

A fine example of lettering being integral

to the quality of the building are the painted letters on the Marston Brothers Corn and Seed warehouse in Portcullis Lane (23). It would be unimaginable to see this building without this majestic adornment, the words sitting so beautifully within the spaces allocated by the structure.

We have a few examples of three-dimensional lettering, and in Upper Linney, house number 14 has the charming and unusual addition of a cast iron panel (24), which immortalises the houses'



industrial past. It's fascinating to see the word 'Manufactory' in its original form, presumably abbreviated to 'factory' for current daily use.

In Old Street, a rather special sign (25), tells us that the house was the old house of the town preacher and lecturer, the house dated 1611. I suspect the sign is much later, but there it is, hand-carved and still visible and enjoyable.

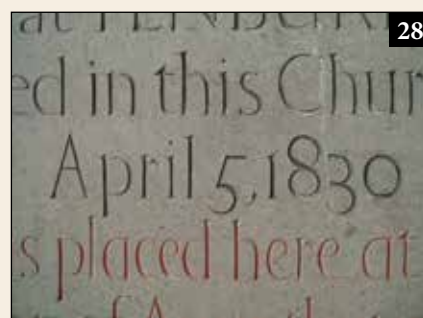
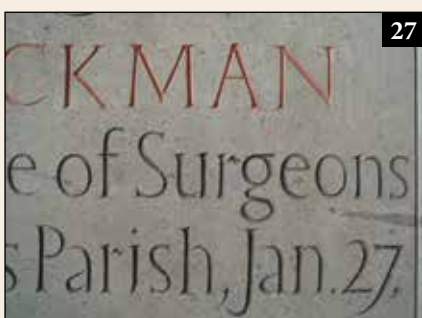
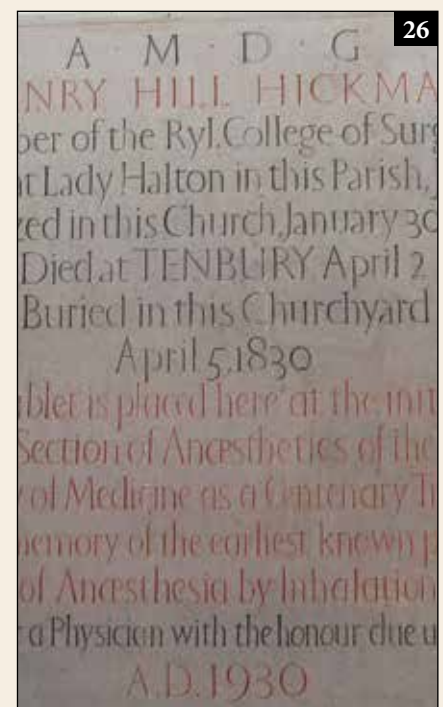
Further out of town, in Bromfield Church, is a plaque (26) to the memory of the anaesthetist Henry Hill Rickman, (whose practice was at

the bottom of Corve Street where now resides the parlour pub, The Dog Hangs Well). My typography background immediately alerted me to the from unmistakable letterform style of Eric Gill, as it is definitely his lowercase 'r', capital 'R' and numerals '3' and '5' (27, 28). I contacted Joe Cribb, who was the coordinator of the Eric Gill Society, for verification, and Joe told me that my instinct is correct; that this is from a design by Gill and cut by his assistant, Lawrence Cribb, in March 1930. I was delighted to find such a

connection to one of my typographic heroes so close to home.

So, if you haven't yet, take time to look up and notice the craftsmanship of the signwriter and lettering artist. I'm sure Scott Hill and Les Price would be glad you did. Better still if their handiwork inspires a younger person to train in the craft, then I, for one, would be content that Ludlow's signwriting tradition will continue.

Chloe Alexander



THE KNIGHT FAMILY OF DOWNTON CASTLE, VOLUME I 1698-1852,

BY BARNEY ROLFE-SMITH,
STONEBROOK PUBLISHING, 2020

BOOK REVIEW



The author begins this meticulously-researched and highly-detailed book with an account of how Richard Knight (1659-1745), grandfather to the better-known Richard Payne Knight, became a successful ironmaster, working firstly at Coalbrookdale and later Moreton and Poynton near Shrewsbury. After he married Elizabeth Payne, he moved with his growing family to Bringewood in the parish of Burrington near Ludlow, and so began the association of the remarkable Knight family with this corner of Herefordshire. The visitor to Burrington Church can still see a nationally-important collection of iron grave slabs to the iron masters of this area, including Richard Knight himself and some of his family. And a few miles away there is, of course, Downton Castle, built by Richard's famous grandson.

The book takes a chronological approach with frequent use of subtitles, usually stating the year in question and describing the events on a year-by-year basis from 1698 to 1852. As such, the book is a treasure trove of information for readers interested in the day-to-day affairs of this family. I suspected that the sequential unfolding of the details of their lives might become wearisome, but the curiosity of anyone interested in the history of the Marches and the West Midlands in the Georgian era will be stimulated and intrigued by the linkages between this family and other notable families, individuals and localities.

With the exception of Richard Payne Knight (1751-1824), who never married and left no heirs, the Knights were a fertile lot and intermarried widely with other eminent families in the West Midlands. Keeping track of their progeny is helped enormously by a series of useful genealogical tables in Appendix III. The book also benefits from over twenty colour plates and over forty monochrome figures. The book emanates from the author's own publishing concern (Stonebrook Publishing), and one plea I would make for the next volume is more careful editing. There are two Figure 5s and so references to figures in the text are misplaced by one from page 42

onwards. The problem self-corrects some twenty or so pages later since there is no Figure 13, and alignment of text and figures is restored. The enthusiasm and knowledge of the author are apparent, but to squash everything into the 328 pages, the printers have resorted to an unusually small font, so if you have reading glasses, have them at the ready.

The book is heavy on detailed descriptive narrative and less so on analysis and context. Some may find this a weakness, and indeed at times the book becomes more of a chronicle than a history. But as a year-by-year account of the unfolding of the lives of the Knights, their relationships, their achievements and disappointments, the book is superb, and will serve as an excellent reference work. The reader is made aware of the great events of the day, such as the Industrial Revolution (especially the switch from charcoal to coke smelting), the Napoleonic Wars, the 1832 Reform Act and the Repeal of the Corn Laws of 1846, but these happen in the background without too much analysis of their wider significance. Similarly, other themes in Georgian Britain pertinent to the Knights, such as the role of the Society of the Dilettanti in eighteenth-century aristocratic culture, debates about aesthetics stimulated by Burke and Hume (to

which Richard Payne Knight made his own forceful contributions), and the arguments about the Picturesque and landscape gardening between Uvedale Price, Richard Payne Knight, Repton and Capability Brown are noted but not examined in any great depth. For a detailed discussion of these issues, you will have to look elsewhere. On a more positive note, the book notes in passing these questions and stimulates the reader's appetite to learn more.

The two characters that loom largest in the book are, understandably, Richard Payne Knight and his brother, Thomas Andrew Knight, both highly distinguished in their day and remembered by posterity for very different reasons. I came away from the book impressed by the energy, talents and artistic achievements of Richard Payne Knight and not a little dismayed by his arrogance, rudeness and, on many issues, his stubborn wrong-headedness. Richard was a prominent member of the Society of Dilettanti and played a role in two episodes that tarnished its reputation: the controversy about the marbles taken from the Parthenon and brought to Britain by Elgin, and the publication of the *Priapeia*.

The author reminds us that the arrival of the Parthenon marbles in the UK was not met with

universal acclaim. Not simply because of the dubious means by which they were acquired (a debate that continues), but also because several commentators, most notably Richard Payne Knight, doubted their age and their artistic value. Payne Knight seems to have taken a personal dislike to Elgin, and claimed that the sculptures were not Greek, but Roman copies from the time of Hadrian. He was wrong of course, and his outpourings on this subject damaged his reputation as a scholar and a connoisseur of taste.

Payne Knight is also famous for having published *An Account of the Worship of Priapus...* (1786), complete with graphic images of the subject matter. Payne Knight was a man of the Enlightenment, a rationalist Whig with republican sympathies. The work was not so much designed to titillate a libertine audience as seriously to explore in an objective way, typical of Enlightenment natural philosophy, the roots of religious symbolism, arguing that religious practices and beliefs originated from natural processes such as sex and procreation. The book initially caused little commotion – it was not put on sale for the general public, and its circulation among intellectuals familiar with such investigations caused little offence. Yet a few years later critics such as Thomas Mathias turned on Payne Knight and this work, which he described as odious, loathsome and blasphemous. Interestingly, however, and the author makes this clear, the repugnance of Mathias came from Payne Knight's republican sympathies expressed in his long poem *The Landscape* (1794), ostensibly a didactic poem dealing with landscape gardening that digresses to praise the role of rebellion in overcoming despotism – a theme bound to inflame nervous Anglicans and landowners at the time of the French Revolution. George Canning, for example, complained that Payne Knight's other didactic poem *The Progress of Civil Society* was full of 'democracy and infidelity'.

Payne Knight's more tangible legacies are, of course, Downton Castle (a neo-Gothic building of international importance), and the surrounding Downton Walks. The author knows both well, and the first two Appendices, dealing

with the castle and the walks are altogether informative and interesting. Despite his interest in Priapus, Payne Knight left no heirs, and it was his brother, Thomas Andrew Knight, who inherited Downton after his death.

Thomas Andrew Knight made an interesting contrast to his brother. Whereas Richard was driven by aesthetics, connoisseurship and an almost idolatrous reverence for Homer and Greek culture, Thomas's concerns were practical and utilitarian. In the many acres of his estates he performed thousands of experiments on plants with the single goal of improving the quality and yield of foodstuffs such as fruit and vegetables. Many varieties he first bred are still in cultivation today such as the 'Downton Pippin'. As the book demonstrates, hardly

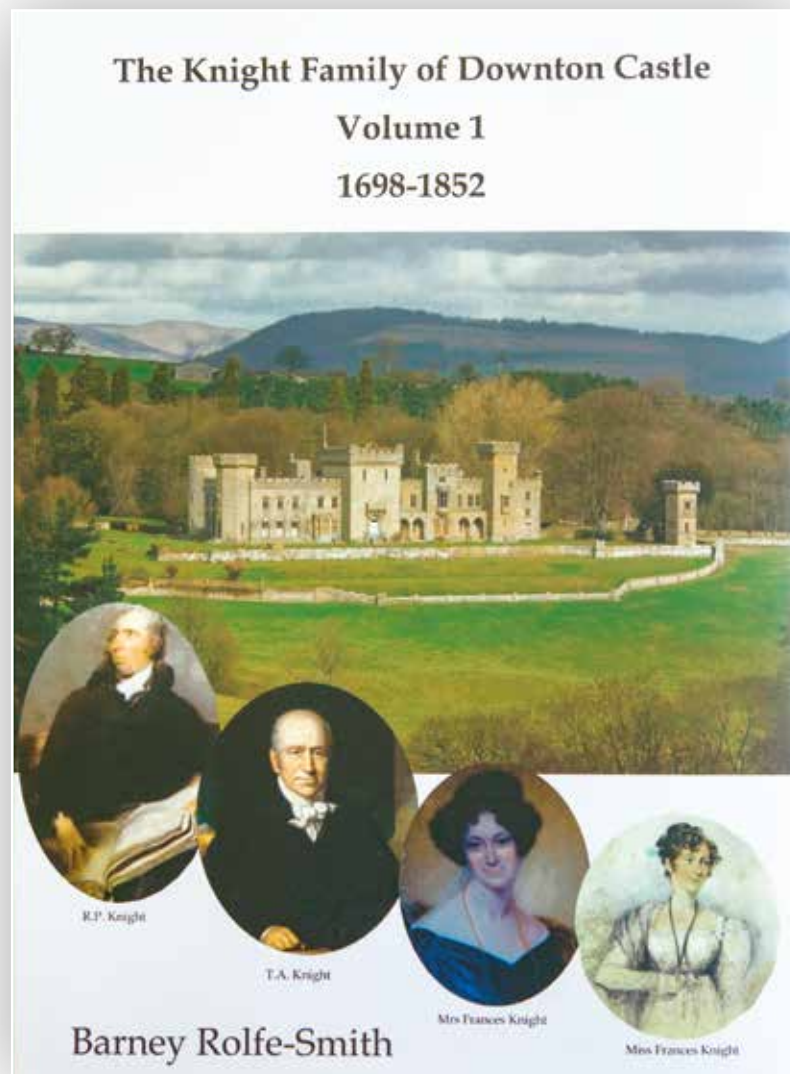
a year passed in his adult life without Thomas delivering a paper on horticulture or addressing a learned audience. Over his working life he contributed over forty papers to the *Transactions of the Royal Society*, and over a hundred papers to the *Transactions of the Horticultural Society*. From 1811 to his death in 1838 he was President of the Horticultural Society; he was also a member of the Royal Society and received the Copley Medal in 1806. The book usefully provides references for anyone interested in reading his horticultural papers online.

Thomas Knight comes across as a genial and sympathetic character. He showed a genuine concern for the condition of agricultural workers and the labouring poor. He supported the repeal of the Corn

Laws and was a constant critic of the institution of church tithes and its effect on those who could ill afford to pay. He also spoke up against the harsh treatment of the poor and destitute that he feared would follow the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act. After Thomas's death, Downton Castle passed to his daughter Charlotte, also a horticulturist of some repute, and renowned for the breeding of the 'Waterloo Cherry', another crop still grown and enjoyed today.

The book closes with the promise of a second volume. Together, these two works will be a valuable reference tool for anyone interested in this extensive and distinguished family.

John Cartwright



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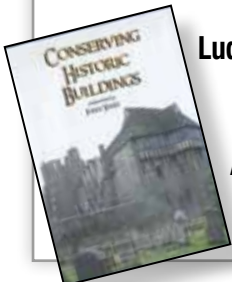
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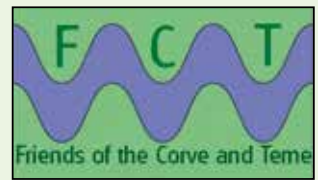
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IRON WORKS IN LUDFORD

A stroll across Ludford Bridge, for visitors and local residents alike, frequently includes a walk along the recently-named Park Road. Often the purpose is to visit either the St Giles cemetery or the Ludford Park Meadow of Remembrance both of which afford clear views either to Cleve Hill or a magnificent view, from rising ground to Ludlow itself. The path along the field boundary is well used and allows a glimpse of the garden façade of Ludford House.

Few pedestrians can be aware that they follow the original route which led from Ludlow to Hereford and, further on, to Worcester. In 1836, the opening of the new road, now the B4361, divided Ludford House from its parkland setting to the west. Whether it is the Lodge, the Sir Job Charlton Almshouses, St Giles Church, Ludford Mill, the Old Bell House, the row of Old Bell Cottages, and the wall that enclosed the walled garden, the individual residences formed a unified whole through their attachment to the Ludford Park estate.

Over time there have been a number of alterations to the layout of the village. The clearest recording of this can be seen in the map to be found in 'The Diary of our Parish of Ludford' compiled in 1866 by Prebendary Charles Kent who served as the Vicar of St Giles from 1858 to 1886 Fig. 1. The route of the Hereford and Worcester turnpike terminates at the field boundary at the end of Park Road. The remainder of this is now a footpath. The path which led to St Giles Church was through a small pair of gates opening opposite the entrance to Ludford Mill, and across the village green. Following the alteration to the turnpike road, this path was closed and incorporated into the almshouse gardens.

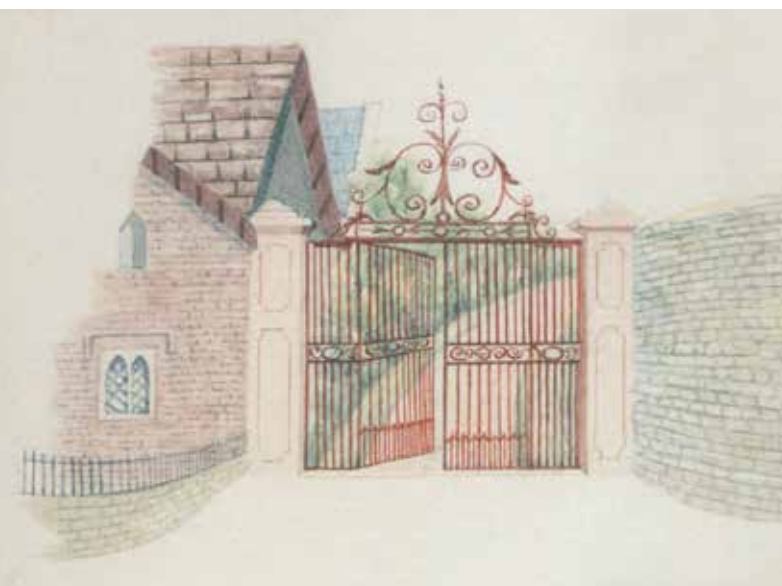


Fig. 2. "These Gates and Pillars stood as lately as 1836 adjoining the old Turnpike House now Mr Grounds' on the south side in the village of Ludford and were the entrance to Ludford House."

Immediately on entering Park Road, the visitor will see an imposing and elegant pair of wrought iron gates. These are capped by a fine hood, supported by side screens and by two incised, ashlar stone piers. They are quite unlike what you would expect to see in a quiet country lane, and have the distinction of being the only Grade 2 listed gates in the Ludlow area. They formed the secure entrance to Ludford House. Access could only be granted by ringing a bell and requesting the gates to be unlocked. The remnants of this mechanism remain in place, attached to the external wall of the Lodge. The gates would close automatically thanks to the pulley system on the left hand gate, which is still in working condition Fig. 2. Prior to the highway alterations, these gates only provided access to St Giles House, as the remainder of the current path was used as gardens for the residents of the almshouse cottages. To enter the rear of Ludford House, the visitor used the steps and path opposite to the Lodge, and went around the western side

of the churchyard. The pathway that leads across the garden to the front door is accessed by a delicate iron trellised screen and gate. This resembles the ubiquitous wooden trellising seen in garden centres today, comprised of vertical and horizontal bars some half inch in width Fig. 3. The new entrance to the rear apartments of the main house and St Giles House was through a gate to the left of the church porch. Although untouched for some considerable time, this simple structure is in sound condition Fig. 4.

The fence around the curtilage of the oval graveyard is of a simple hooped design, as is the set of railings round the garden of Charlton House which abuts the churchyard. Both of these sets of railings, although of a good age, are functional boundary fences. Although not recorded, all of these structures to the south of the path are believed to have been in place prior to 1836 and the realignment of the turnpike road, serving the requirements of the owners of Ludford House. However, the Ludford Gates at the junction of the path and driveway entrance were already in situ, as recorded in Prebendary Kent's diary.

The small raised garden bed on the western façade of the Lodge is more ornate.

Its uprights are pointed and there are three small urns

along the curved edge. This additional modest embellishment provides a balance to the grandeur of the Ludford Gates themselves. The gates, piers, side screens and hood were all included in the English Heritage listing of the Lodge in 1974.

There are other attractive examples of iron work along the lane. The drive at the side of the Old Bell House is guarded by a fine pair of double gates, the design of which bears some likeness to the Ludford Gates, with a newer pair added to service a vehicle parking area. The lantern situated on the angle of the façade, at the first floor level, sits quietly in its long-established location.

Within the churchyard there is a good example of a cast iron surround marking the grave of Chaplin Hodges who died in 1871. It is fortunate that this link with the Castle Foundry in Ludlow remains in good condition.

Despite the passage of time and the depredations of two World Wars, most of these items remain in good order today, still serving their original purpose. They record the social and industrial history of the locality, and stand as a memorial to those involved in their manufacture. They show that the physical records of the past transcend the immediacy of the present; they can provide a fleeting moment when our hands touch history and our feet follow in others' footprints. Unfortunately, a number of these historical structures have been allowed to fall into disrepair over the last few years. Residents, local and regional bodies have a responsibility to recognise and respect their importance. Only if there is help and concerted support from local and regional bodies can they be saved for the future.

Imogen Liddle



Fig. 3. Garden trellis.

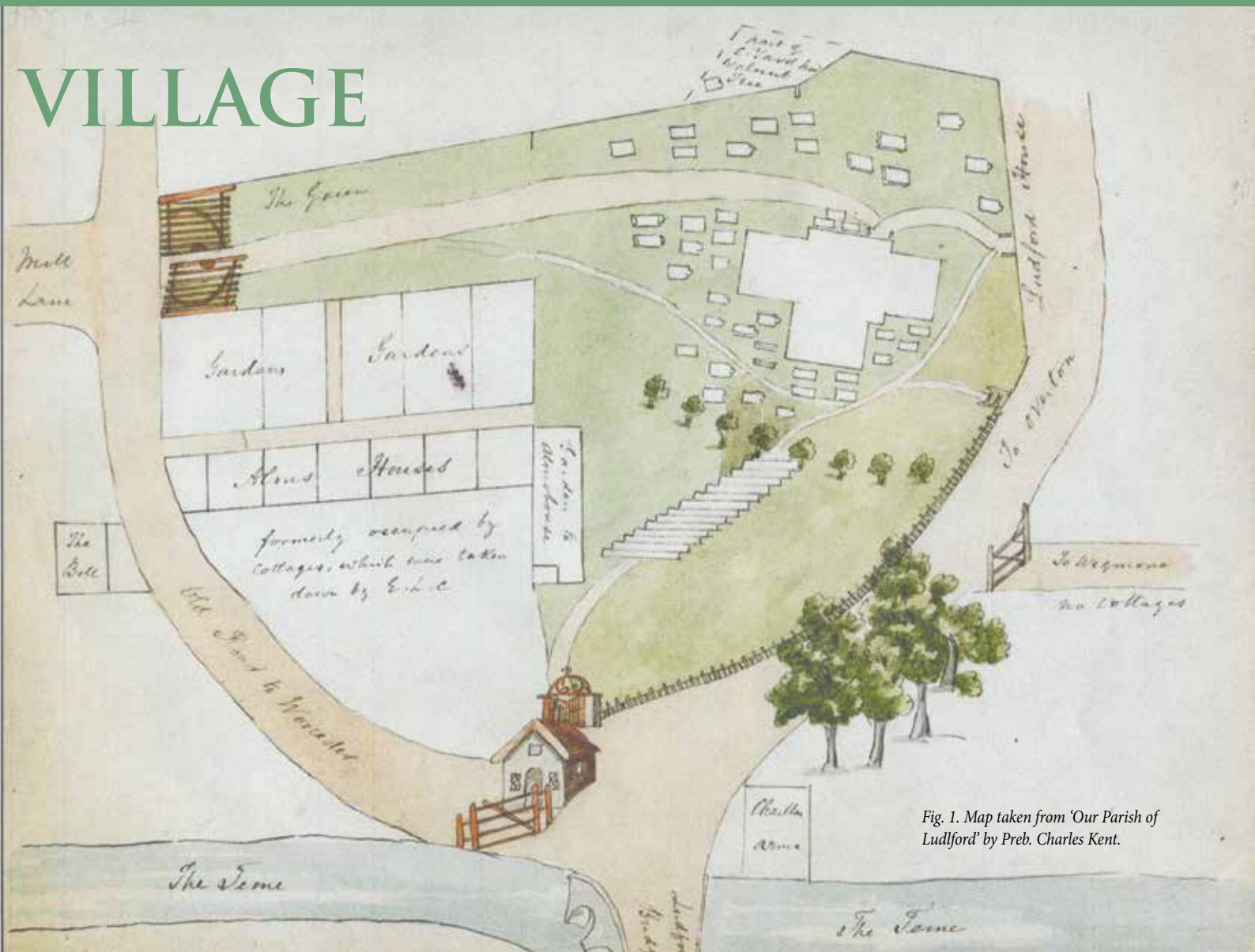


Fig. 4. Garden gate.

REMEMBER, THE FIFTH

Guy Fawkes Day celebrated the frustrating of a Roman Catholic plot of 1605 to assassinate the King and members of the House of Lords and Commons during the opening of Parliament. An Act of Parliament in 1606 made the day an annual public day of thanksgiving. Young men of both the labouring and shopkeeping classes, sometimes aided by the sons of the higher social orders, took part in the local celebrations. A large bonfire was constructed and effigies were made. These were often paraded through the streets before being thrown on the fire, sometimes after a mock trial. For many years these events were supported through the patronage of the middle and upper classes who saw the day as a celebration of 'English Liberty', 'English Institutions' and the death of 'Foreign Catholicism', while the lower middle classes viewed it in terms of popular Protestantism. As the years progressed, the labouring classes began to see the day as a time of raucous merriment, and a way of showing their displeasure through the burning of effigies, not only of Guy Fawkes, but also of local dignitaries who had offended them in some way.

As the nineteenth century progressed, the ever-growing, respectable middle classes started to suppress such behaviour, as the protection of property and control of law and order in public places became a vital part of the values held by Victorian authorities. In many isolated rural areas such as South Shropshire, away from the growth of industrialization and modernization, Guy Fawkes celebrations still managed to be carried on virtually unaltered, but the tide of change was inevitable. In 1859 the 'Thanksgiving Act' of 1606 was finally repealed, but the first move against these traditional celebrations occurred a few years earlier in Ludlow.

It began in 1847. It had been the custom, started by the Municipal Corporation, and then taken over by Ludlow Borough Council when it was formed in 1836, that the townsfolk would be given a cart loaded with coal with which to make a fire in Castle Square. This had been introduced originally to stop the damage to gates, fences, hedges and trees in the search for wood to burn. This annual gift to the populace was ended and the immediate result was public disorder. At 5 o'clock on Guy Fawkes Day, the young men of the town, feeling betrayed, went on

the rampage as a search was made to find fuel with which to build a fire. They cut down trees in Castle Walk and on Whitcliffe, removed gates, pulled down fences and even stripped a barn owned by the Mayor. At 9.30 pm, as the bonfire was lit, the police intervened to stop further wood being collected. The populace met this with force and a fight broke out. The son of the publican of the Sun Inn was hit on the head by a police truncheon and seriously hurt. The crowd was only just persuaded by the young man's father not to throw the guilty policeman on the bonfire. To make the town authorities further aware of their anger, the youth of Ludlow now paraded the streets, headed by one of them using a tin kettle as a drum whilst two of his friends accompanied him playing fifes.ⁱ

The result of that night's events was that the ritual lighting of the town's bonfire, instead of being ended, merely moved. As one spectator later noted, though bonfires could be seen 'in several parts of the town and neighbourhood... Whitcliffe was the centre place of attraction, being literally covered with bonfires large and small. Bonfires were also lit at the Grammar School, the Workhouse etc. [with] the usual accompaniment of rockets, squibs,

crackers, fireballs etc.'ⁱⁱ

Though Castle Square no longer saw a bonfire, the organised celebration of November 5th still started in the centre of the town. Over one hundred young men, carrying an effigy of Guy Fawkes sitting on a barrel and carrying a lantern, led a torchlight procession. They paraded through the streets lined with cheering crowds, setting off fireworks incessantly. They would then cross Ludford Bridge and head to Whitcliffe where a mock trial was held before consigning Guy Fawkes to the bonfire.

An attempt by the local authorities to curb this new yet still raucous tradition was made in 1879. The police were instructed by the Borough Council not only to stop the annual torchlight procession through the streets but also the letting off of fireworks along the way. They insisted that all such celebrations should take place outside the borough boundary. Realising that trouble might flare up due to this order, the local constabulary was reinforced for the day by the Herefordshire force. They were not needed, but the ban was still soon to be lifted as the people chose a different tactic to fight it. The effigies now being burnt on Whitcliffe each year not

only represented Guy Fawkes, but also unpopular local figures such as councillors and churchmen who had instigated the ban. Faced with this very public show of personal hostility, the ban was quietly forgotten.

As the century progressed, the effigies carried in the main procession now became national hate figures rather than local ones. In 1899, during the South African War, they were of Boer commanders. In 1904 they were of the Russian ambassador and his wife. Some effigies remained local, especially in smaller private processions. Annie Nicholas of Corve Street and Harriet Didlick of the Brickyard paraded caricatures of Richard Adlington, a local wheelwright, and his wife. This was part of a fifteen-year-old personal feud. When police blocked their way, they turned into a nearby field and set fire to the effigies there.ⁱⁱⁱ

An eyewitness account of a bonfire night procession in 1895 is given by Arthur Everall in his recollections of his early childhood whilst living at the top of Corve Street:

'There was a great torchlight procession preceded by a drum and fife band, followed by effigies of unpopular public and local celebrities. The rear was escorted

REMEMBER F NOVEMBER

by a number of young farmers on horseback. This procession proceeded up Corve Street, past our house, through the town to the Whitcliff [sic], where the effigies were duly consigned to the flames of a huge bonfire, to the accompaniment of fireworks and appropriate music'.^{iv}

But animosity from the authorities slowly began to have an effect. November 5th celebrations began to wane as the idea as to what constituted 'respectable' behaviour permeated down to the lower middle classes. As their support diminished and was finally lost, so was most of the organising force. From 1905 the planning of the evening's proceedings was now being left to individual public houses. In that year the parade started at the Portcullis Inn in Upper Galdeford, and after passing through the streets of Ludlow, ended on the Smithfield where a bonfire was lit. The next year it was the turn of the Eagle and Child in Corve Street. By 1911 even these shortened festivities had ended and Guy Fawkes Night was becoming a domestic affair, with most bonfires being lit only in gardens and celebrated by families or groups of friends and neighbours. A traditional, boisterous celebration of the people had been tamed.^v As the twentieth century progressed, it would be curtailed even further as bonfires slowly left private gardens and moved to communal areas under supervision as the concept of health and safety grew.

i Eddowes Journal 17 November 1847.

ii Hereford Journal 9 November 1867.

iii Ludlow Advertiser 11 November 1899, 17 November 1900 and 12 November 1904.

iv Ludlow Days by Arthur Everall, in Shropshire Archives, ref. 7320/4/3.

v Ludlow Advertiser 11 November 1905, 27 October 1906 and 11 November 1911.



Derek Beattie

MARY DANIELL (NÉE RODD) 1932-2020

Mary Elizabeth Jill Daniell died peacefully at home on 15th July at the age of eighty-eight with her family around her. She may have lived in Ludlow for only sixteen years, but she loved everything that it gave her, from her friends to the many groups and organisations that she was involved with. Ludlow really helped to make the last few years of her life unbelievably happy.



Mary was born on 5th February 1932 in a house overlooking Regent's Park, London, but grew up in Herefordshire at her family home, the Rodd, near Presteigne. She was the third of four sisters – her father, Francis Rodd, later Lord Rennell, was a geographer, banker, businessman, linguist and military intelligence officer, and her mother, Mary, an artist and matriarch, with an enthusiasm for what the family described as 'hobbies'. In 1939, when the war broke out, Mary was evacuated to America with her mother, three sisters and two cousins, where they lived on Long Island, while her father remained on this side of the Atlantic, working in Africa and Europe. They returned to the UK in 1943 by boat, via three months in Portugal waiting for transport onward to England. Once home, they settled in Herefordshire again. Mary and her sisters were sent to what she called 'prison' – Westonbirt School in Gloucestershire – where she discovered and confirmed that sport was definitely not for her (and never changed her opinion). Her school reports also say she was too talkative – something that also never changed. But she loved her home life at the Rodd where she also began her writing and drawing.

On leaving school, she went to London and studied book illustration at the Central School of Art and Drama in Holborn, then worked at the General Trading Company. Her capacity to make life-long friends took hold, and with early trips to Australia and South Africa, her love of travel began. It was at this time that she met and married the photographer, Michael Dunne, and they settled in a flat in West Kensington. A year later, the first of her children – me – was born. The family moved to Richmond-on-Thames, Surrey, but we still spent endless holidays at the Rodd. The family grew, and by 1966

there were three daughters and two sons, a dog, cat and parrot, and au pairs. Trips to Hereford continued, but by now in a VW minibus packed to the rafters, and we were moved to Ashley Farm, two miles up the hill from the Rodd, where Mary was later to live. In 1968, the family moved again, to live in a tiny mews house in Kensington above Michael's photographic studio, and a couple of years later, when her youngest child started school, Mary returned to 'school' herself, at Morley College. Here she studied etching under Adrian Bartlett, creative writing and literature under Margaret Drabble, and philosophy, and a new chapter began. Her network of friends continued to grow. A huge etching press was installed at the top of the house, she began exhibiting and selling her works, and helped set up the Greenwich printmakers' group.

In the mid 1980s Mary and Michael went their separate ways and she moved back to Herefordshire permanently (with her etching press – downstairs, this time). In 1985 she married Christopher Daniell, and her family expanded to include three stepsons, and more dogs and cats. At least the children were now mostly self-sufficient, and she really enjoyed her relationships with all of them. She continued with her etching and having exhibitions, she and Chris travelled to all corners of the globe, and her network of friends continued to grow. In 1990 the grandchildren started to arrive, which gave her a huge amount of pleasure. By 1999 there were eleven in all, and as they grew up, she enjoyed very special one-to-one relationships with each and every one of them.

In 2004 Mary and Chris moved into Ludlow as his mobility problems meant that town life (instead of a hillside) was more appropriate for them. For Mary, though, having everything on the doorstep meant that she could launch into Ludlow life, and her social life blossomed again. She stewarded at her much-loved Assembly Rooms, and latterly at St Laurence's, and she joined many groups – book club, film club, U3A, NADFAS, the Arts Society to name but a few – and of course, the Civic Society. She was never one for being on committees, but her sharp wit and enquiring mind meant she was the entertainment at each and every event, and she continued building her extraordinary network of loyal friends whom she loved. Chris died in 2012, but that did not hold her back – if anything, she was out and about even more, and, importantly, had a lot of fun. She travelled a bit less, but probably lunched and entertained more (she was a really good cook), and continued with her drawing and painting. By 2015, four of her five children were living nearby, and all her grandchildren were constant visitors. For a while, two even lived with her. She loved the fact that the grandchildren were all so different, and wanted to hear about the different paths they were all setting out on, and in turn regaled (and sometimes shocked) them with stories of her adventures. Over the past couple of years her physical health declined significantly – which was a constant source of frustration to her. Anyone who spent any time with her knew that her mind was as sharp as ever, but "you can't cure old age" became her mantra.

My mother really missed her friends and busy social life during the months of lockdown. Now we all miss her sharp wit, intelligence and fun, but she lives on in her friends and her art and, most importantly for her, her family. It is with great sadness that for now we have not been able to have the celebration of her life that she wanted all her friends to enjoy. But we hope to remedy that by the Spring 2021 if not before – she certainly left instructions.

Jemima Lord

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

A surreal quality to the last six months has led to a feeling that we are running a Secret Society! Until last month, committee meetings have been by email and 'virtual', with the first physical resumption held at the Jubilee Garden in August, when everyone sat in a séance-like circle. Messages in from the ether produced news of progress on logging the Town Walls and producing a new Walls brochure. Talks, outings and events that have been put on hold are optimistically being planned with their customary efficiency by Jane Hunt, Gaye Smith and John Cartwright. The optimism lies in hoping that the pandemic restrictions will be lifted enough to hold meetings again in the Methodist Church. We shall, whenever possible, book speakers on a provisional basis, confirming the event if conditions allow. Proposals for the new year include a talk by Head of Planning Services for Shropshire, and a talk by John Cartwright about Charles Darwin. We hope more talks will follow, and excursions. The much-anticipated trip to Madresfield and Malvern was postponed last May, but will be revived. Our Summer Lunch is planned, conditions allowing, when we will be beyond being drenched in sanitizing spray.

However, in the midst of lockdown, the planning authorities continue their core work of eroding checks and balances to the fabric of the town, aided by the added cloak of 'Covid conditions'. Despite much opposition, a depressing decision was made to grant a balcony/roof garden in the centre of town at 9-10 King Street, in spite of the effect on the Church Inn, the Reader's House, the almshouse flats and the Jubilee Garden. It sets a bad precedent.

Further trouble looms at Castle View Terrace with an appalling scheme dreamt up by a development firm not unknown to the Society. The suggestion to

embrace that part of town as a Victorian Conservation Area is being considered by the residents, and would be supported by the Civic Society. That said, the new planning law relaxing permitted development of two-storey extensions is extremely alarming, and, as yet, it is unclear whether this will further weaken the spineless authority of Conservation enforcement.

It cannot be denied that a great part of the vibrancy of the town depends on tourism. In 1904 the Town Clerk was delighted to announce that the Railway Companies had agreed to place

Ludlow on their Tourist List, and the Council envisaged an influx of up to a hundred visitors a day. Nowadays, more than this number seem to arrive on just two coaches and generally disembark at the Smithfield, not an immediately obvious historic portal to the town. To ameliorate this, the Society proposes to place an Interpretation Board at the site, explaining that they have parked on the ruins of an Austin Priory (please wipe your feet!) Other such boards are planned in the town.

The Committee say farewell to Chloë Alexander, who is heading southwards out of necessity, and we

say thank you for her valued input, and wish her good luck on her move. As a result, the 'press gang' will be out recruiting, so beware.

I hope everyone has come through lockdown safe and 'nearly' sane. Through the years the town has had encounters with various plagues and pestilences. Once we have defeated Covid, the planners and developers, alas, will still be with us.

Richard Hurlock

MEMBERSHIP AND EVENTS

It would have been impossible to foresee in March the impact of the Covid 19 lockdown on the usual activities offered to our members over the months of 2020. It was necessary in mid-March to advise all the members that the remaining Wednesday afternoon talks would have to be postponed, together with the AGM plus the excursion to Madresfield. Planning for the Summer Lunch had to be wound up. It seemed unreal, but was nevertheless happening! The Spring edition of Heritage News was well-received in April by all our members. It seemed to reassure everyone that the Committee was still there behind the scenes. You will remember that this edition focused on the Town Walls.

What happens next for our members? As mirrored by several organisations in Ludlow, we are working out what we can actually do now, and what contingent plans can be made for the new year. The Committee decided that no entrance fee would be charged to members for all the talks next year, and we would arrange the Summer Lunch with a small discount. This

was in recognition of the fact that members cannot be offered talks for the rest of this year. However, we have gone ahead to ask for renewal of membership for 1st September, partly for practical reasons and also to comply with the terms of our Constitution. I am compiling this report in late August and am about to send out letters inviting members to renew their membership in

the hope that we have a full and great response. In November, the members will receive this winter edition of Heritage News, with more updates on talks and excursions in 2021. You will receive your membership card and Programme of Talks also in the new year. The more hidden benefit and value for all the membership, however, is the core activity of the Society, to

promote the heritage of Ludlow.

The events sub-committee, including myself, send our best wishes for 2021, hoping we can return to what has become known as the 'new normal'.

Jane Hunt



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