

LUDLOW

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FREE

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Welcome to the Spring/Summer edition of Heritage News. After what for many has been a fairly challenging winter, a glimmer of hope is on the horizon in the roll-out over the next several months of the vaccine against Covid-19. It is our hope that each and every one of you remains healthy and safe through these difficult times.

Our 'new look' magazine-style Heritage News was in the main well received by our readership. For this issue we are presenting another magazine-style edition with, once again, a wide range of interesting articles, including the start of a new series on Ludlow and its literary connections. We also venture south across the river once again to look at the darker side of our town's history with an account of the Hucks Barn murder. In these days of growing awareness of green matters, we also look at the retrofitting of old buildings. We also feature an extended book review section, reflecting the quantity and quality of books of local interest, locally-produced in the last few months.

Once again, I would like to issue a call for any articles to feature in forthcoming editions of the newsletter. We are always looking out for new writers. We don't mind if it's of a high standard, with footnotes, or a rough draft which we need to 'knock into shape'. Any article would be gratefully received. Please send to the editor at the address on the back page of the newsletter.

I would also like to make a special mention of Valerie Thomas whose contribution to the newsletter has been so vital over the last many years. She has been a great support not only in the planning of each issue, but in casting her well-trained eye over each and every piece to pick out any errors and mistakes. Although she is stepping down from the Civic Society Committee, after many years of dedicated service, she is still going to keep an eye on the contents of your newsletter- thank you, Valerie.

LITERARY LUDLOW

NUMBER 1

This is the first in a series of articles examining and celebrating Ludlow's literary heritage. Here we consider perhaps the earliest work of literature associated with Ludlow: *The Romance of Fouke le Fitz Waryn*, in which a 13th century Ludlow poet and a later scribe paint a colourful picture of the deeds and exploits of a disgruntled Marcher Lord.

THE ROMANCE OF FOUKE LE FITZ WARYN

THE TEXT

Sometime around the year 1260, a poet sat down to write a long work in rhyming octosyllabic couplets that we know today as *The Romance of Fouke le Fitz Waryn*. His identity is lost to history, but he almost certainly lived in or near Ludlow, and may have been a chaplain or minstrel attached to some great household. This original poem was written in Anglo-Norman, but sometime after 1540 it disappeared. It must have been quite popular, however, for 140 years after its first composition there were at least two other versions based on the original in existence. The second version was written sometime between 1325 and 1360, and was, in effect, a transcription and refiguring of the original verse form into an Anglo-Norman prose romance. This was done by an author known as the Ludlow or Harley scribe – 'Ludlow' because, again, he resided in or near Ludlow, and 'Harley' because his hand is well known to medieval historians as present in other manuscripts (now called Harley 2253) once belonging to the Harley family and now in the British Library. Thankfully, this prose version survives as part of the Royal Collection of manuscripts presented to the British Museum by George II in 1757 and now known as MS Royal 12C XII (folios 33-61). The full manuscript is now available in digital form (see Figure 1).

Some years after the composition of the original Anglo-Norman poem – and at roughly the same time as Langland was writing *Piers Plowman* in the late 14th century – another version was written, this time in Middle English in what is known as alliterative verse. In this case we have no idea who the author was, but this verse form was popular in the West Midlands. This version has also been lost, but we know of its existence, and that of the original Anglo-Norman poem by the Ludlow poet, because around 1540 the English antiquarian, John Leland (1503-1552), consulted both lost works to provide his own summary of the tale of Fitz Waryn – although this summary was not published until 1715, long after his death. There are now several translations of the prose *Romance* (e.g. Wright, 1855, and Burgess, 1997). This somewhat complicated history of the texts is illustrated in Figure 2.

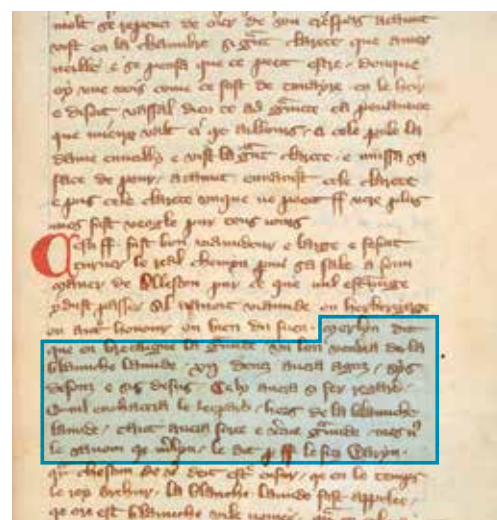


Figure 1. Section from near the end of the surviving manuscript of *The Romance of Fouke le Fitz Waryn* in MS Royal 12.C.XII (folios 33-61). The highlighted section is a fragment of the original rhyming version from c. 1260 that the Ludlow scribe has copied probably unaltered. A translation is given in the text. Source http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Royal_MS_12_C_XII.

WHO WERE THE LUDLOW POET AND THE LUDLOW SCRIBE?

The *Romance of Fouke le Fitz Waryn* (henceforth *Romance*) is a sensationalised account of the life and exploits of a real historical figure, Fouke Fitz Waryn III – a prominent member of the Fitz Waryn family, with extensive estates in Shropshire, who fell out with King John over a disputed inheritance. He became an outlaw but was finally reconciled with the king and regained his lands at the end of his life. The first part of the *Romance* shows such an accurate and detailed knowledge of Ludlow Castle, the landscape of South Shropshire and the Marches, that it supports the notion that the poet was resident in this area. The fact that the original was in French verse also suggests a noble, educated and sophisticated audience, already familiar with the individuals and localities described. The composition of another version in Middle English (probably in a verse form similar to that of *Piers Plowman*), also indicates that the tale came to have a wider appeal, perhaps to an audience who would have seen in Fouke's adventures and heroic deeds a worthy example of the struggle against oppression and injustice.

Scholars believe that they can establish the identity of the copyist and composer (the Ludlow/Harley scribe) of the extant later Anglo-Norman prose version a little more narrowly. He is of enormous importance to students of medieval literature, and is known as the hand behind many other legal documents associated with the Ludlow area. A common view (see Burgess, 1997) is that the scribe was born and bred in Ludlow where his father or an older relative was likely to have been in the service of Geoffrey de Grenville (c.1230-1314), an Anglo-French noble with estates in Herefordshire and the Welsh Marches. The scribe himself may have been a priest and possibly a follower of Adam de Orleton, Bishop of Hereford from 1317-1327.

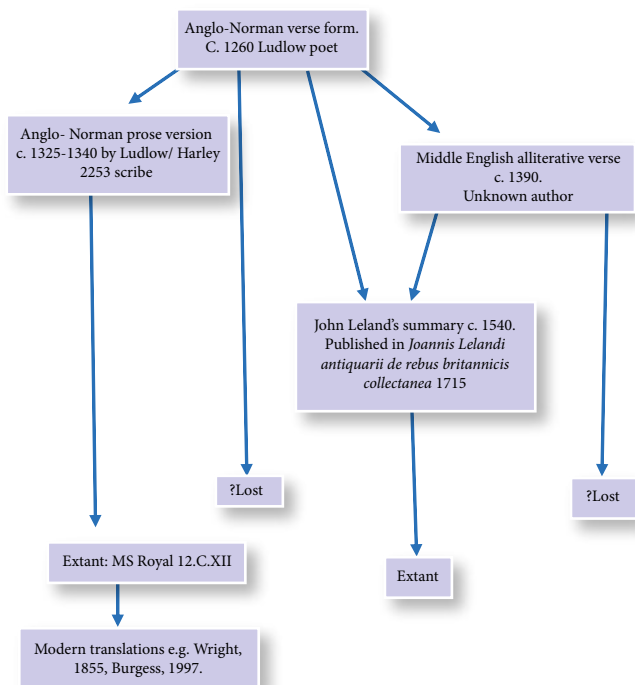


Figure 2. Versions of *The Romance of Fouke Fitz Waryn*.

THE STORY

Classifying the *Romance* into one of the traditional genres of literature is not an easy task. The tale itself is a curious mixture of family history (with errors), biography, verifiable historical events, and vivid descriptions of

fantastical encounters between the hero (Fouke) and fabulous beasts. The problem is that both history and fiction in the middle ages were written by the same set of clerical authors, and the boundaries between them frequently blurred, with history often being recruited to serve some other literary or moral purpose. As such, the *Romance* manages to celebrate the ancestry of the hero, describe his acts of Christian chivalry and justify his struggle against tyranny and oppression. The story can be broken down into five sections:

a) Fouke's family history.

The story begins with the Norman Conquest and the distribution by 'William the Bastard' of lands in the Marches to his supporters. It relates how Roger de Belleme, who received Shrewsbury, began castles at Bridgnorth and Dynan (Ludlow), and how, later, Henry I bestowed the castle of Dynan on Joce, who thenceforth took the title Sir Joce de Dynan. There follows the story of how the king's cousin, Payn Peverel, defeated the devil at a place called Castle Bran, and, as a reward, was given territory known as Blanch Lande. Payn's son, William Peverel, then built a tower there around which grew the town of Blancheville (i.e. Whittington in north Shropshire). The ownership of Whittington Castle later becomes crucial to the purpose of the story.

William Peverel has a niece called Melette whose hand is won in a tournament by a knight called Waryn de Metz. After marriage they produce a son called Fouke. This Fouke Fitz Waryn (Fitz Waryn means son of Waryn) is in reality the grandfather of the hero of the *Romance* and is known to historians as Fouke I. The scribe then tells how Fouke I, raised in Ludlow castle by Joce de Dynan, eventually marries Hawyse, daughter of Joce. Here the author makes one of many historical errors since it was the son of Fouke I (Fouke II) who married Hawyse. In any case, Hawyse produces a son known to historians as Fouke III (1160-c.1258), and it is this Fouke (hereafter simply 'Fouke') who is the central character of the *Romance*. This first section contains remarkably accurate descriptions of Ludlow castle and its environs.

b) Fouke: the early years and his quarrel with Prince John.

Fouke is raised with the four sons of Henry II (Henry, Richard, John and Geoffrey) and is on good terms with all of them except John. A curious incident is then described which is the first sign of the animosity between Fouke and John that is at the heart of the tale. One day the two boys are playing chess when John hits Fouke with the chessboard. Fouke retaliates by kicking John in the chest, and he falls over. John complains to his father, but King Henry takes the side of Fouke and instructs John's tutor to beat him. Thereafter:

Johan fust molt corocée à Fouke; quarunque pus ne le poeitamer de cuer

(John was much enraged against Fouke so that he could never afterwards love him heartily)

When Henry's son, Richard, becomes king, Fouke's fortunes flourish: he is knighted and travels abroad where everywhere he is praised for his grace, strength and courage. On returning to England, Fouke is entrusted by Richard with the protection of the Marches as Richard prepares for his crusade. After Richard's death, John becomes king and summons Fouke to a meeting somewhere in the Marches. Fouke is expecting to inherit Blancheville (Whittington) for which he has a legitimate claim, but before the meeting Morys, son of Roger de Powys, bribes John to grant him the title, which the king duly does recalling 'the blow which Fouke had once given him'. Fouke responds in no uncertain terms:

Sir king, you are my liege lord, and to you was I bound by fealty as long as I was in your service and as long as I held lands of you; and you ought to maintain me in right, and you fail me in right and common law; and never was he a good king who denied his frank tenants in his court; wherefore I return you your homages. (Thomas Wright, 1855, p. 69)

In effect, Fouke has renounced his fealty and has become an outlaw.

c) Fouke as outlaw

This is a lengthy section of the *Romance* and describes how Fouke outwits and outfights his enemies, namely Morys de Powys and King John. The author's sympathies are clearly with Fouke: he fights off hundreds of knights sent by John to kill him, and by a combination of honourable behaviour, trickery and the adoption of various disguises, he evades capture by Morys. But as John increases his efforts and marshals more resources, Fouke is forced into exile (see Figure 3).



Figure 3. Seal Matrix of Fulke Fitzwarin. Inscribed: SIGILLUM FULCONIS FILII II WARINIS (Seal of Fulke Fitzwarin). The helmeted knight on horseback carries a shield with the Fitzwarin arms. The seal is approximately 6 cm in diameter and made of copper alloy. It was found by a metal detectorist in Wiltshire in 2014. It is interesting to note that in 1202, during his outlaw period, Fulke took refuge in Stanley Abbey near Studley in Wiltshire. The seal was found only 20 miles to the east of this site. Ref <https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/643031>.

d) Fouke as exile

Fouke travels to the French court of Philip Augustus, where, in disguise, he impresses Philip with his chivalric skills. Fouke

leaves the French court and pays a master mariner, Mador de Mont de Russie, to build him a well-equipped ship. For the next year, Fouke and his companions sail up and down the English coast attacking property belonging to King John. Fouke is then blown off course to the north of Scotland and then begins a series of fantastical adventures including rescuing beautiful girls from an island of robbers and thieves, and killing a malicious serpent in Sweden. Another storm takes him south to Carthage where he rescues the daughter of the Duke of Carthage by killing a dragon that has abducted her. Replete with gifts from the Duke, Fouke then sails back to England to confront John.

Through a series of clever ruses, Fouke captures John and extracts from him an oath that his lands and inheritance will be restored. John reneges on his promise, however, and after further fighting, Fouke returns to his ship. After adventures in the land of Barbary and Brittany, the ever-resourceful Fouke returns to England, captures John again and a final lasting peace is concluded at Westminster, where Fouke is pardoned and has his lands and property restored.

e) After the pardon

Following the pardon, Fouke accompanies Earl Ranulf of Chester to Ireland where he helps the Earl regain his lands by heroically slaying a dragon. He then returns to build a new castle at Blancheville where he rules wisely and well. As a penance for his sins, he builds a priory called the New Abbey near Alberbury (near Shrewsbury). We are then told how he becomes blind after seeing a bright light and hearing the voice of God absolving his sins. After his death he is buried at the New Abbey where both of his wives, who predeceased him, are also buried. The story ends by demonstrating how Fouke's life is the fulfilment of a prophecy of Merlin, who predicted that a wolf (Fouke) would come from Blanche Lande and drive away the leopard (King John). This final section is also interesting since the Ludlow scribe has clearly simply copied the original rhyming couplets verse form, and so here we glimpse a fragmentary relic of the lost original (see Figure 1).

*En Bretaigne la Graunde
Un lou vendra de la Blanche-Launde;
Xii dentz avera aguz,
Sys desouz e sis desus.
Cely avera si fer regard.*

*Qu'il enchacera le leopard
Hors de Blanche-Launde;
Tanta vera force e virtue graunde.
Mès nus le savom qu Merlyn
Le dit par Fouke le fitz Waryn*

In Britain the Great
A wolf will come from the White-Launde;
Twelve teeth he shall have and sharp,
Six beneath and six above.
He shall have so fierce a look,
That he shall drive away the leopard
Out of the White-Launde;
He shall have such great force and virtue.
But we know that Merlin
Said it for Fouke Fitz Warine

(Wright, 1855 p. 179)

Literary themes: a ripping yarn or a political parable?

The *Romance of Fouke le Fitz Waryn* is a fascinating, exciting and often funny fast-moving story, full of literary tropes and devices that even six centuries later we can recognise today. Like all important literature, it has numerous dimensions. While describing the actions of a real historical figure, the *Romance* is also an attack on the failure of monarchy and a demonstration of how the feudal order breaks down if a weak, incompetent and vindictive monarch such as John refuses to respect the rights of his subjects. Although Fouke's rebellion in the tale and in life predates the signing of the Magna Carta (1215), it is clear that the tale is an echo of those same frustrations that led the English barons to force King John to acknowledge the limitations to his powers enshrined in the Charter.

At another level, the *Romance* falls into a common chivalric pattern: the hero rescues maidens from dragons and lustful men, performs Christian deeds, comes to the aid of his friends and fights for good causes. Yet for all this, neither Christianity nor sexual love are central to the story. A stronger claim can be made for the tale as an example of an 'ancestral romance', that is

a story designed to lend prestige to a family. One of the earliest advocates of his position was Thomas Wright (1855), one of the earliest translators of the text and the author of a much-respected history of Ludlow (Wright, 1852). Wright suggested that the original poet may have been in the service of the Fitz Waryn family, and hence was employed to proselytise their good name, although the numerous errors in the *Romance* about the lineage of the family are a problem for this hypothesis.

Several modern scholars (e.g. Burgess, 1997, Rock, 2011 and Bedford, 2011) have argued convincingly that the tale falls easily into the category of the 'outlaw romance'. Tales of good outlaws, such as Robin Hood and Eustace the Monk, were popular in the middle ages, and usually made the point that the outlaws were honourable men, victims of injustice and driven into rebellion to protect their rights and property.



Alberbury Castle (nr. Shrewsbury. Most likely built for Fulk FitzWarin in the early 13th century. It remained in the FitzWarin family until around 1340 when it was abandoned. It now lies on private land. Image courtesy of <https://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/3044576>.



White Abbey Farm in Alberbury. Alberbury priory was founded by Fulk Fitzwarin around 1226 for remission of his sins. The only surviving buildings are incorporated in the farmhouse at White Abbey Farm. They consist of part of the Abbey church and St. Stephen's chapel. FitzWarin and his two wives were buried here. (Image courtesy of <https://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/463773>).

It can also be argued that the various versions of the *Romance* reflected real contemporary historical conflicts between a king and the higher nobility. The first verse form (c.1260) may have been reflecting the dissatisfaction with John's reign some fifty years earlier, but it was also written around the time of the Second Barons' War when Simon de Montfort and others sought to reassert the Magna Carta, abolish the absolutist nature of the rule of the Norman monarchy and force Henry III to acknowledge the views of a council of barons. The prose version (1320-1360) was written by the Ludlow/Harley scribe at around, or within living memory of, the time of Roger Mortimer's rebellion against Edward II. And, finally, although the dates are less certain here, the Middle English version (c. 1360-1390) was written in the period that coincided with the struggle between Richard II and the 'Lords Appellant' – a group of nobles who sought to diminish the power of the king's favourites who they thought were culpable in the king's capricious rule. Of these, given that the prose scribe was most likely a Ludlow man, the parallels between the *Fouke Romance* and the Mortimer rebellion are perhaps the most convincing (Hanna, 2011).

Roger Mortimer's antipathy to Edward II stemmed from the fact that Edward's favourites, Hugh Despenser senior and junior, constantly disrupted hereditary lines of inheritance and forced legitimate heirs to surrender their rights, most notably perhaps the occasion when land belonging to Mortimer was granted to the younger Despenser. Mortimer also supported the highly political Bishop Adam Orleton (Bishop of Hereford, Worcester and then Winchester) who argued in parliament for the king's deposition. The link to Orleton is significant since the editors of the standard modern edition of the *Romance* conclude from an examination of the Harley 2253 manuscripts that the Ludlow scribe was probably part of the household of Adam de Orleton (Hathaway *et al*, 1976). Mortimer, with other Marcher Lords, led a rebellion against Edward known as the Despenser War, but in 1322 he was captured and imprisoned in the Tower of London. On 1st August, however, during the feast of St Peter ad Vincula (Peter in chains), he made a remarkable escape by drugging his captors and then fleeing to France. After his return to England in 1326, and in thanksgiving for his escape, Roger Mortimer financed the building of an additional chapel, dedicated to St Peter in the outer bailey of Ludlow castle, and its ruins can be seen today. Mortimer's return was followed by the capture and imprisonment of Edward II in 1326 and his death on 21st September 1327. Eventually, Mortimer became one of Edward III's over-mighty subjects. He fell foul of the new king and was executed in 1331. He was buried at Wigmore Abbey.

So, might the prose version of *Fouke le Fitz Waryn* have been written by someone in the circle of the Mortimers as a parable of the virtues of resisting

bad kingship? Intriguingly, the binding of the Harley 2253 collection includes early 14th century fragments from the financial accounts of Mortimer family.

For the interested student of medieval life and literature, there are many monuments still standing in Shropshire relating to the ripping yarn of Fouke le Fitz Waryn III and the real historical character of that name. In Whittington, north Shropshire, the castle held for a time by the Fitz Waryns still stands. It is open to the public and managed by the Whittington Castle Preservation Fund. Alberbury castle, a site occupied and enlarged by Fouke, now stands as a romantic ruin (on private land) in the village of Alberbury, about nine miles NW of Shrewsbury. In the same village, now part of a farmhouse, are to be found the remains of the priory established by Fouke, and where he, his two wives and his son were buried. Exactly where in the Ludlow area the poet of 1260 and the scribe of the early 14th century lived will probably never be known, but they have left us a small window into the life of quarrelling medieval Marcher Lords.

John Cartwright

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Whittington Castle Gatehouse, early 13th century. Although restored, this gatehouse does date from the time of Fulk FitzWarin. It remained in the FitzWarin family until 1420 when the line died out. The coat of arms of the FitzWarins stands above the archway entrance. (Image courtesy of <https://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/6137210>).

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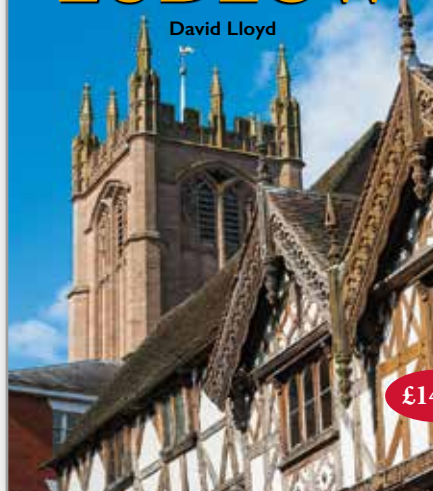


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THE HUCKS BARN MURDER

In 1731 the playwright, George Lillo¹, produced his most famous play, *The London Merchant, or the History of George Barnwell*, supposedly based on a 17th century ballad describing how he ‘was undone by a Strumpet, that caused him to rob his Master, a woollen draper, and murder his Uncle.’

First performed at Drury Lane, the play, with its moral tone and message that evil begets evil, was aimed at a less ‘genteel’ audience than had hitherto attended the theatre. It was extremely popular at the time and long after, and mentioned by Dickens in *Great Expectations*, though dismissed as a nauseous sermon by Charles Lamb.

THE BALLAD

In the ballad, Barnwell, an apprentice, is seduced by Sarah Millwood, a ‘lady of pleasure’, whose manipulation leads him to embezzle a total of £200 to pay for his visits before being discovered. Now he is a penniless fugitive, and Millwood is about to cast him out before discovering that he has a wealthy father and ‘likewise an uncle I have, at Ludlow he doth dwell, he is a grazier who in wealth doth all the rest excel.’ Sarah dispatches him to Ludlow to rob his uncle, where:

Most suddenly within a wood
He struck his uncle down,
And beat his brains out of his head
So sure he crack’d his crown
And eighty pounds in ready cash
Out of his purse he took
And coming up to London Town
The country quite forsook.

He continued to live with Millwood until the money ran out, when she once again threw him out. This time he ran off to sea, but first wrote a letter to the Mayor of London confessing the crime and implicating his mistress. Millwood was sent to Ludlow where she was hanged, and the entire ballad is supposedly related through the regretful spirit of Barnwell, whilst hanging in chains, though his execution, it was claimed, happened in Poland (for another crime?). ‘For murder in Polonia was Barnwell hanged in chains.’

At this stage no suggestion is given that Hucks Barn was part of the story, nor indeed

is it mentioned until 1810. That it exists is indisputable, lying on the west side of the B4361, about ¾ of a mile from Ludlow, and allegedly a plot of ‘land near it still bears the appellation of Barnwell’s Green, so named from his waiting there to rob his uncle’, but doubt exists as to the truth of the tale, and the O.S. maps are silent as to the location

THE PLAY

Lillo clearly used whatever snippets of inspiration he required to create a ‘Morality Play’. The time is set just before the Spanish Armada, which is mentioned as a current topic, and Lillo adds several names not quoted in the ballad. The defrauded employer is named as Thorogood, with daughter Maria and his agent/clerk Trueman. Millwood meanwhile has two servants, Lucy and a man called Blunt. No mention is made of Hucks Barn or Ludlow, the scene being a village adjacent to London, and the uncle is ‘a gentleman of a large estate and fair character in the country’.

Lastly, the murderer is armed with a pistol but uses a poniard to kill the victim.

THE LEGEND GROWS

The ballad is undated and the details obscure. In 1765 Bishop Thomas Percy², not even born until 1729, published his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*. He considered that the ballad was current in the mid-17th century, though the setting of the play is around 1588.

For a large part of the 17th century, the owners of Hucks Barn were the Astons, a prominent Shropshire family, producing members of the Ludlow Corporation, Bailiffs and a local M.P. during the Protectorate. Much correspondence exists from 1671 between the widow, Judeth Aston, and George Antrobus, woollen draper of London³, but for this line of enquiry to bear fruit, an Aston wife would need to be née Barnwell.

In 1812, in *The English Drama Purified* (Vol. 3), by James Plumptre, a footnote stated: ‘The

Globe, Saturday, Nov. 17, 1810, “The Scene of the Tragedy of George Barnwell has lately been discovered in Shropshire⁴, a short mile from Ludlow, where there is a plot of land called Barnwell’s Green, so named from his having waited there to rob his uncle as he returned from Leominster Fair.” This from a memorandum given me by a friend.’ Plumptre also cites the mention of Hucks Barn, publishing a letter in *The Gentleman’s Magazine*⁵ for October, 1810, dated Shrewsbury, August 13, sent from D. Parkes to the traditional nom de plume of the editor, ‘Urban’:

‘Lillo’s celebrated tragedy of George Barnwell, having by some been imputed to fiction and by others to an event said to have happened at Camberwell, the whole still remaining in apparent obscurity, the following observations which arose from visiting a place near Ludlow in Shropshire, may be deemed worthy of notice by the curious. The place alluded to is called Hucks Barn, a short mile from Ludlow, on the Leominster Road, which is said to have been the residence of the uncle of George Barnwell, and a plot of land near it still bears the appellation of Barnwell’s Green, so named from his waiting there to rob his uncle.’

This ‘revelation’ was written by David Parkes of Shrewsbury (1763-1833), schoolmaster, draughtsman and antiquary, who visited and drew Hucks Barn in 1805. He would thus appear to be the principal authority in identifying the site, on what empirical evidence is unclear. Barnwell or Millwood are ‘topographical’ surnames as well as vice versa, so it would take more than the name of a copse to justify the legend. The attribution has echoes of the myth of Beddgelert and David Pritchard, not to mention the innumerable locations for Camelot. Parkes was a gifted artist and wrote numerous historical articles, but his idea of rigorous research on this occasion is as uncritical as that of most Georgian antiquaries.

The Memoirs of George Barnwell published in or before 1817, shines its own peculiar light on ‘The unhappy subject of Lillo’s celebrated

¹ George Lillo (3 February 1691- 4 September 1739), London playwright and jeweller, produced at least seven plays including *Sylvia, or the Country Burial*, in 1730, *The Country Merchant*, *The Christian Hero* (1735), *Fatal Curiosity* (1737) and *Marina* (1738).

² 1729-1811, Bishop of Dromore, published *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765), the first of the great ballad collections, based on an old manuscript collection which Percy claimed to have rescued in Humphrey Pitt’s house at Shifnal, Shropshire, ‘from the hands of the housemaid who was about to light the fire with it’.

³ A family of woollen drapers and merchants operating out of St Paul’s Churchyard in the 16th and 17th centuries.

⁴ Although part of Ludford, this was already in Shropshire prior to the boundary changes in 1895.

⁵ *The Gentleman’s Magazine* founded 1731 by Edward Cave who wrote as Sylvanus Urbanus. The name seems to have stuck for subsequent editors.

Tragedy; Derived from the most authentic source, and intended for the Perusal and instruction of the Rising Generation, by a Descendant of the Barnwell Family.' This throws all previous dating out of the window, and much else besides, whilst giving a further potential source for the playwright.

Giving the very specific date of Barnwell's trial of Friday 18th October 1706, it states all the participants' names, alters the scene of the crime and allows Millwood to evade justice. Robert Thorowgood and Thomas Trueman were clerks to Barnwell's employer, Robert Strickland, 'a very considerable woollen draper in Cheapside', whose daughter, Maria, was in love with Barnwell. Sarah Millwood had two servants, Ann Lucy and Thomas Blunt, whilst the victim was Mr Barnwell of Camberwell, a client of Strickland. Barnwell, found guilty at Kingston Assizes, by Lord Chief Baron Bury and Mr Justice Powell was sentenced to death and to be hanged in chains on Kennington Common.

Whilst production of the book was clearly a money-making attempt, the trial could have been for a similar crime with the name Barnwell, and dressed up by the Ordinary of the prison. The Ordinary or chaplain was the last witness of the condemned and frequently made money from publishing their confessions in a broadsheet of lurid prose at the time of execution – strict adherence to the truth was not a primary consideration. Baron Bury was a real person (1655-1722) as was John Powell (1645-1713) who presided over one of the last witchcraft trials. The time line, however, is at odds with the age of the ballad.

The story continued to fascinate, with further publications promoting ever more fanciful versions, but only the original ballad mentions Ludlow, until Parkes's theory gathered ever

more traction. In 1830 Hucks Barn was up for tenancy on the death of 'Mr Thomas Colerick, one of those upright honest men, whose loss is severely felt by the community amongst whom he resided. Several generations of his family had been the respected tenants of the Charlton Estates and Mr Colerick was employed during the minority of the present Mr Charlton to superintend his property. We understand the place where Mr Colerick resided was formerly occupied by the uncle of George Barnwell, and the spot is still pointed out where the old man fell by the hand of his worthless nephew.'⁶ Thus the myth was now mainstream history.

With local notoriety endorsed by Parkes⁷ in 1805-10, the tale was repeated as fact by Ludlow historian, Thomas Wright in the 1820s. The *Hereford Times* in 1841 ran a letter where the correspondent described it as an 'immemorial tradition' supported by a weight of evidence, but fails to provide the latter. Matters continued in 1860 when Lord William Lennox in *Pictures of Sporting Life and Character* could write 'The playgoer who has undergone the penalty of witnessing *George Barnwell* on a boxing-night, may see Hucks Barn, the residence of the unfortunate uncle, and the thicket in which the murder was committed.'

Another appraisal in 1906 by the eminent historian and man of letters, Sir Adolphus William Ward, concluded nothing material, merely adding to the publications of the ballad.⁸

So we are left with the basic claim from a 1650s ballad that George Barnwell came to rob and murder his uncle near Ludlow. If he was a maternal uncle, the Barnwell name would not appear as a tenant of Hucks Barn, but Barnwell Green possibly lies on the old (diverted 1765) road to Leominster (maybe Starve Crow Lane). If the murder

was perpetrated here, the accused would be returned from wherever they were arrested to face the Assize for that area. Hence Sarah Millwood is sent from London to Ludlow. As for George, the amount of money embezzled was a capital offence, and the fact of an apprentice robbing his master, which involved the betrayal of a superior by an inferior, was a Petty Treason, so he was in double trouble in London without considering Ludlow.

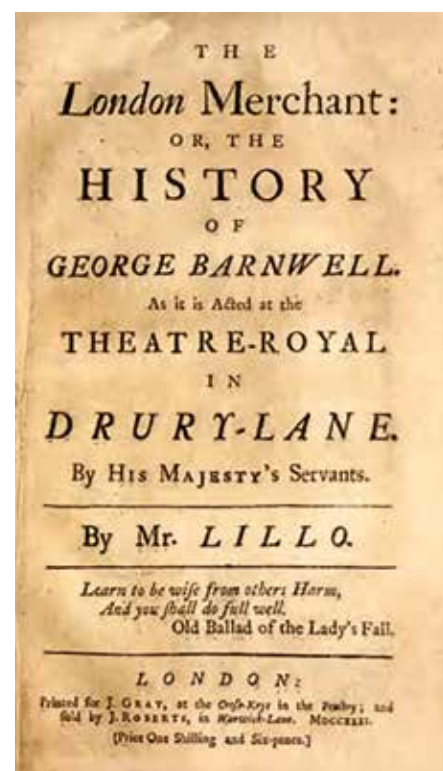
If the reader is now as confused as the author, I shall leave the last word with the current owners:

'We have no evidence of the site of the murder except that until the mid 1970s there was a lot of undergrowth, brambles and small trees in the old quarry, near where the former driveway to Hucks Barn leaves the old road (pre-turnpike days), now Starve Crow Lane. Interestingly, in the early 1980s, after this had been cleared, a visiting friend took his dog for exercise up that route and the dog suddenly rushed back to him and walked with its nose touching his calf whilst whimpering and shivering. Over three or four years several other people reported a similar experience. One visitor who had never been here before, walked alone up the path towards Starvecrow and later took me aside and asked if anything nasty had ever happened up there! He had very uncomfortable feelings about the site.

'Barnwell Green – we have no evidence of any field of that name. However, if it ever existed, we would place it on what is now Three Corner Piece, which is where about fifteen to twenty years ago a friend who was out after dark with his little dog and watching him chasing a rabbit, became aware of a much larger dog panting beside him. The little dog returned to his owner who could then turn the lamp onto the strange dog. There was no dog

there, and he used the lamp to look all around – he was in the middle of the field – and there was no way any real animal could disappear in the time available!'

Richard Hurlock



⁶ *Hereford Journal* 9th June 1830

⁷ David Parkes (1763-1833), schoolmaster, draughtsman and antiquary, son of an old family in reduced circumstances, near Halesowen, after being educated in the village school was apprenticed to a japanner at Birmingham, but soon set up a small school, and eventually obtained a situation as usher in a private school. He moved to Shrewsbury and a school called 'the Franciscan Friars', and spent his leisure drawing antiquities etc., accumulating an important collection of books and prints connected with Shropshire. Parkes was a frequent contributor to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and his library and collections were sold at his death.

⁸ Copy of the ballad in the Ashmole Collection, entitled *An Excellent Ballad of George Barnwell, an apprentice of London, who thrice robb'd his master and murdered his uncle in Ludlow*. The tune is *The Merchant*. There is another copy in Ritson's *Ancient Songs*, 11, 156.



Picture of Parkes from 'Gentlemen Magazine' undated.



Silhouett of Parkes 1824 by W. S. Spence.



Sidney Road PV panels.

RESPONSIBLE RETROFITTING

Responsible retrofit should deliver sustained net reductions in energy use at minimal environmental impact, while maintaining and improving the traditional built environment and making a positive contribution to human health (1).

It is increasingly difficult to ignore or deny the effects of Climate Change globally, nationally and locally. There is a growing awareness, and a sense of urgency across generations, of the need for change – and that change needs to happen sooner rather than later.

David Attenborough pulls no punches about mankind's effect on our planet, and Greta Thunberg's teenage voice is gaining respect from young and old alike.

In December 2020 the UK government committed to a 68% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, and to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050 (2). The targets are ambitious but the UK is due to host the postponed COP26 Climate Conference in Glasgow later this year, and it will be essential to show some positive and credible results towards achieving those targets.

Greenhouse gas emissions come from every sector of modern-day living, with domestic energy consumption producing 20%

of these emissions (3). Energy consumption must include energy efficiency and, in comparison with Europe, the UK's building stock has a reputation of being the least energy efficient, with almost 30 million homes in need of retrofitting (4).

Ludlow's beautiful historic buildings stand as proud exemplars of sustainable construction, and the carbon costs of extracting the materials to build them has long been cancelled out by the centuries they have endured and the generations they have housed. However, regardless of a building's age, unless it has been built to Passivhaus (5) or equivalent house standards (6), heat leaks out and draughts leak in through roofs, eaves, windows, doors and floors. To maintain comfort, the instinct is to turn up the thermostat thereby maintaining these emission levels.

Remedial action is needed and retrofitting provides a range of measures to shore up those leaks and increase energy efficiency.

It comes at a financial cost, of course, and is not without its challenges, its complexities or, indeed, its ironies. The aim of retrofitting is to reduce energy use and pollution, but the production and disposal of materials used to retrofit buildings involve both (7).

And, undeniably, retrofitting will involve change, be it on a practical level or on a psychological level – and change isn't always welcome. Practically, changes range from benign to more invasive interventions in the homes we live in; psychologically, changes mean altering embedded behavioural patterns, from adding an extra layer of clothing to switching off lights in rooms as we leave them, not leaving equipment on standby, showering less frequently, generally, using energy more carefully, thoughtfully, prudently – more efficiently.

Ultimately, it is a win-win situation. Savings will be made financially and environmentally, and comfort, wellbeing and health will be improved.

Retrofitting houses built during the first half of the 20th century is a simpler and more straightforward undertaking than for older houses, and, indeed, for more modern houses built within the last 30 or 40 years as building regulations altered. Apart from their physical construction, there is little likelihood of planning consent requirements, and few, if any, restrictions on altering a building's appearance or making some of the more invasive interventions.

I'm lucky enough to live in one of those early 20th century houses. It was built in c. 1950 as a council-owned property, part of the expansion of the Sandpits area of Ludlow. It is semi-detached, of brick/concrete construction, with a pitched, tiled roof and cavity walls. Originally, it had single-glazed windows, probably of galvanised metal, with access doors front and rear, most likely of wood. Its orientation is south-west/north-east. It had, and has still, two main downstairs rooms – a living room and a kitchen. There was a separate larder and a coal 'cupboard' (subsequently converted to a downstairs WC and utility room). A coal-fired back-burner in the living room provided limited

heating and hot water, and the kitchen had a coal-fired range for cooking. There was electricity and mains-water drainage and sewage.

Over the years, ownership changed from council to housing association to private, and by 2011, when I purchased the property, extensive changes had been made – a retrofit example before the word became capitalised. Metal doors and windows had been replaced by UPVC double-glazing. Gas had been installed, providing central heating and hot water, and replacing the range in the kitchen. A log-burner had replaced the back-burner in the living room, and cavity wall insulation installed.

Since 2011, 12 PV panels have been fitted onto the south-west facing roof. The electricity they generate feeds into a lithium battery installed in the loft, and any excess into the National Grid. Gas central heating has been replaced by modern electric storage heaters. The loft has been insulated and a SmartMeter has been fitted.

These changes have improved energy efficiency, enhanced the fabric of the building and increased its value. Realistically, its longevity is probably between 50 and 70 years, so houses like mine, and those built subsequently, score low marks for sustainability.

Retrofitting listed buildings is recognised as more complex and presents different challenges (8/9). However, a range of measures is still possible. The simplest, and those with no visual impact or planning consent requirements, include changing energy provider to one which uses and invests in 100% renewable sources, fitting secondary glazing and/or insulating window film, fitting thermal blinds, curtains or curtain linings, draught-proofing all doors and loft/attic/cellar accesses, creating a 'draught lobby' and fitting a SmartMeter (10).

Less simple measures involve installing insulation – an apparent quick-fix which may backfire without adequate ventilation to avoid accumulation of condensation/damp (11/12). More challenging are retrofitting measures which may require planning consent: replacing open fires with wood-burning stoves, generating energy via PV/Solar

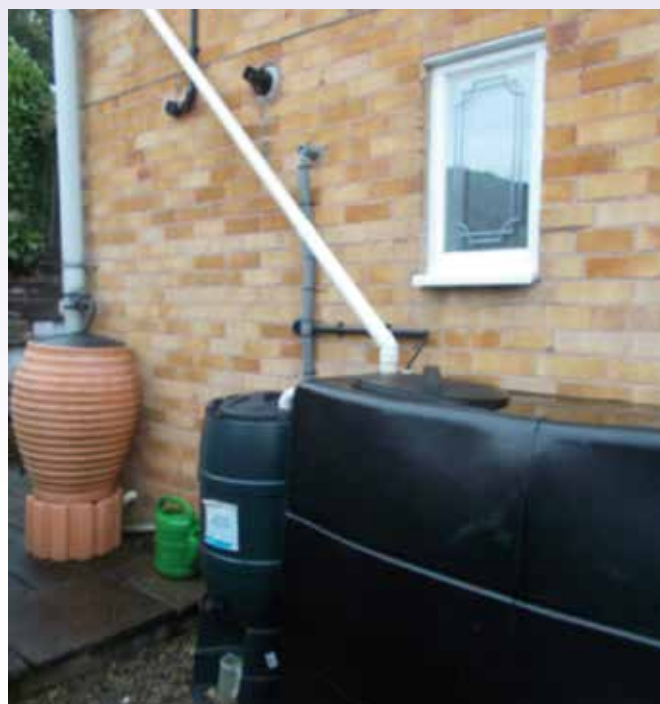
panels and the installation of Ground or Air Source Heat Pumps (13). Whatever retrofitting actions are taken, they will make a positive difference from improving comfort and health, saving money on fuel bills, enhancing property values to reducing carbon emissions.

The pandemic has introduced us to change – however unwilling we may be, and the climate emergency will require us to make more. Accepting that change, and adapting to it, before it is imposed by Nature means that we are taking responsibility for our own choices and keeping control.

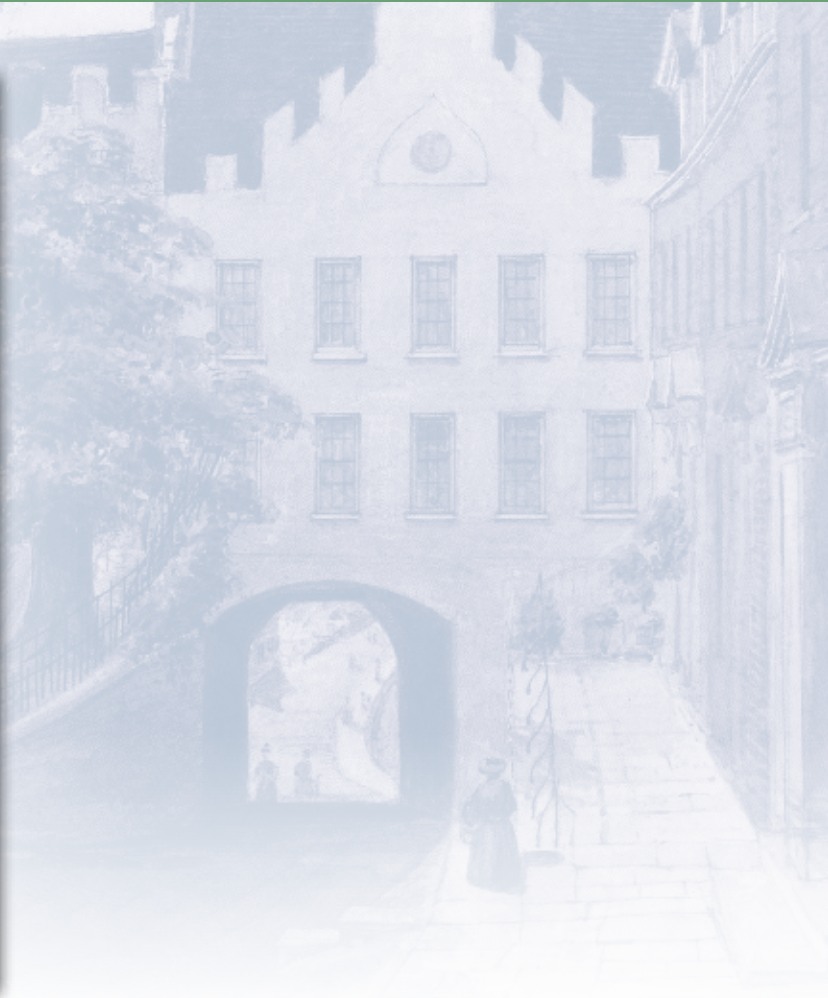
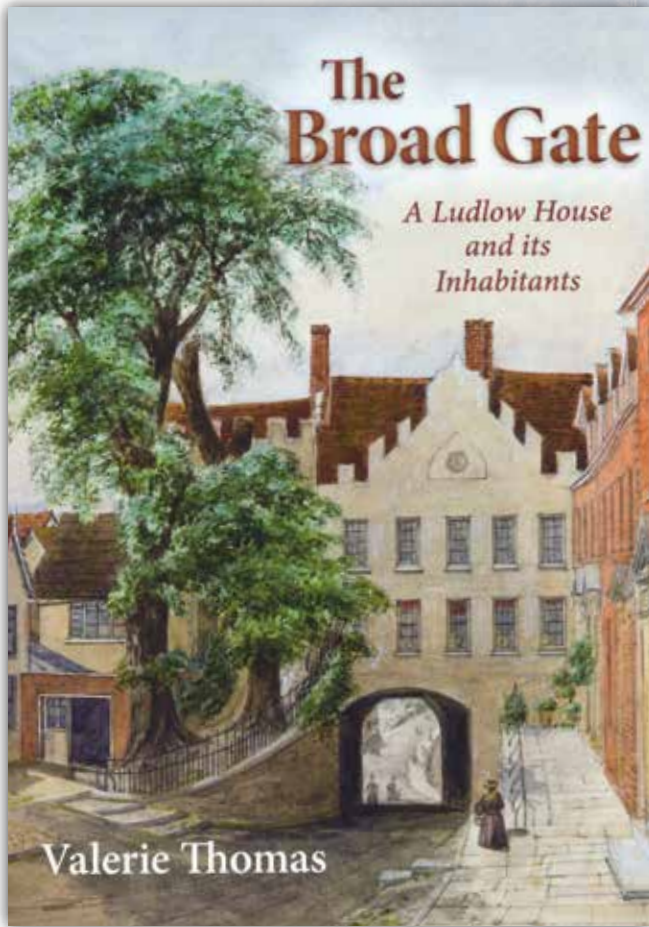
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Di Lyle



Sidney Road Rainwater Harvester Tank and water butts.



BOOK REVIEWS



The Broad Gate: a Ludlow House and its Inhabitants

by Valerie Thomas. Ludlow, Left Field Editions, 2020.
£25.00.

The Broad Gate is the only remaining gatehouse in Ludlow: 'an extremely rare survival'. Grade 1 listed, it is one of Ludlow's oldest buildings. It provides a spectacular approach to Ludlow from the south with its portcullis grooves and rounded towers. It is part of the town walls and dates back to the thirteenth century. To the left is a neo-Gothick building which was constructed in the early nineteenth century to serve as legal chambers. Adjoining is the spectacular medieval/eighteenth century house which has had continuous occupation by several well-to-do families, all of whom are carefully documented in Valerie Thomas's meticulous historical research. She maximises her resources to provide a structured account of the history of the Broad Gate: family histories of its owners, its architectural history and the social context of Ludlow in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. She unveils some captivating stories of the occupants and provides fascinating period context.

Building on the work of the well-known Ludlow historian, David Lloyd (1935-2009), (no relation to the Lloyd family who occupied the Broad Gate), the primary sources she uses are parish records, wills, death

certificates, trade directories, poll tax, land tax and rate book returns for Ludlow, Ludlow Corporation Minutes and the Easter books for St Laurence's church. Literary sources (such as Jane Austen) add another dimension. For the later period she uses the notes of Michael Lloyd (1928-2003), photographs of the Lloyd family and oral history. At the time when the house was heated only by one open fire, the Aga and three storage heaters, Bella Collier, who worked for the Richardsons (1946-1991) recalled weeping with cold when cleaning the unheated hall!

Many of the owners of the Broad Gate came from the landed gentry. As well as being landowners, property owners and speculators, they were professional people such as lawyers and doctors. The first occupant who probably used the entire building as a dwelling-house in 1693 was John Stead, a doctor and property developer. He had to rebuild the house after a fire in 1700. The second family of owners, the Sprotts, were landowners with extensive estates in Staffordshire and Shropshire.

Samuel Sprott (1696-1759), also a physician, was most likely to have employed the famous Shrewsbury

architect, Thomas Farnolls Pritchard, to design the radical alterations to the Broad Gate probably between 1745 and 1760. Pritchard's work provided the battlements on the north façade of the house, the battlemented pediment, the oak staircase and classical arches in the hall, and the new angled front door. This door is typical of Pritchard in his intermingling of styles: clustering of columns and a blind fretwork chinoiserie frieze. Pritchard was working in Ludlow at this time on designs for the Buttercross, 1744 (not executed), Hosyer's Almshouses, 1758, 27 Broad Street, 1764, and the Guildhall, 1766. Unfortunately, no original drawings of the Broad Gate by Pritchard survive. Pritchard was very fond of ancient buildings and we are to thank him for saving Ludlow Castle from demolition by deliberately putting in a high estimate!

Pritchard also designed the memorial to Samuel and Mary Sprott in Ludford Church. The inscription indicates Mary's connection with the Childe family. Similarly, the memorial to Anne Pryce, Samuel Sprott's aunt, in St Laurence's Church, shows her descent from the distinguished Agard family of Forston in Derbyshire. Lineage was all-important. The author aptly remarks of Samuel Sprott:

Looking from his ancient drum towers and Gothick battlements up the hill into the town and out into the countryside around, he could be very pleased with his own castle.²

Where evidence is available, the characters in this book really come to life. John Stead was a litigious person who went to the Court of Chancery several times, on one occasion in a dispute with his plasterer, William Piper, over his charges. When she was ninety-one, Anne Pryce's generous bequest to her 'beloved nephew, Samuel Sprott', depended on his agreeing to be her executor 'as he promised and as I most earnestly desire'. Her will reveals her to be 'an intelligent and articulate woman with a strong religious faith, and very much in control to the end of her life'³. James Kinnersley is characterised as a debt-incurring banker who was rather

Portrait of Dr Thomas Lloyd.

an inefficient lawyer as he did not respond to clients' letters. Another interesting character is Dr Thomas Lloyd who, when studying anatomy in Bristol, went himself in search of a body in the local graveyard! A remarkable survival is a letter from Thomas to his father describing the six hours it took to unearth the corpse, and asking for more money:

I am very sorry to trouble you again on the subject of my pockets, but they are so low...if convenient, I should be thankful if you could remit some money by return of post.⁴

Thomas was also an amateur geologist who discovered fish fossil fragments and vertebrate remains which were made known to the famous geologist, Roderick Murchison (1792-1871), who discovered the Silurian system.

An interesting account of the status of the medical profession in the eighteenth century is given. At first, physicians were respected for their intellect and education, whereas surgeons were associated with trades rather than a profession, dealing with the practical side of medicine, amputations, tooth-drawing, etc. However, by mid-century, according to a contemporary writer:

The genius of Surgeons differs very little from that requires by a Physician. To a solid judgement, quick apprehension and a good memory, he must add a courage peculiar to himself...[with] a lion's heart, a hawk's eye and a lady's hand.⁵



The front door.

Likewise, an account of the status of the different legal practitioners at the time is given for those families who occupied the Broad Gate as lawyers: the Kinnersleys (1785-1814) from Eardisland, and the Lloyds (1814-1946), a landed family from Wales, Radnorshire and Weobley in Herefordshire. James Kinnersley was also one of the first bankers in Ludlow. Henry Lloyd built new legal chambers by demolishing the house on the south side of the western tower and replacing it with a picturesque neo-Gothick style building with a two-storey battlemented extension. The author dates this building to between 1824 and 1826 by comparing two views of the Broad Gate, one from Thomas Gregory's Shropshire Gazetteer of 1824 and Henry Ziegler's watercolour of 1826, showing the new building. (See images opposite.)

This was a radical alteration from when Henry Lloyd moved into the Broad Gate after the Kinnersleys. The 1813 sales description of the house states:

...on the first floor, six large bedrooms and a laundry, with attics above; on the ground a handsome entrance hall, drawing room, breakfast and dining parlours, kitchen, pantries, with excellent offices thereunder; cellars and stabling, a hot-house, with a large garden, inclosed with a lofty brick wall, facing the south, stocked well with choice fruit trees, and commanding the most delightful view of Whitcliffe Hill and the River Teme⁶.

As the author says:

The whole property...with its gardens, orchards, glasshouses, stables, pig-sties, brewery, icehouse and elegant reception rooms, could be seen as a miniature, self-sufficient estate, perched on the edge of the town. In 1814, it had every convenience needed to sustain the life of a prosperous, professional and 'genteel' family⁷.

The very detailed description of the house and its contents at this time is accompanied by delightful illustrations by Peter Brears of the kitchen as it might have looked then and the brewhouse, so essential at a time when clean drinking water could not be guaranteed. There is also a photograph of the closet or dressing-room on the first floor (see image). This 'has a cornice round the walls, a strong key pattern on the central beam, and a broken pediment over the writing-desk...The desk was available together with a peephole in the shutters so that whoever was working at it could see what was happening in Broad Street even when they were closed⁸'.

It is these human touches which make this book so enjoyable. As the chapter on *Social Life in Eighteenth Century Ludlow* indicates, the season coincided with the local elections, the assizes, race meetings and associated balls. The Long Room at the Market House, built in 1706, replaced the Castle as place for entertainment. Walks provided around the Castle in 1771 by the Countess of Powis, were planted with trees and became the 'Mall'. The race course had moved from the Linney fields to Bromfield by 1739. A permanent theatre was established in Mill Street by 1770. Ludlow had become a fashionable town with its elegant classical buildings and specialist shops, private educational establishments, coffee houses, inns and clubs. For the season, Broad Street was occupied by the leading families of the day: Lord and Lady Powis, the Bournes of Burwarston, the Dunnes of Gatley Park, the Pearces of Downton Hall and the Salweys of Richard's Castle. Most importantly, the social scene offered opportunities for match-making. Mrs Lybbe Powys, who was staying with relatives nearby, says:



Desk in dressing room.



Views of the Broad Gate from the south before the Gothick Chambers were built, in Thomas Gregory's *Shropshire Gazetteer*, 1824, (left), and after construction in Henry Ziegler's *View of 1826*, (right).

*Mr Hill married a Miss Rock and Mr Rock a Miss Hill... just at the same period; so that as a smart gentleman said, on paying the wedding visits, 'Really, the Rocks having turned into Hills and the Hills into Rocks, it was utterly impossible to distinguish them so as to pay each of them his proper compliments on the occasion.'*⁹

In her life of Mary Sneade, one of three sisters who lived at Brand House, Brand Lane, Carola Oman describes Ludlow in the 1790s:

*Ludlow was at this time a pleasant residence not only on account of its unequalled natural beauty and noble historical monuments, but because of the company to be met there...Broad Street gay with rapid feet and glancing eyes; the expeditions for tomorrow's ball; the little encounters with partners from last night's ball...*¹⁰.

By the time the new Assembly rooms were built in 1837, the élite social life of the eighteenth century was over. However, assemblies continued, and the coming of the railway in 1852 provided an occasion for a grand déjeuner to which three hundred people were invited, and in the evening there was a ball. In addition to access by railway, the stage coach services to and from the Crown and the Angel improved enormously, with frequent services to London and Birmingham. By 1844 there were forty coaches a week with regular services to Hereford, Shrewsbury, Bristol and into Wales. However, the coaches had to negotiate the archway of the Broad Gate, and by 1828 the fashion for larger carriages caused a problem. Thomas Telford was employed to provide a solution: to excavate a cavity above the archway of two feet and use the excavated soil to build up Lower Broad Street by about four feet, a retaining wall to be built to preserve the pavement outside the Lower Broad Street houses. At the same time, a sewer was built down the centre of the road to which the drains of individual houses were to be connected. A new road surface was to provide a steady gradient along the hill from the river to the top of Broad Street.

The 'Great Law Case' arose over Ludlow Corporation's administration of the Palmers' Guild Charities, and in 1845 the Court of Chancery ruled in favour of the Charities and costs were awarded against the Corporation which by this time had become an elected Borough Council. To pay the debt, the Council had to sell off its properties in the town. John Lloyd was able to buy the freehold of the Broad Gate in 1852. The Broad Gate benefited from the long ownership of many of its families. The Lloyds owned the house for 132 years, from 1814-1946. A remarkable survival is a catalogue of John Norton's three-day sale of the entire contents of the house, including a thousand books, in 1940. Valerie Thomas analyses this catalogue in some detail. The army occupied the house during the War, and the next family to live in the house were the Richardsons from Bishop's Castle from 1946-1991. In 1991 Keith and Valerie Thomas moved in.

This provided an opportunity to replace the black and gloomy décor and heavy furniture with a very sympathetic Georgian interior. Valerie Thomas is the ideal person to do this as she is a long-standing member of the Georgian Group and former Secretary of Ludlow Civic Society. Her expertise in Georgian matters comes out clearly. Her research is wide-ranging and well-documented in the list of references. She provides family

trees for the Steads, the Sprotts and the Lloyds which are very useful when unravelling the complexities of these families. The index, I found, sometimes did not provide me with what I was looking for. There could have been more cross-references, for example from Pryce Anne to Sprott Anne. However, the book is exemplary in many ways: the product of years of impeccable research with a fluid, very readable text, numerous well-chosen illustrations, and extremely well-designed. It is a visual delight, full of so much new material. It has made a very significant contribution to the history of Ludlow.

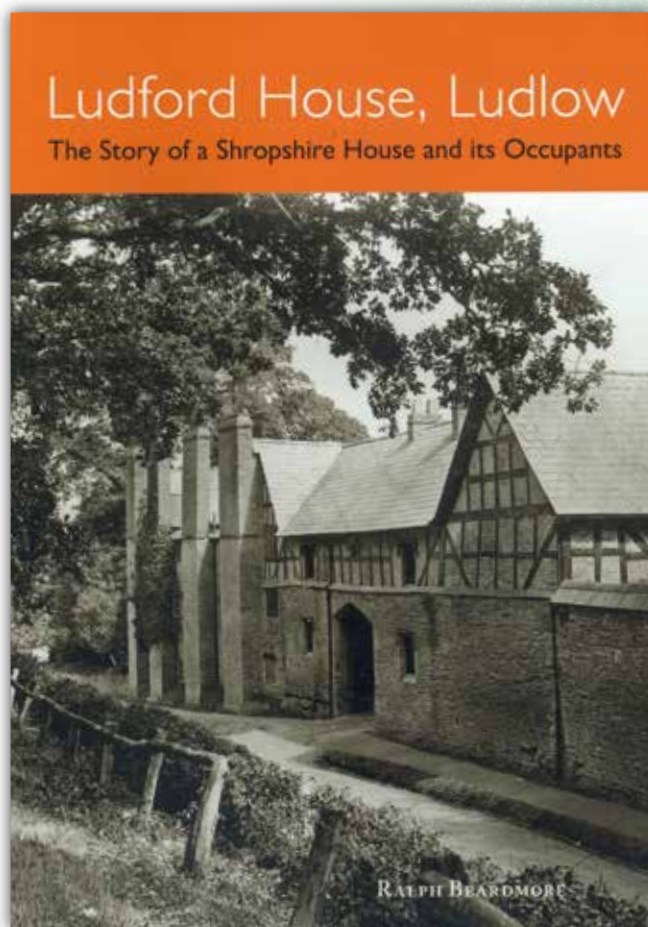
Gaye Smith

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The passage and stairs today.



Ludford House

by Ralph Beardmore, Fircone Press, 2020,
£10.00.

Anyone approaching Ludlow from the south descends the hill towards the bridge over the Teme. To their right is a stone wall, some windows, an entrance to a courtyard and four chimneys. This is part of the west range of Ludford House. Three further ranges lie out of sight from the road. Unlike some of Shropshire's buildings, little had been published about the house's fabric and history. This has changed now as Ralph Beardmore has written a book, *Ludford House: the Story of a Shropshire House and its Occupants*. He has had a thirty-year involvement with the property, and, throughout this period, he has studied its past. The book starts with a reproduction of a plan prepared by Arthur Baker, that was published in *The Builder* magazine in 1902. This plan is used to understand the location of the rooms. Then both the history of the house and the lives of its owners and occupants are chronicled.

Ludford was first mentioned in the Domesday Book where its earliest Lords and the role of St John's Hospital are described. During the mid 1500s the Foxe family was one of the powerful and influential families in the region. They completed various works at Ludford House including rebuilding of the north, east and west ranges. Around this time it was decided that the assizes for the county of Hereford should be held at Ludford, and this started a tradition lasting many years of holding court within Ludford House. The Charltons took over the estate and carried on the tradition of altering and improving the building. Both these works and the family's influence in the area are portrayed.

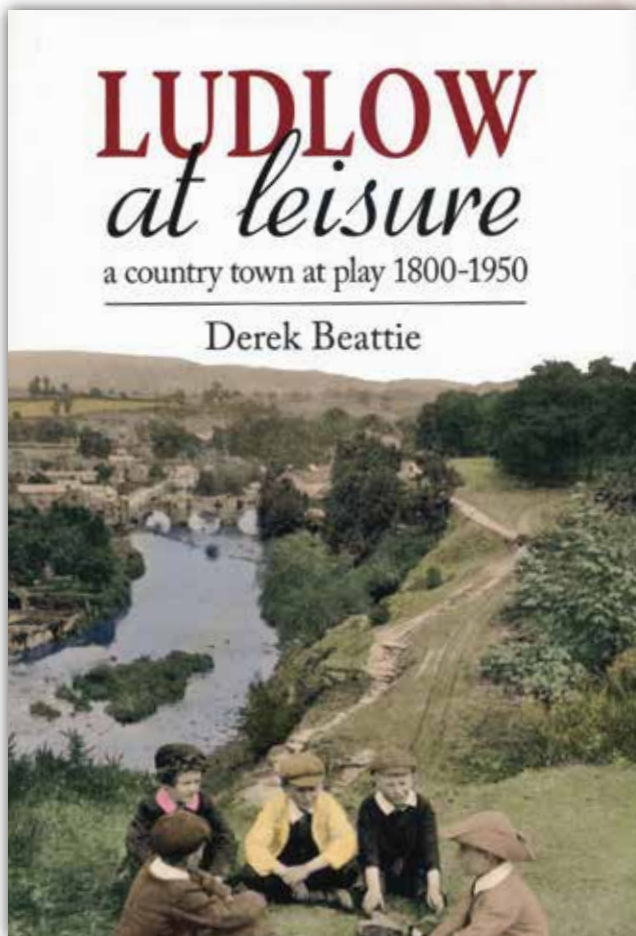
Like previous owners, Job Charlton carried out works on all three ranges of Ludford House, and also rebuilt the almshouses next to the churchyard. In 1761, Sir Francis Charlton commissioned Thomas Farnolls Pritchard to repair and improve the east range which was in danger of collapse. He supported the timber framing, replaced some of the walls, built a new staircase and chimney and completed other works. This was by no means the end of the alterations as only fifty years later extensive changes were carried out by Edmund Charlton. This was followed by changes to the road going south from Ludlow, improvements to the access to St Giles's Church, then in 1988 the Garden

House was restored using as much of the original timbers as possible.

Ludford House is a large property with a footprint of nearly a quarter of an acre, and over the years there have been many alterations, especially in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The result is a complex building with many phases of additions and alterations. The book details the various owners and their contribution to these changes. However, the reader would be forgiven if they had difficulty visualising the location of each of the rooms and the details of the work. There is an appendix with Baker's plans of the house and an explanatory note on each of the rooms, but the book would benefit from more pictures of the rooms.

The author has spent a great deal of time gathering and recording an enormous quantity of information on the topics covered in the book. The result is an interesting study of a little-known property, a useful addition to the libraries of those who collect books on the history of Shropshire's great houses and their owners.

Michael Page



Ludlow at Leisure: a Country Town at Play, 1800-1950

by Dr Derek Beattie, Merlin Unwin Books, 2020,

£14.99.

Derek Beattie needs little introduction to students of Ludlow history. He is well-known for his talks and lectures on aspects of our history, as well as his ground-breaking books on the area in World Wars I and II, and, more recently, for *How the Other Half Lived*, his pioneering study of the lives of the Ludlow poor in the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries.

Dr Beattie's latest book complements his earlier work, dealing this time with leisure and social life in Ludlow over a hundred and fifty years, charting their changes and developments, reflecting changes in both national and local life over the same period. The author also examines the social divisions of the community as represented by sports and pastimes, particularly in the earlier decades of the period he studies.

In 1800, Ludlow was still a town whose leisure activities reflected its predominantly rural location. Fox hunting was largely the preserve of the wealthy and gentry, whilst rabbit coursing was the pastime of the working classes, with clubs such as the Ludlow Fox Terrier Coursing Society. Horse racing, on the other hand, was widely popular with all sections of local society.

Many leisure events included well-lubricated celebration, and brawls and verbal disputes were a common feature, increasingly deprecated by the

middle classes and religious groups in the town. One such pastime which caused considerable disquiet was bare-knuckle boxing, despite the fact that a Rector of St Laurence's Church was a regular participant!

Other events such as the annual 'Beating of the Bounds' and the Tug of War between the Broad Street and Corve street areas of the town, in which large numbers of the population took part, also frequently ended in large-scale disorder. The May Fair, as always, was a subject of controversy, and widespread celebration of Guy Fawkes Night also caused alarm.

An interesting chapter deals with public houses, of which Ludlow had 71 in 1850, and pub amusements such as skittles and bowls. These establishments were the object of widespread disquiet to the middle classes and religious organisations in the town and young men's 'temperance' clubs were set up, with mixed

success, in an attempt to provide alternative recreation. Even the practice of yule-tide 'waits' or carol-singing, with children going from house to house singing, led to the accusation that it was 'detrimental to the moral health of the children and a blight on the lives of respectable and upstanding citizens.'

Dr Beattie, in his chapters dealing with sporting activities such as rugby, football and cricket, points out that until fairly recent times, these too ere often the preserve of specific social classes, whilst other sports, such as angling, were much broader-based.

Much fascinating information is also provided on lesser-known activities such as hockey, boating on the Teme, hiking, excursions and the many cultural activities in Ludlow such as choral societies.

The wealth of contemporary photographs is a particularly attractive feature of this engrossing book, which fills a major gap in the history of Ludlow. Warmly recommended.

John Barratt



The Dinham Millennium Green Trust was formed in September 1999, with the object of the Trust that its Trustees 'provide and maintain an open space, the Dinham Millennium Green, for the benefit of the inhabitants, and to be used for ever as an area for informal recreational play and for the general benefit of the community'.

Since then, the Trust, a registered charity, has worked hard to remain true to these founding principles. For example, in 2008/9 it oversaw a major scheme of reconstruction of the dilapidated water mill on the Green, and has managed major and minor work on the site ever since. Upcoming work includes a structural survey of the weir.

Key to the success of the Trust has been the welcome financial support from the Friends of the Millennium Green, each of whom pays an annual subscription (£10 for a single person, £20 for a couple/family) which helps the Trust maintain the Green as one of Ludlow's most iconic open spaces.

If you are interested in becoming a Friend of the Millennium Green, please email the membership secretary on rl956b@icloud.com for details of how to join.

Richard Bowen

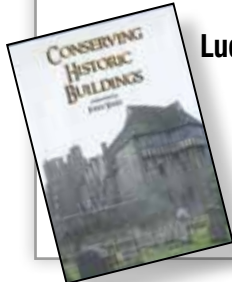
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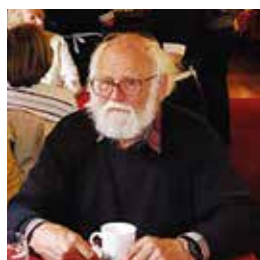
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PETER HOWELL

It was with great sadness that the Civic Society learnt of the death of Peter Howell on 9th January, at the age of 89. He was a valued member, committee member and friend of the society for many years. A full obituary will appear in a future edition of this newsletter.

HOWARD JOHN CHEESE 1950-2020

Howard Cheese was a well-known Ludlow character who worked at Ludlow Museum for over forty years, and who died at the age of 70 on 17th October 2020. Howard was a familiar sight on his trusted sixty-year-old bike, often seen cycling round Ludlow, always with his safety helmet on! He was a valued member of and friend to the Civic Society, who had a huge interest in and knowledge of all things to do with Ludlow and its history.

Born in 1950, he was one of four siblings, at the Hoopits, a small farm near Greete, just outside Ludlow. Howard went to Caynham Primary School, followed by Tenbury School. He was a member of both the Greete Cubs and Young Farmers. After school, he began to work for a Volkswagen dealership in Bridgnorth, as well as helping on the family farm. He helped his father with the construction of the milking parlour and always helped with the milking when his father was ill or on holiday.

He developed a lifelong obsession with the Volkswagen Beetle. His father had driven one and Howard fondly recalled being driven on family holidays in one, and his interest must have stemmed from this. Beetles were to become a lifelong passion to say the least; he became an absolute guru on Beetles. He annually visited Wolfsburg in Germany, the home of the Beetle, and even visited the Beetle factory in Mexico. He started a UK register for Mexican and Brazilian models which continues to this day, and he travelled far and wide attending rallies throughout the country and beyond. Indeed, a cup is to be named after him and is to be presented at the most prestigious VW Beetle event in the world.

Howard started working at the Ludlow Museum in a voluntary capacity, but soon he was taken on as an employee, becoming John Norton's trusted lieutenant. The museum was to become the focus of his life. When Howard made a trip to Australia to visit family, museum friends and fellow Beetle enthusiasts, he went specifically to Adelaide to visit the city's Boer War memorial designed by Ludlow-born

Adrian Jones. Howard was very upset when the plaster-cast copy left Ludlow after the demolition of the old Town Hall. Howard also kept a diary for over sixty years, and it was a source of pride that he had easily beaten Samuel Pepys! He was a committed blood donor and donated sixty-five pints of blood. Howard was also a town guide and brought his interest and extensive knowledge of Ludlow to the town's many visitors. He will be sadly missed by members of his family and his many friends in Ludlow and beyond.

We celebrate the life of Howard Cheese with the following miscellany of reminiscence by the people who knew him best, his colleagues and friend at the Ludlow Museum:

'Obviously I have a lot of fond memories of Howard, going back to when I first started volunteering at the museum in around 1993. By that point Howard had already been working at Ludlow for over twenty years, and he seemed to me the epitome of what a museum curator should be. He was knowledgeable about lots of subjects, particularly local and social history, and had such a good memory for recalling when an object was given to the museum, who gave it and often a little story behind it. Crucially, he used to know where it was in the stores as well, which at the overcrowded Old Street store was pretty amazing to me at the time.' Daniel Lockett

'I first met Howard at 'Old Street' where the collections were stored before the move to the new Museum Resource Centre. The building had been an old school and still had that smell of chalk and school dinners.



Howard was there in his blue work coat carefully getting everything ready for the big move, keeping all the volunteers busy with objects to pack into boxes that were stacked almost to the ceiling. We would all squash into the tea room with the tea-stained mugs and cheap biscuits, taking turns to sit on one of the few chairs and talk about dragonflies and fossil fish.' Sarah Griffin

'Howard's whole work life revolved around Ludlow Museum. At one time, he would probably have known every object in it, which shelf or drawer it was in or on which rail it hung. The geology collection was no exception. He was here through all the museum's moves to various homes over the years, and, when he retired, we put a board up in the museum office in Ludlow with a photo of him as a baby at the top titled 'Ask Howard' so that anything we couldn't find or questions we couldn't answer, we would write on the board, and then Howard would call in and see what was on it. Needless to say, he never failed to clear the board.' Averil Lincs

'In many ways Howard was the friendly face of Ludlow Museum for many generation of visitors – a constant and ever-changing world. Even when he retired, he spent a as much time as he could around us. We will all miss him.' Peter Reavill

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

By the time of publication, the second AGM to be held under lockdown will be upon us. Last year's hurried arrangements will again be adhered to with some modifications and greater understanding of the current crisis. Details of the meeting will be on our website. The committee has honed its computer skills with a virtual meeting every month ensuring that work goes on behind the scenes, including our support for the so far successful campaign to save Castle View Meadow. We are delighted to welcome Sue Bleakly as Treasurer and saddened to say farewell to society stalwart Valerie Thomas, whose committee work and knowledge of the town and its history is immense, as demonstrated in her recent book on the Broad Gate.

The country's thanks to the carers and Health Service echo a national characteristic recorded by Daniel Defoe in his *Journal of the Plague Year*: 'I cannot but leave it upon record that the civil officers, etc...whose business it was to take charge of the poor, did their duties in general with as much courage as any, and perhaps with more, because their work was attended with more hazards...But then it must be added, too, that a greater number of them died; indeed it was scarce possible it should be otherwise.' Despite its many flaws, we are lucky to live in such a country.

Elsewhere in this edition you can read of the Georgian antiquary, David Parkes, who created a sensational story based on little evidence, but now accepted as true. In this, he pursued the result

he wanted with scant regard for the facts. At least, his was flawed scholarship, as opposed to the work of the hotelier, David Pritchard, who deliberately created the legend of Beddgelert to further commercial ends.

Through uncritical acceptance, these Georgian era myths have now assumed a history of their own. The rewriting of our history by a movement begun in protest about American police brutality against the black population, is 'bursting with ludicrous errors' in the words of the historian, Lord Lexden¹, and is now in danger of becoming factual to future generations. Lexden was defending 'the manifold falsehoods' propounded against Churchill, whilst at the same time Manchester City Council is considering removing a statue of Sir

Robert Peel on the grounds that his father was pro-slavery! If the sins of the fathers are to be extended, fingers have yet to be pointed against Charles II and James II, both monarchs being associated with the Royal African Company. Would this lead to the destruction of all of their palaces – the Queen's House, Greenwich?

A recent controversy on this theme has arisen at Exeter over a statue of General Redvers Buller, by Ludlow-born sculptor, Adrian Jones (1845-1935). Having originally conceded that the statue might be offensive because of its imperialist associations, Exeter City Council's executive made a spineless decision to consider its removal before the Secretary of State gave them some backbone and they reversed their decision.

The government recently revealed plans for a new law on cultural and historic heritage which would make clear that 'historic monuments should be retained and explained'. It would give the Secretary of State power to call in any application and make sure that the law is followed. This is welcome news, but the extremist actions of a few have only served to emphasize

divisions supposedly closed.

Jones went on to create the sculpture of Peace descending on the Quadriga of War atop the Wellington Arch, at the time the largest bronze in the world. The current parallel universe would doubtless interpret this as an overblown statement on the merits of imperialism, mounted on an arch commemorating the crushing of French ambition. Surely a complaint from M. Macron is overdue!

Every era is offensive to someone. Are the Welsh delighted by the history of Ludlow castle, or the critics of Empire by the Clive family gate at St Leonard's. Should we boycott Danish bacon because of the Viking atrocities at Lindisfarne? The Society will continue its role in the protection of the buildings, while explaining the history of Ludlow, and add 'woke misinformation' to dry rot and erosion as yet another threat to our heritage. I commend this issue to you.

Richard Hurlock

¹ Letters Telegraph, 06/03/21

MEMBERSHIP AND EVENTS

When I wrote notes in late August last year for the Heritage magazine it was becoming clear that government restrictions and the earlier lockdown had prevented all prospect of arranging events for members. This was the situation for most Ludlow associations. Looking at the current report from Civic Voice, the national organisation for all civic societies, they report that this shut-down has happened across most civic societies in the country. However, you will read in the Chairman's report that our work continues behind the scenes.

In spite of this, the renewal by members of their membership was enthusiastic and loyal. A number of newly-arrived residents continue to join. I received a letter from a lady in Adelaide, Australia, who wrote that she was ninety-five years of age but would now like to join

the Ludlow Civic Society because she wished to read the Heritage magazines.

We offer free entry to talks when they begin again and, of course, production of the Heritage magazine continues. It has been

well-received during lockdown as light reading about Ludlow's wealth of buildings and history, and more beyond. Also, we have publicised that past editions of the magazine are freely available to members and non-members. Please email jmhslap@gmail.com if you would like to receive some back editions.

We have to wait to see if we can resume talks and excursions later this year. Many groups and societies have, of course, embarked on virtual talks. A recent talk via Zoom on the Flaxmill Maltings at Shrewsbury was received well

and enjoyed by many members. Accordingly, we shall try to arrange speakers willing to give virtual talks until we can resume real meetings!

You will be aware that membership cards and talks programmes have not been sent out but we shall wait to do this when we can provide a timetable of talks. We shall then notify you by email or letter of any virtual talks.

The membership and events sub-committee send their thanks to you all for your continuing support.

Jane Hunt



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