

Newsletter

Newsletter of the Broseley Local History Society

Incorporating the Wilkinson Society



August 2010

MEETINGS

Meetings of the Broseley Local History Society are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7.30 pm at the Broseley Social Club, High Street, unless otherwise announced. Car parking is available at the back of the Club.

Members are requested to be seated by 7.30 pm to allow speakers a prompt start.

Visitors are welcome but are asked to give a donation towards Society funds.

PROGRAMME

- 1 Sept *Shropshire Writers*, by Gordon Dickins
6 Oct AGM and talk by John Challen *Blists Hill Ironworks*
3 Nov *Memories of the Coalport Branch* by Neil Clarke – joint meeting with the FIGM, Glass Fronted Meeting Room, Coalbrookdale
1 Dec Christmas Dinner
5 Jan *More Broseley Memories*, Joan Griffiths
2 Feb *Shrewsbury to Bridgnorth by Boat* by Ron Miles
2 Mar Annual Wilkinson Lecture, *Our Wilkinson Heritage*, by Vin Callcut
Further details from Neil Clarke 01952 504135.

NEW MEMBERS

The Society would like to welcome the following new members:

- Tony Cullis, Sheffield
John Dennison, Telford
Rose Hewlett, Frampton on Severn, Gloucester
Chris Luty, Broseley
Ms A Williams, Broseley

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Annual General Meeting

The Society's AGM will take place on Wednesday, 6 October when the agenda will include the election of the committee. Anyone interested in putting their name forward should contact secretary Dot Cox on 01952 883568 for a nomination form. This will be followed by a talk on Blists Hill Ironworks given by John Challen.

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Life and Times of George Pritchard

In May Michael Pope gave an illustrated talk on George Pritchard, who lived from 1793-1861, and the influence he and his family had in the Broseley

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area in the 19th century. To set the context, he highlighted some of Britain's achievements during this, the Victorian era, in particular the expansion of the Empire and the many impressive buildings which were constructed throughout the world.

This age also saw a proliferation of civic and public buildings being erected in every community and Broseley was no exception. Throughout this period the Pritchard family were involved in supporting many of these projects, one of which was the replacement church for the old St Leonard's. Completed in 1845 and renamed All Saints, it was built in the perpendicular style and was the grandest Victorian church in Shropshire.

The Victorians were also aware of the importance of education and in 1870 the Education Act was passed which laid the foundation for free elementary education for all children. Broseley, however, was well ahead of Parliament for in 1854 the foundation stone for a school for both boys and girls was laid on land given by Lord Forester just off the High Street. The building of this school was due mainly to the efforts of the Rev'd Canon Forester, Rector of Broseley, and the generosity of the Pritchard family. The building still stands today, but is now a public library and health centre.

It is against this backdrop that George Pritchard's family became such a well-known and well-loved part of the Broseley community. George's father John was born in Sutton Maddock. He trained as a solicitor and after his marriage in 1791 moved to Broseley. Once settled in Broseley his reputation soon attracted the attention of George Forester of Willey Hall who, in 1794, appointed him agent for the legal affairs of the Willey Estate.

In 1799, in addition to his law business, John Pritchard set up a banking business in Broseley and Bridgnorth in conjunction with Valentine



The Pritchard residence and bank in the High Street; it is now the Social Club

Vickers. At the time there was no bank in Broseley and John based it next to what is now the Social Club, the house at the top of the High Street then occupied by the Pritchard family. When Valentine Vickers retired the banks were taken over by John and his sons George and John junior, both of whom had followed their father into the legal profession. In 1844 John junior married Jane Gordon. Her brother George was also a banker and attorney and became a partner in the firm of Pritchard, Gordon and Co. They were later joined by William Nicholas and George Potts. The banking side of the business was eventually taken over in 1888 by what was then Lloyds Bank.

John Pritchard senior, who by then had gained the respect and affection of the whole community, died in 1857, "a liberal benefactor of the poor" according to a memorial tablet in Broseley Church.

John senior's son George was born in 1793, the eldest of seven children. In 1821 he married and settled in Broseley where he became involved in almost every organisation both in the town and throughout the Borough. A magistrate and Deputy Lieutenant for Shropshire, a Justice of the Peace for the Boroughs of Much Wenlock and Bridgnorth, he was also Mayor of the Borough of Much Wenlock. He was a trustee and treasurer of a number of Provident Societies, a generous subscriber to the Severn Valley Railway and a supporter of almost every charitable undertaking in the district. In 1848 he was elected chairman of the Madeley Poor Law Union and later became High Sheriff of Shropshire. A true public servant.

It is obvious from his philanthropic activities that George Pritchard was a committed Christian. When in the early 1840s it was decided to build a new church to replace the old St Leonard's George, who at the time was living at the Lawns in Church Street, offered a site near his house. This, however, was considered unsuitable and the new church was built on the site of the old one. This new church, designed by Harvey Eginton of Worcester, was built by William Exley and Sons of Broseley and, despite the fact that this company owned a brickworks, was built of stone. When the target of £8,000 for its construction had not been reached it was George Pritchard who put his hand

in his pocket. The church was consecrated in 1845 and as part of the celebrations George gave a party for Sunday School children and teachers in a field next to his house at which over 1,000 people enjoyed the entertainment he provided.

Then in 1861 tragedy struck. George contracted typhoid fever and, according to a report in the Wellington Journal of 28 December of that year, “medical skill was unavailing and this truly philanthropic gentleman sank to his rest. . . . the loss of Mr Pritchard is irreparable.”

After his death various proposals were made as to a suitable memorial for such a well-loved man. One of them was the provision of a drinking fountain in the centre of the town and an appeal for funds for this raised almost £3,000.

The scheme, however, was strongly opposed by Dr Frederick Hezekiah Hartshorne of Alison House, Church Street. Some time before this Dr Hartshorne had sunk a well adjacent to his premises and provided a supply of free water to local residents, whereas previously they had had to go to the Down Well in Dark Lane to fetch their water. He also claimed that the fountain could never supply drinkable water because of the underlying ironstone bed. What was not known at the time was that George Pritchard had been paying Frederick Hartshorne £10 a year for allowing public use of his well, a situation which only came to light after George’s death when the local Committee refused to take over these payments.

Despite Hartshorne’s objections, the project went ahead. He was, however, to have the last laugh as



Jackfield Church was built as a memorial to George Pritchard using all local materials

the water did prove undrinkable and the fountain quickly fell into disuse. Some 20 years later a small boy was drowned when he fell in whilst throwing stones down the well. In 1936 the District Council removed the wall and railings from around the monument and filled the well in, although the actual monument itself was only dismantled in the early 1950s.

Another suggestion was the installation of a stained glass window in Broseley Church. It was decided, however, rather to build a church further down the Gorge in Jackfield to replace the old Red Church, and in 1862 the foundation stone for the Pritchard Memorial Church was laid. Designed by Sir Arthur Blomfield of London it was built to showcase the range of local materials available and is architecturally one of the most distinguished buildings in the Severn Gorge. In his will, George Pritchard left money to support the Jackfield curacy, provided that Jackfield became a separate parish. This wish was carried out, although later it became a part of the united benefice with Broseley.

While George Pritchard had devoted his life to his native Shropshire, his brother John had much wider ambitions. In 1853 he, together with Henry Whitmore of Apley Hall, was elected Member of Parliament for the Borough of Bridgnorth and John became part of the social and artistic scene in London. As well as owning property there he acquired extensive lands and property in the Bridgnorth area. This included Stanmore Hall, described by one of his detractors as “a very mean looking square built brick house”. John later decided to rebuild the Hall in the French renaissance style using red Broseley bricks and red and blue tiles.



The Pritchard Memorial fountain in Broseley Square was erected after George Pritchard’s death in 1861 All that is left today is the plinth, below. The well has long since been filled in





The south aisle in St Leonard's Church, Bridgnorth, was paid for by John Pritchard in memory of his brother George

John, however, did not have the same regard for the public's welfare as his brother George. In 1865 he alienated the local people when he withdrew his support for the Bridgnorth, Wolverhampton and Staffordshire Railway, saying that it would pass too close to the Hall, destroying "its beauty, comfort and privacy". Conversely, when St Leonard's Church in Bridgnorth was almost completely rebuilt in the 1860s, John funded the construction of the south aisle in memory of his brother George who had recently died.

With John's death in 1891 came the end of the Pritchard family's connection with Broseley. But the memory of them, and George Pritchard in particular, remains as this inscription in Broseley Church testifies. "He trod in the steps of his honoured father, and as a good neighbour, as a protector of the fatherless, and widow, as an able and upright magistrate, and as a considerate guardian and benefactor of the poor, he so entirely gained the affection and respect of all around him, that the church at Jackfield, and the monument in the public street of this place, were erected by public subscription to perpetuate his memory."

Photographs courtesy of Michael Pope

A Walk round Broseley's Jitties

On a perfect summer evening in June over 50 members of the Society gathered at Broseley Cricket Club for a walk around Broseley's historic



Dot Cox (somewhere in the middle) leading a group around the jitties on a perfect summer evening

Chairman Gill Pope presenting rail enthusiast Vin Callcut with a suitably decorated birthday cake



jitties. The walk was led by Michael Pope, Dot Cox and Janet Robinson, who shared some of their local knowledge of the area, and was enhanced by the playing of the audio tour which is part of the official Broseley Jitties Trail and which explains how some of the jitties got their name.

Those who could not make the walk, but did not want to miss the fun, remained at the Cricket Club where a short video, based on the audio tour, was screened.

Members were in for a pleasant surprise after the walk, when they were treated to a glass of wine and a buffet supper provided by Vin Callcut in celebration of a milestone birthday.

Thanks to the guides, to Vin and the weather for making this such a lovely evening.

Both the Broseley Jitties Trail leaflet and the audio tour may be downloaded from the Society's website www.broseley.org.uk, click on Town Trail.

Derwent Valley and the Arkwright Mills

In July Society members enjoyed a trip to the Derwent Valley in Derbyshire where their first stop was at Cromford, the site of the first successful water powered cotton spinning mill. This mill had been built by Richard Arkwright in 1771 to take advantage of his newly developed water frame which could spin yarn continuously without the need for skilled workers.

Richard Arkwright was born in 1732, the son of a poor family, who had no formal education. This did not stop him, however, from eventually becoming the first person to create the modern factory system, combining power, machinery, semi skilled labour and raw material to form a finished product.

His initial trade was as a wigmaker. This involved travelling around the country collecting people's

hair and it was whilst on these travels that he learnt of the attempts being made to develop new machines for the textile industry. Always with an eye to the main chance, Arkwright enlisted the help of two associates and built the first spinning frame. This machine involved three sets of paired rollers turning at different speeds. These rollers produced yarn of uniform thickness while a set of spindles twisted the fibres together. This process resulted in the production of thread much stronger than that made with a spinning jenny, and without the use of skilled labour.



Richard Arkwright created the modern factory system

This spinning frame, however, was too large to be operated by hand. After experimenting with horse power, Arkwright decided to use water power and in 1769 patented what became known as the water frame. In 1771 he built the first mill for producing cotton thread using this new machinery.

The site which Arkwright chose to set up this water powered mill was at Cromford in Derbyshire. This site was some way from the main markets for cotton, but it was on recognised packhorse routes and, most importantly, had an ample year round supply of water.

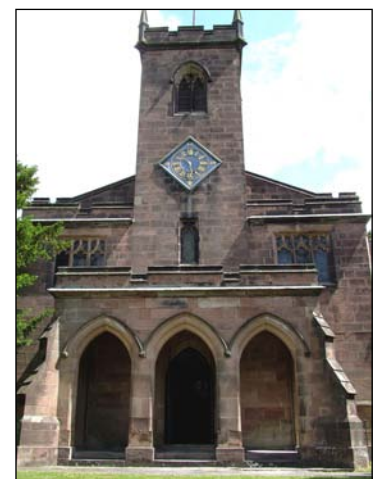
Although the water frame did not need skilled workers to oversee its operation, the whole cotton making process which subsequently evolved did require a substantial amount of semi skilled labour. With not enough local people to fill these jobs, Arkwright brought in workers from all over the county, preferring weavers with large families so that the women and children could work in his factory while the weavers worked at home turning the yarn into cloth. To house this influx of workers, he built workers' cottages as well as local amenities such as shops and schools. Although the work was long hours in what today would be unacceptable conditions, he was known to pay good wages and insisted that any children he employed should be able to read and write.



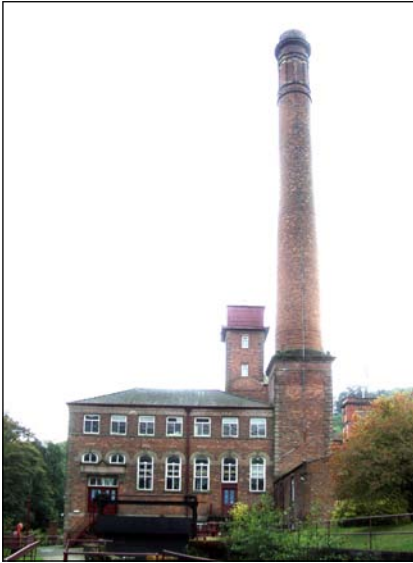
These warehouses were part of the expansion of Cromford Mill and were built in 1785

Cromford Mill proved a real success story and by 1789 the factory site had been considerably extended. By 1791, however, partly because the centre of the cotton industry had moved to Lancashire, the mills gradually decreased their output until around 1850 they closed altogether. Some of the buildings were later used as a paint factory but were then abandoned for over 30 years. The site has now been taken over by the Arkwright Society and plans are in hand to put the buildings back into working use and establish a visitor centre for what is now the Derwent Valley World Heritage Site. Already one of the buildings, which was partly destroyed by fire in 1890, has been put to use housing an exhibition of Arkwright's life and work.

Before moving on to the nearby Masson Mill, there was time for a brief visit to Cromford church. This had been founded by Arkwright, originally as a chapel. After his death in 1792, it was completed by his son, also Richard. The original building had a very distinctive square shape and was described in early records as "a stone built preaching box". It was later 'gothicised' by enlarging the chancel arch, remodelling the windows and adding a tower.



Cromford church was described in early records as "a stone built preaching box". It was later 'gothicised' by adding a tower



Richard Arkwright's Masson Mill was built in 1783 and was in continuous production until 1991. It is now a working textile museum

Masson Mill was built by Arkwright in 1783 and is the oldest mill in the world in continuous production until 1991. It has now been restored as a working museum open to visitors, and members were given a fascinating tour of the machinery, from the cotton bale breaker, to the scutcher and on to the carding machine which combs the cotton fibres into one direction. From there the fibres are spun into yarn and stored on huge bobbins before being sent on to the looms for the weaving of the final cloth.

As well as looms from Lancashire and Yorkshire, which weave traditional cloth, there were also the much more versatile Jacquard looms which weave more complex types of cloth and take several days to thread. And it wasn't just cloth that was woven. There was also a loom producing a range of fine crocheted products, as well as a braiding machine which is currently being used to make jute rope,

Looms brought in from Lancashire and Yorkshire



This jacquard loom could weave complex patterns but took several days to thread

supplying the material for the skipping ropes on display in the museum shop.

Although Arkwright was known as a good employer and paid above average wages, the working conditions must have been appalling. One can imagine the dust from the cotton getting everywhere and the noise would have been mind boggling – no wonder the workers quickly learnt to lip read. And, of course, the machines had to be kept working whatever happened, which was why children were employed – not only were they cheaper but they were small enough to get under the machinery to carry out repairs while it was still working.

Thanks to Richard Sells and Michael Pope for organising such a fascinating day. There was so much to see and not enough time to see it all – perhaps another year!

OBITUARY

Frank Dawson



It is with great sadness that Newsletter reports the death in May of Frank Dawson. Many of you will remember Frank for the talk on John Wilkinson he gave to the Society in 2004 and the very memorable visit the Society made to his home at Castle Head the following year. Castle Head was, of course, the house which John Wilkinson built overlooking Morecambe Bay in Cumbria and where he was once buried before being re-interred in nearby Lindale Church. David Lake, who had been working with Frank regarding the Society's publishing of his book *John Wilkinson, King of Ironmasters*, recalls what a remarkable career Frank had enjoyed.

In 1978, with an Arts Degree from the Open University, a Diploma in Education from the University of Leeds, and 20 years' teaching experience in both this country and in Africa, Frank Dawson went to live and work at Castle Head, the 18th century home of John Wilkinson. There he and a group of friends established a private short stay residential field study centre for both teenage and adult students.

Frank knew nothing of John Wilkinson when he first moved to Castle Head, but folk memories of the activities of the family led him to research their lives and fortunes. He became so interested that he eventually directed and taught short study courses on the Wilkinson family and for some 12 years gave an annual public lecture of aspects of their lives at Castle Head. On his retirement in 1997 he continued to research their lives, gathering further material from private and public archives up and down the country.

Frank and his wife Fev were high achievers, both in teaching and school construction in Ethiopia and in building up Field Studies and Wilkinson Studies at Castle Head. It was a delight to enjoy their company and that of their three daughters. Frank frequently came to Broseley to talk at Society meetings, to meet fellow authors Ron Davies and Barrie Trinder, and to join in such occasions as our visit to Brymbo in 2008.

Frank's sudden illness came as a shock to both him, his family and his friends and Neil Clarke and I were fortunate in being able to visit him at Castle Head shortly before his death. It was a privilege to know Frank and, along with Society members, I extend my deepest sympathy to his family.

ENGLISH HERITAGE ARCHIVE CATALOGUE
English Heritage's historical archive catalogue is now online and people in the West Midlands will be able to search for more than a million historical photographs and documents relating to historic buildings and archaeological sites held by English Heritage's public archive, the National Monuments Record (NMR). Photographs, plans, drawings, reports and publications covering England's archaeology, architecture, social and local history can now be

accessed at www.englishheritagearchives.org.uk. Order online or contact tel: 01793 414600 or email: nmrinfo@english-heritage.org.uk.

SEVERN GORGE COUNTRYSIDE TRUST

The Severn Gorge Countryside Trust (SGCT) has finally moved from its cramped accommodation in Jockey Bank to purpose built offices in Darby Road, Coalbrookdale. The Trust, which manages some 260 hectares of land on both sides of the Gorge, works to balance the conservation of this area with allowing full access to the public so that they can explore and enjoy the paths and trails which have been waymarked through the woods and meadowland. In particular the circular routes through Dale Coppice and Lincoln Hill have been marked to correspond with the booklet, *Coalbrookdale, 3 Historic Woodland Walks** written by Michael Pooley, while a kissing gate will be replacing the current barrier at the Rough Park entrance to Dale Coppice.

In addition to this, and as part of access improvements to the woodlands, volunteers have recently installed a bench on the Rope Walk at the entrance to Lydebrook Dingle; this will be followed by signage and interpretation boards and has been funded by Natural England and the Big Lottery Fund.

**For availability of this and other booklets in the series contact the Trust, tel: 01952 433880, email: staff@severngorge.org.uk or visit their website www.severngorge.org.uk.*

WHAT'S ON?

Severn Gorge Countryside Trust

Night Owls and Bats Walk

Tuesday 31 August, 9.00 – 11.00 pm

Meet at Coalport Village Hall 8.45 pm

A night walk to look out for owls and bats around the Silkin Way area; terrain includes steps and uneven ground. Please wear sensible clothing and footwear. Under 16s must be accompanied by an adult. Sorry no dogs. Booking required tel: 01952 433880, email cadiprice@severngorge.org.uk.

Museum of the Gorge, Ironbridge

Inspector Drake and the Black Widow

28 August, 4 and 11 September, 7.30 pm

The first of a series of evening events at this venue. Performed by Sundial, a professional company touring children's plays in schools, performing Victorian Music Hall shows and 1940s variety shows. Tickets £10, concessions £7.50 from Ironbridge Visitor Information Centre tel: 01952 884391 or visit www.ironbridge.org.uk.

John Randall Day School

John Randall Primary School

Queen Street, Madeley

Saturday 4 September, 10.00 am – 4.30 pm

Cost: £5.00 includes buffet lunch

A day school to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the birth and the 100th anniversary of the death of John Randall who was born in Broseley in 1810.

Talks will cover all aspects of Randall's life from his birth and early years in Broseley, through his wide ranging interests in geology and history and his skills as a china painter, to his death as a respected writer, publisher, local politician and Freeman of the Borough of Wenlock. Speakers will include George Baugh, Neil Clarke, Roger Edmundson, Shelagh Lewis, Hugh Torrens and Barrie Trinder. Further information or for tickets contact shelagh@madeleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

Gorgeous Contemporary Craft Fair

Saturday and Sunday 9 and 10 October

10.00 am – 5.00 pm

Enginuity, Coalbrookdale

Shropshire Guild of Contemporary Craft showcasing the best in contemporary crafts.

Admission £2.50 (children under 12 free)

Further details on www.shropshireguild.co.uk or Ironbridge Visitor Information Centre tel: 01952 884391 or www.ironbridge.org.uk.

Blists Hill Victorian Town

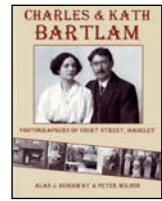
Ghostly Gaslight, Saturday 30 October

Fireworks Night, Saturday 6 November

Tickets in advance only from Blists Hill or Ironbridge Visitor Information Centre, adults £9.00, children £5.00 for each event; combined family ticket (2 adults and 2 children) for both nights £48.00. Parking limited, Park and Ride from Telford available. Passports not valid for evening events.

BOOKSHOP

Charles & Kath Bartlam, Photographers of Court Street, Madeley, edited by Alan J Heighway and Peter Wilson. 182 pp of photographs, paperback.



Charles Bartlam and later his wife Kath ran a photographic studio in Court Street, Madeley, from 1905-48. This book reproduces just some of the 2,500 photographs which have survived and includes pictures of outdoor events, studio portraits and weddings. Not all the people in these photographs have been positively identified and in publishing this book the authors hope that readers will help them put names to faces. To anyone living in the Madeley area during this time, this will be a trip down memory lane not to be missed.

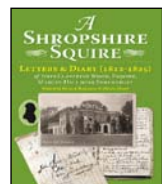
Price £10.00, further details from Shelagh Lewis, Madeley Living History Project, tel: 01952 567288, email: shelagh@madeleyparishcouncil.gov.uk.

Public Sculpture of Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire, by George T Noszlopy and Fiona Waterhouse. 448 pp, 250 b&w illustrations, hardback. The latest volume in the Public Sculpture of Britain series published by Liverpool University Press.



Further information from LUP, 4 Cambridge Street, Liverpool L69 7ZU, tel: 01517 952149, or www.liverpool-unipress.co.uk.

A Shropshire Squire, Letters & Diary (1812-1825) of John Clavering Wood, Esquire, Marche Hall near Shrewsbury, edited by Gerard Benjamin and Gloria Grant. 200 pp, illustrated, hardback, includes foreword, introduction, endnotes, biographical notes, appendices, family tree and detailed index.



The letters and diary of John Clavering Wood (1778-1835), spanning 1812-1825, show just how diverse were the interests of a Shropshire country gentleman during the early 19th century.

Available from the Shropshire Family History Society or from Booka Bookshop, Oswestry, tel:

01691 662244. Further details available from <http://ggbooks.wordpress.com/books/a-shropshire-squire/>.

An article on how *A Shropshire Squire* came to be published appears in the Summer issue of *Salopian Recorder* tel: 01743 255353 or email: Alison.Mussell@shropshire.gov.uk.

FUTURE PUBLICATIONS

Joan Griffiths, whom many will remember as the author of *Broseley, the People and the Past*,* is once again busy on records of the town. One recently completed project has been to compile a list of the inscriptions on the gravestones in All Saints' Churchyard as well as the plaques inside the church. The dates on these run from 1770-1925 although the graveyard itself was closed to burials in 1875, apparently by order of Queen Victoria. No formal plan of the graveyard appears to exist, and many of the stones have been moved to the edge, but the author has clearly indicated where each stone now is; there is also an index of surnames for easy reference. It is hoped that this will be published in the near future and that profits from sales will go to the Church.

Another of Joan's projects is to computerise the complete cemetery records. These are currently held by the Town Council and date from 1885 to the present day. Once completed, it has been suggested that access to them could be made available to the public when the cemetery chapel is opened as a visitors' centre.

Perhaps of even greater interest is her planned book on the history of all schools (including Sunday Schools) in the Broseley area from 1863. This includes records kept by the various headmasters of Broseley Boys National School in Bridgnorth Road. These records give a fascinating insight into the lives of the children, one entry in November 1885 reporting that attendance was poor on that day, 68 pupils being absent of whom 46 were ill with mumps. All it needs now to turn it into a valuable resource is to find a publisher!

**Copies of this book are available from E Davis, Broseley High Street or from Joan Griffiths, tel: 01952 883074, price £15.95.*

MAILBOX

Following Anna Wharfe's request for information on the Davis family and the Dunge Brickworks (*May 2010 Newsletter*), Valeria Hackett writes:

I am the daughter of Lilian Ivy Davis and the great granddaughter of George Davis 1828-1903. According to information I have the Dunge Brickworks were acquired some time after 1811 by a Richard Hartshorne. He leased it to a Richard Poole from 1818 to about 1845 when the lease was acquired by George and Francis Davis. It remained in George Davis's family until it was sold to a Major Donald Prestage in 1919. According to our family tree as researched by Trevor Instone the Thomas Davies who married Rebecca Potts was two generations before George and Francis Davis and the only link between the families seems to be several generations back between the brothers Francis Davis, baptised 1699, and John Davies, baptised 1701.

Valerie Hackett

johnfhackett@freeuk.com

Clive Edwards also replied to this request:

Edmund Lloyd married Mary Potts (a relative of your Potts?). Their daughter Rebecca Lloyd, born about 1829 and died in 1902, married George Davies/Davis. He was born about 1828 and died on 7 June 1903. George and his brother Francis owned the Dunge Brick and Tile Works.

George's first child, James Edward Davis, born 26 May 1850, married Emma Matilda Meredith. They are my great grandparents. James moved to the Wirral and the Broseley Davis's lost touch with our branch, but re-established the connection a few years ago. Trevor Instone, deceased, has written a book on the Middle/Broseley Davis's.

Clive Edwards

cliveedwards@talktalk.net

I refer to the correspondence in the *May 2010 Newsletter* regarding the Last Supper Plaques made at Coalbrookdale.

I worked at the Coalbrookdale Works from about 1963 to 1966 where my job in the Cost Department involved me occasionally going down into the foundry. I can distinctly remember the Last

Supper Plaques being made and sometimes used to watch them being cast. They were made only occasionally, normally for presentations to VIPs or for special events and were made by my wife Pauline's uncle Fred Pace from Broseley. I remember being told that he was the only man who could make them then as it was a very delicate and skilled job. Fred was close to retirement in those days and I know that he had worked as a floor moulder at the Coalbrookdale Works for many years.

Derek Bradburn
derek.bradburn@ntlworld.com

As the manager at Maws Craft Centre I am keen to gather information about the Maws family and the tile factory.

This is such a lovely place and so often people go to the Tile Museum thinking that they are at Maws and miss out on visiting here. Others are quite amazed at how big the factory used to be and that it was once the largest encaustic tile factory in the world.

I know there is a lot of information here and there about Maws and the tile factory but I should like to pull some of it together and bring it back home. My aim is to have an exhibition here telling what it was like as a factory and its journey from there through to it becoming a Craft Centre where people live and work. I should also like to be able to put stories and pictures up around the walls of the courtyard.

If any of your readers have information regarding the tile factory, the Maw family and people who used to work for Maws I should very much like to hear from them.

Diane Rixom
Tel: 01952 883030
Email: diane@mawscraftcentre.co.uk

I was surprised recently to find that the church in Broseley is called All Saints, although possibly the fourth on the site. My great great great grandmother Sarah Bill was married in St Leonard's Broseley to Thomas Sheward, and four of their children were baptised there. Can anyone tell me anything about St Leonard's? I should like to come to visit it if it survives and also to explore Linley

Brook, Stockton Church at Norton and Broseley, where the Bills and the Shewards were to be found from c1780 to at least the mid 19th century.

Jacqueline Roberts
jacqueline@vocks.org.uk

When St Leonard's was rebuilt in 1845 it was renamed All Saints so the present parish church is on the site of the old St Leonard's. I am not sure why it was renamed because all it does is cause confusion. There is a little bit about the church on <http://www.broseley.org.uk/church.htm> and also in the Victoria County History <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=22876#s17>

Steve Dewhurst

I am a Maw descendant and have been researching my ancestors. My paternal grandmother was Sidney Ruth Maw (b 1877), daughter of Charles Maw (b 1835), son of Solomon Maw (b 1805 Owston Ferry), son of George Maw (Kelfield 1770), son of George and Alice. Here we reach a brick wall.

However, we have recently come across a painting we didn't realise we had. It is a watercolour of Rochester Castle by John Hornby Maw, the brother of my great great grandfather Solomon Maw. What is really interesting is what is written on the back. "This drawing of Rochester Castle done on the spot by J H Maw (many years ago) was sold at the sale of Dr Hartshorn's effects, Oct 15, 1878 and given by J H Maw to Martha Standering at Barratts Hill House, Broseley, Oct 16 1878. J H Maw hopes it will not be allowed to go out of the family."

This implies that Martha Standering is related to him, although we have not so far come across her in our research. The painting has remained within the Maw family, although I am not actually a direct descendant of John Hornby Maw. A search on Genes Reunited found five trees with a Martha Standering born in Owston, the little village in Lincolnshire where J H Maw was born. However, Standering is perhaps more likely to be her married name as she was obviously living in Broseley in 1878. If she did originally come from Owston Ferry, it is quite a big coincidence that she also ended up in Broseley, unless they are closely

related. If that is the case I am surprised that none of us Maw descendants have come across her!

I have looked at the trade directories on your site and have found a Frederick Hezekiah Hartshorne who was a surgeon – presumably the doctor whom J H Maw says he bought the painting back from. But who is this Martha Standering whom he then gave it to in 1878 in the hope that she would keep it in the (presumably Maw) family?

Margaret and Roger Stevens
margaretandroger@waitrose.com

I cannot find mention of any Standering in my records. The only conclusion I can draw is that Martha was visiting when the painting was presented to her. It is strange that John Hornby seems to have bought back his own painting. Presumably originally it would have been a gift to Dr Hartshorne. John Hornby is listed in the census as living at Barratts Hill in both 1871 and 1881. In 1861 the house was occupied by George Maw and his brother Arthur. However Casey's directory lists him at Barratts Hill so presumably he was away at the time of the census. One of the Maw family (probably George) had a son called Hornby as there was a treat at the Maw's New Jackfield works for his coming of age on 10th May 1883.

Hartshorne was quite a common name in Broseley at the time. Dr F H Hartshorne lived on Church Street and died on 18th August 1878 and was one of the local doctors.

Steve Dewhirst

I have been tracing my family tree back to Broseley in the 1840s. I believe my great great great grandfather, Thomas Dutton, lived in Lower Ridding on Rough Lane in 1841 and worked on the Riddings farm. He and his wife Elizabeth Johnson were married in Barrow church and she died in 1840. I recently visited Broseley and walked down Rough Lane and asked some residents about Riddings Farm and they suggested I write to Lady Forester to see if there are any records of workers on the farm.

Do any of your readers have any information about the farm and its workers? I have already contacted the local vicar but he said there are no records held

by the church for this long ago.

Lian Dutton
lian.dutton@hotmail.co.uk

*I think it will be very difficult to trace any records of Thomas working at Ridding Farm. It would have been run by a tenant farmer and the farmer would have employed Thomas direct. The Forester Estate may have records of the farmer himself. These are now deposited at Shropshire Archives <http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/archives.nsf> so you should contact them to see if they have anything in the records. I believe that the records themselves can only be viewed with the permission of Lady Forester. The other contact would be Shropshire Family History Society <http://www.sfhs.org.uk/>.
Steve Dewhirst*

Thank you for publishing my request for information on my great great great grandfather James Clarke in your May 2010 Newsletter – I gained some fantastic information. I should also like to congratulate you on the Broseley history website which has been a valuable research tool for my family history.

Leighton Bolton
machiavelli41@aol.com

Thank you for your suggestion as to where to look for 76 Caughley, the house where my grandfather was born (May 2010 Newsletter). You were so helpful and I did find the house, down Pound Lane, past the Round House to Caughley Cottage. I had an old photograph of the house and sure enough that was it. It was wonderful to see and we were also able to meet with some distant relatives in Broseley. I also found the house of my great great grandfather on Hockley Street, so that was a bonus.

Debbie Curto
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*Caughley
Cottage in
Pound Lane
where Debbie
Curto's
grandfather
was born*



I am a descendant of Anfrid de Benetala but all I can find out about him is that he died some time after 1128. I should be very grateful if any of your readers know where I could find further information on him.

Joyce West

You might like to try <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=22875> which gives some details and sources. You could also contact the Benthall family at Benthall Hall.

Steve Dewhirst

Your readers may be interested in a recently published book entitled *A Shropshire Squire, Letters & Diary (1812-1825) of John Clavering Wood, Esquire, Marche Hall near Shrewsbury.*

The book portrays J C Wood of the 350 acre Marche estate near Westbury as, among other things, a keen horticulturalist but he also invested, with other local gentry, in the mining of feldspar at Middletown Hill which was supplied to the Spode factory. Though not local to the Broseley area, one diary entry records his calling to see John Rose of Coalport; unfortunately he was out.

The diaries and letters only came to light in New Zealand relatively recently and their publication has been a labour of love, since the diarist is my great great great great grandfather. The story of

how the material was found is the subject of an article in the Summer issue of *Salopian Recorder* which is available from Shropshire Archives.

Gerard Benjamin (co-editor with Gloria Grant)

<http://ggbooks.wordpress.com>

See Bookshop on page 8 for further details of this publication.

Editor

I am researching James Clifford, lord of the manor of Broseley during the late 16th and early 17th centuries. Any information concerning James, his family and their involvement with coal mining would be of interest to me. I would also like to know more about Priory House which I believe he built, and what Broseley was like during the period 1550-1630.

The Clifford family were primarily based in Frampton on Severn and Fretherne in Gloucestershire, and I hope to write a book on them covering the period 1550-1700 which will, of course, include a chapter on Broseley.

Rose Hewlett

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One of the swing posts on the Broseley Jitties Trail describes how James Clifford, Lord of the Manor of Broseley, encouraged immigrant workers to build their squatter cottages in Broseley Wood in the late 16th century



Photograph courtesy Dennis Webster

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To see this Newsletter in full colour visit the website at www.broseley.org.uk.