

Broseley and Its Surroundings

BEING A COMPLETE

HISTORY OF BROSELEY, WILLEY
BARROW, BENTHALL, AND LINLEY

WITH NOTICES OF

Remarkable events, facts, phenomena

AND

MANUFACTURES

And Containing

A CAREFULLY COMPILED INDEX

Illustrated

BY

John Randall, Author of "The Severn Valley," "Old Sports and Sportsmen &c."

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Introduction to this Reprint

John Randall was born in Broseley in 1810. For much of his life he worked as a china painter at both the Coalport and Rockingham China Works, specialising in painting birds. He lived through major changes in the district. When he was born Broseley was a major ironmaking and mining district. By the time he was 20 ironmaking had all but ceased and Broseley had become a depressed town. Mining gradually declined such that by the time this book was published there were fewer than 200 people working in the mines of Broseley. During this period ironmaking and mining were replaced by the clay industries of Brick and Tile making, Pottery and Clay pipes.

The book still remains the main source of information on the history of Broseley and is particularly informative on family, industrial and medieval history as well as the Forester family who still live at Willey Hall. He had access to many documents, which have either been lost or are held in private collections.

As in all works of history there is some conjecture and misinterpretation however this does not detract from its value and even today it remains the most complete history of the district.

As well as being a painter Randall was an accomplished geologist and acted as a consultant in mining geology. He was also a prolific author of books on the district. He lived much of his life in Madeley and died in 1910. His epitaph in Madeley Church reads: *'To his geological researches was due the extension of the mining industry in the neighbourhood'*

S. Dewhirst
September 2001

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