

Newsletter

Newsletter of the Broseley Local History Society

Incorporating the Wilkinson Society



February 2005

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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

- 2 Mar *John Wilkinson, Copper King?*, by Vin Callcut
- 6 Apr Proposed talk on the geology of the area
- 4 May *Living and Working in Medieval Shropshire (including Burwardsley!)*, by Di Bryan
- 1 Jun Summer event
- 2 Jul Coach trip to Castlehead and Backbarrow

For further information contact Neil Clarke on 01952 504135.

New Members

The Society would like to welcome the following new members:

- Mrs Kathryn Bennett, Woking
- Mrs Rosemary Nevin, Broseley
- Mr & Mrs Parkinson, Scarborough
- Mr R Swallow, Broseley

Visit to Castlehead and Backbarrow



Wilkinson's mansion at Castlehead in 1816, with the iron obelisk in the background

Date:	Saturday, 2 July 2005
Cost:	Coach £10.00 per person
	Admission to house £ 3.50 per person
	Optional extras
	Buffet lunch £ 8.50 per person
	Tea £ 3.00 per person
Leave:	Broseley 8.00 am
	Coalbrookdale 8.15 am
Return:	Approx 9.30 pm

The Society, in conjunction with the Friends of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum, is organising a visit to Castlehead, the home which John Wilkinson built at the head of Morecambe Bay.

The house is now a field study centre, formerly run by Frank Dawson and his wife Fev. Frank, who gave the 2004 Wilkinson Lecture to the Society, is working on a substantial new biography of

Wilkinson and he will be our guide at Castlehead. A buffet lunch will be available in the dining room of the house.

The visit can be as energetic as you wish. You can climb the heights of Castlehead to see John's mountain top gardens and explore nearby Lindale where John and Mary Wilkinson's remains are interred in the church; the great cast iron monument to him stands in the town. Or you can take it easy and simply admire the mountains of the Lake District from the wide windows of the house itself.

Backbarrow furnace is some six miles from Castlehead, so if some people wish to cut short their time at Castlehead in order to visit Backbarrow this should be possible.

Although the first, John Wilkinson was not the only notable resident there. Frank Dawson has uncovered some interesting snippets about previous owners.

After the liquidation of the Wilkinson Trust the Castlehead estate was bought by a solicitor, Robert Wright. He appears to have lived there very little, and for over 30 years the house was closed up and the estate became overgrown, a solitary gardener and caretaker being the sole occupant

But in 1857 the railway through Grange-over-Sands was completed. This meant that a return trip to Manchester and Liverpool could comfortably be undertaken in one day and a country and seaside estate in Lancashire suddenly became a very attractive proposition to wealthy businessmen.

In 1863, following a survey which valued it at £14,651.17.6d, Castlehead was bought by Edward Mucklow, who lived there until his death in 1906. One of the first commuters, he travelled to his office in Manchester each day, his carriage taking him to the station. He would then breakfast on the train, conduct his affairs in Manchester and return on the afternoon train, taking tea on the way. At Grange his carriage would be waiting to take him back home in time for dinner. He manifestly loved Castlehead, as had John Wilkinson, and added the great Italian ceilings and mouldings, new fireplaces and mosaic floors, and the lavish surrounding verandah.

If you are interested in coming on this visit, and have not already done so, please contact David Lake as soon as possible on tel: 01746 762813. A booking form will appear in the next Newsletter.

Out and About

Over the past months, several members of the Society have given talks to other groups in the area. In November, following the Society's visit last July to the fascinating industrial village of Cookley, David Lake gave a talk on John Wilkinson to Cookley and Wolverley History Society. This Society remarkably holds meetings every week, so David did not find it difficult to interest such a dedicated audience, who responded with a rewarding flow of questions.

In January, *New Light on John Wilkinson* was the title of a presentation given by Neil Clarke and Paul Luter as one in a series of local history talks at Dudley Library. Neil gave an update on his research into late 18th and early 19th century opinion of John Wilkinson, while Paul reported on his findings on Wilkinson's West Midlands enterprises, which he had gleaned from Aris's Birmingham Gazette.

January Meeting

In January Derrick Pountney gave a fascinating talk on *Ancient Bridleways in and around Broseley* and explained how, consequent on a 1949 Act, the definitive map of footpaths, bridleways and byways open to all traffic came to be drawn up.

As a result of this Act, it had fallen to Parish Councils to check all 140,000 miles of public rights of way and reinstate any which had fallen into disuse. As Rights of Way Officer of Broseley and Much Wenlock Ramblers Association, Derrick has spent many years ensuring that these footpaths remain open.

History trail – a virtual walk past some of the historical sites around Broseley

In the warmth of the Social Club, Derrick took the meeting on an imaginary walk around Broseley, stopping along the way to point out various sites of historical and general interest (see Map 1, p 12).

Starting out along the public footpath to the Fiery Fields, he explained that these fields had got their name from the spontaneous combustion which occurred from the waste tips and coal seams near the surface. Through the Fiery Fields, to where a footbridge crossed the stream just before Brooke Leasowe, he pointed out on the left part of the tramway which had once run through the Fiery Fields down to the Severn.

Still in virtual mode, Derrick then turned left into Lodge Lane and, at the bottom of the hill, indicated an old (now breached) earth dam on the right which once fed the water wheel at Willey Furnace. Further on was the very old Lodge Farm. In the time of Henry III this area was part of the royal forest of Morfe and Shirlett and nearby was the Little Deer Leap, a boggy area into which deer were driven. Lodge Farm had been built, it is said, to protect this area from poachers.



It is said that Lodge Farm was built to protect the area from poachers

Back up Lodge Lane towards Benthall Derrick said that the gate on the right which led past Old Park Farm to Park Lane was not yet a public right of way, but could be used to get to the Tyning and Chapel Lane.

It was then down Benthall Avenue to the church and Benthall Hall where Derrick commented that the isolated position of these buildings was due to the old village of Benthall having been destroyed during the Civil War. He also said that the original church was most unusual in that it had been dedicated to St Brice. Only one other such dedication was known, that in Brize Norton in Oxfordshire. It seems that a St Brice had been born

The present church of St Bartholomew was built to replace the old chapel of St Brice



in Cardiganshire around 420 and as a missionary had worked in both Wales and Brittany. So it was possible that he had come over the border to England, visited Benthall and founded a chapel there.

The present church of St Bartholomew was built in 1667 on the site of the old chapel. Unusually, it has a sundial instead of a clock, with the two holes in the carved lion's face connecting to lockers in the gallery of the church. These lockers served as beehives of which the church wardens had the rights to the honey.



The stone carving on this sundial bears the biblical quotation "Out of the strong came forth sweetness"

Nearby Benthall Hall, built in 1558 on the site of a previous house, had suffered at the hands of the Parliamentarians who had held a garrison there. This garrison had been responsible for guarding Benthall Ford to prevent shipments of coal from reaching Royalist troops. A very old road from this ford over Benthall Edge and through the Vineyards still exists and is a right of way.

Further down the track Derrick turned right to the cottage in the woods which had an intriguing inscribed gravestone on the wall of the house. Not accessible to the public, this gravestone marks the burial of one Cordelia Corbett who died in 1669 after mistakenly jumping her horse over a hedge into a pool in the quarry.

From here Derrick followed the contour path to Patten's Rock, named after the quarry owner who lived in Bower Yard in about 1800. At Patten's Rock steps led down to a path above the railway track bed. This path went over a brick arch and turned left under the old railway to Bower Yard, site of 18th and 19th century boat building. It also had one of the best views of Ironbridge.

From here the Severn Valley Way (once the track bed of the Severn Valley Railway) went past the Iron Bridge, under a footbridge and on to an old railway crossing gate, reputed to have the longest single span on the old Great Western Railway.

Just beyond this was Calcutts House, used as a cholera hospital in the 1830s. This was also the site of the Calcutts foundry, where the casting of cannon first started. This foundry was taken over by Alexander Brodie in 1786 and two of his cannon are still on HMS Victory in Portsmouth.

Just beyond this site was the old Craven Dunnill tile works, now the Jackfield Tile Museum. Newly renovated it is well worth a visit. Pottery and later encaustic tiles had been made on this site since 1560. Opposite this is the French Gothic style church of St Mary's with its unusual reredos made of encaustic tiles donated by Craven Dunnill.



This reredos in St Mary's Church, Jackfield, made of encaustic tiles, was donated by Craven Dunnill

Further down on the left could be seen the old Maws tile works. Closed in 1970 it has now been turned into residences and a craft centre. Further on still Derrick turned right beyond a brick bridge and followed the lane up the hill. On the right was The Tuckies, an Elizabethan house once occupied by John Langley and William Reynolds. The track then passed through sandstone cliffs near the area known as the Amies, after an old manor house. On up through Corbett's Dingle, named after the owner of the nearby coal and limestone mines, Derrick explained that Mr Corbett had had problems getting his product down to the river. The nearest route was over the Willey Estate, but unfortunately the owner of this was also a competitor!

Just beyond these mines a mound, which many people mistook for a spoils heap, was actually the burial place of some forty horses which had died in an epidemic. Later the Coalport China Works had tried to use these bones in their chinaware, but were stopped by the local medical officer of health.

Beyond Coneybury Farm on the left Derrick pointed out the site of the Coneybury furnaces which at one time had been producing 30 tons of iron a week. Blown out in 1823, the furnace bricks were subsequently used to build the field boundary wall. On reaching the Ironbridge Road, a white cottage could be seen opposite; this had been the offices of the Coneybury works before becoming a tollgate.

Derrick then took the path up by the cottage to the Haycop and on to Down Well, built in 1885 to supply Broseley with spring water, before reaching Dark Lane. It was in Dark Lane that in 1876 the Council had built a reservoir to store water from a spring in nearby Holloway's Field. Unfortunately, subsequent mining activities had caused it to leak badly and the Council had then used it for sewage instead. This had been equally disastrous as sewage had leaked into Dark Lane and subsequently had had to be piped under the Fair Field into a stream which ran under Calcutts Foundry and into the Severn. The reservoir was eventually filled in and is now under the garden of Rivendell.

And so it was back to the High Street and the end of a fascinating experience.

Pound Lane and Caughley Road

But Derrick wasn't finished yet. A pause for breath and he was off down Pound Lane, which runs off the Bridgnorth Road by the Forester Arms (see Map 2, p 13). This road led down to the Batches where an isolation hospital had burnt down in the 1950s. Near here, crossing Caughley Road, a railway used to run from Willey Furnace down Tarbatch Dingle to Willey Wharf by Balls Foundry. This was the tramway which had carried the first iron boat to be built.

Carrying on along the Caughley Road and past the Round House (which is square) on the right, Derrick pointed out the next track on the right. This was called the Cutting which went over a bridge at the Devil's Den, crossed the Bridgnorth Road, over the horse pasture and on through Willey village to Shirlett. This road had been



The Round House on the Caughley Road is actually square

built to take the white clay from the mines at Shirlett to the Caughley china works.

Derrick, however, stayed on the Caughley Road, passing the site of the Caughley china works, now

The memorial plaque marking the site of the Caughley China Works



marked with a memorial plaque, and turned left at the T junction down past Swinney Farm to an old railway bridge. Here, a track to the right led to Balls Foundry, but Derrick went under the bridge, turned left and followed the old railway track to Coalport, then up Corbett's Dingle, past Coneybury Farm and back to the Ironbridge Road.

Barrow to Willey

For a final stroll, Derrick set off along the road to Barrow which turns right off the Bridgnorth Road just past the Dunge. Just before the Round House (this isn't actually round, either) he turned left along a bridleway over an old earth dam which had once held water for the waterwheels at Willey Furnace.

Map 3 shows the route he took past Dean Corner Farm to Willey village, then down Scots Lane to the



This Round House at Willey isn't round either

Bridgnorth Road and across to the Honeypot and the old village of Darley. When Caughley china works had been in production, there had been some 50 houses in this valley built by workers at Caughley, as well as the Thrift Inn,

although nothing now remains but a few ruins. Through Darley and past the old opencast workings, the track came out on the Caughley Road. A left turn here, past the square Round House, along Pound Lane and it was back to Broseley.

The Jitties

Derrick also knows the jitties in Broseley Wood like the back of his hand. But that is a story for another day . . . !

Enamel Decorated Caughley China

Most people think of Caughley china as being just blue and white, often with an oriental pattern or one featuring fruit, flowers or a picture of the Iron

Bridge. This is hardly surprising since the Caughley factory was a major producer of blue and white wares in the late 18th century. However Caughley china does have a more colourful side to it, and to make people more aware of this the Coalport China Museum will shortly be holding an exhibition exploring enamel decoration of Caughley porcelain.

The history of this type of Caughley china is an area which has been greatly overlooked, traditionally being viewed as inferior to the enamel decorated porcelain produced by other factories. However, since early in the last century writers on ceramics have been suggesting that much high quality Caughley polychrome porcelain had been mistakenly classified as Worcester porcelain.

So the Museum set themselves a project to identify the painters and organisations responsible for the enamel decoration of Caughley china and shed light on the history of the Caughley factory as a whole. The results of this research can be seen in the exhibition itself which covers every aspect of enamel decoration on Caughley porcelain from the mid 1770s to 1799 and beyond.

Over 300 pieces will be on display, some on loan from other collections, and the Museum believes that this is the first time that so much enamel decorated Caughley china has been gathered together in one place.

Highlights include some of the finest examples of this china, as well as magnificent mask jugs decorated with fanciful exotic birds and beautiful landscapes. There will also be a number of pieces from the 1793 Marquis of Donegal's stunning dessert service, and the only four known dated pieces of Caughley polychrome.

Thanks to the work of Chris Brown of the Caughley Society, the Museum says their understanding of Caughley porcelain has been changing on an almost daily basis and they now know a great deal more about the enamel

Caughley plate with the arms of the Dutch Stadtholder Willem V. Believed to have been decorated for the Prince's visit to the Gorge in 1796, recent research suggests it may be of an earlier date





'Target' pattern Caughley coffee pot, so called because the design resembles a dartboard. Probably decorated by the Chamberlains' establishment in Worcester in the early 1790s

decoration of Caughley porcelain. They can now clarify what was decorated during the early years, what was decorated by the Chamberlains in Worcester, and what was decorated at the factory. The work of a number of different painters has been identified and new light has been cast on the previous grey

area of the mid 1780s. In addition, previous thinking on dating and decoration of pieces has been challenged, and the commencement of enamel decoration at the Caughley factory has been pinpointed. The outcome of all this research has not only informed the development of the exhibition itself, but will also be available as a full colour catalogue at the exhibition.

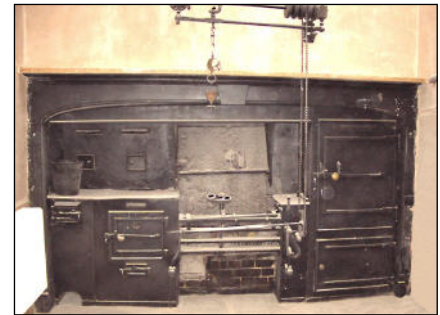
The exhibition will run from 19 March until 30 October at the Coalport China Museum. Further information may be obtained from Jennifer Thomson, tel: 01952 580650.

The Lawns

Late last year Mel Mars, the new owner of the Lawns, invited some of the Committee members to take a guided tour of the house and grounds, at the same time outlining how he plans to restore this important building.

When we were there he had already stripped all the floors to reveal the original oak flooring and taken up the carpets from the stairs, which are also made of oak. The wallpaper was being removed and Mel said that the walls would be painted in a neutral matte finish.

Mel also showed us the kitchen with its amazing cooking range and complicated spit. This cast iron range, which is the largest in the county, has a spit with a most devious mechanism; it seems that the hot air going up the chimney turns a fan which then turns a spindle which then turns the cogs which then turn the spit . . . !



This cast iron range is the largest in the county and has a complicated fan driven spit

Although Mel plans to modernise the kitchen, he does intend to keep the cooking range – and even get the spit working.

What we had really been invited to see, however, was something which had been revealed when the wallpaper had been stripped from one of the upstairs rooms. This was a drawing, obviously done by a very skilled person, of what appeared to be a vase. The style of the drawing suggested the vase was intended to be made from metal and was probably done on the spur of the moment, rather like an impromptu sketch on a paper napkin. Mel intends to leave the drawing intact and simply redecorate around it. Who knows if the vase, if it was ever made, will one day come to light.



This sketch of a vase was found on the wall of an upper room in The Lawns during restoration

Outside Mel pointed out the date on the building, 1727, which appeared beneath a phoenix, speculating whether this indicated that it had been built on the site of an earlier house which had burnt down.

We look forward to hearing how the restoration is progressing.

Severn Gorge Countryside Trust

Silkin Way to Sutton Wood

The SGCT has been busy this last autumn working to improve access in this area of the Gorge and to provide a new route from Coalport to Sutton Wood, bypassing the busy Coalport Road which has no footpath.

This undertaking is part of the World Heritage Site Regeneration through Heritage project, which is partly financed by the European Union.

A very festive evening was enjoyed by members when they met at the Lion Hotel for Christmas dinner. Good food, good wine and good company were rounded off by a couple of Ron Miles' famous anecdotes to send us on our way



The Trust is also looking to producing a new walks booklet for the area this year so that more people can explore the lovely walks in Haywood and Sutton Wood and enjoy the views of the Gorge.

Bookshop

William Reynolds, 1758-1803: Proceedings of the events held in June 2003 to commemorate his life and achievements, edited by Neil Clarke.

52 pp, A4 format, 19 photographs (11 in colour), 13 maps and diagrams, paperback, Wrekin Local Studies Forum.

Now available, this well illustrated proceedings of a memorable day may be obtained from Neil Clarke, Cranleigh, Little Wenlock, TF6 5BH; cost £5.00 (£5.75 including post and packing). Cheques should be make payable to Wrekin Local Studies Forum.

Broseley Morris Dancers

Over the years, Neil Clarke as editor of the Society's Journal, has published some fascinating material. Some of these journals are now out of print, but Vin Callcut, as reported in the August Newsletter, has embarked on a project to scan, re-index and make available this material.

To give members some flavour of what is in store, here is a report on the adventures of a party of Broseley morris dancers in the time of Cromwell, as detailed in the sessions records of Wenlock.

August 9th 1652. To the Wor'full the Baylife and Justices of the Towns and lybertyes of Much Wenlock certifying.

That all wee whose names are subscribed Inhabitants of the Parishe of Astley Abbots doe certifie that upon Munday in Whitsunday week bein'g the 7th of June last past there came a Morrice daunce forth of the Parish of Broseley with six sword bearers and a rude companye of followers throwe ye whole bodie of this our said Parish being uninvited or desired by any one within the said Parish that wee doe know of. And coming to Nordley unto the house of Richard Pensham a lycensed ale seller calling for what drinke they pleased left most party thereof unpaid and nott onely inseulted the people of the house butt also al the rest of the neighbors and people there present with some that were absent that have bine approved

frendes and servants to ye Parliament of England as likewise Mr. Crowther who desircing they to pay ye poore woman for their drinke they there upon presentley called her bad names many tymes and in this way misbehaveing themselves in letting their tongues run at large that yf there had bine a considerable partye to have mashed them yt is beleevved there would have bine a Create fray and blood shed yf nott murder comitted many of those rude persons haveing borne armes against ye Parliament as will be mad to apeare to your worships. Subscribed with our hands ye day and yeare above written

Signed

AMS X CROWTHER

GEO X FELTON

KATHEREIN X POWELL

Many other witnesses might be presented butt conceive these to be sufficient.

Coalbrookdale Watercourse Project

Work has recently started on the cleaning up of the Upper Furnace Pool in Coalbrookdale which, following years of neglect, will now be returned to an open body of water. The work will also include the creation of visitor amenities together with an explanation of the importance of the watercourses in the area's heritage.

This pool, which is on the corner of Dale and Darby Roads, is one of six originally constructed to store water for providing the power for the blast furnaces and forges in Coalbrookdale.

This project is only part of an overall plan to restore these historic watercourses. Once completed, it is

This Pool was constructed to power the Upper Furnace, the first blast furnace in which coke-smelted iron was successfully used to make castings



proposed to enhance this World Heritage Site attraction by making public access easier and by telling the story behind the original building of this system.

Anyone who can contribute to this is asked to contact either Chris Butler on 01952 202524 or Kate Turner on 01952 202273, both of Telford and Wrekin Council.

The work is being funded by Advantage West Midlands, English Partnerships and the European Regional Development Fund and is being managed by the Borough of Telford and Wrekin in conjunction with Atkins Global Consultants.

Photograph, map and information courtesy of Telford and Wrekin Council



Legend

1. New Pool

Probably built towards the end of the 17th century as a backup for the Upper Furnace Pool. In 1864 the construction of the Great Western Railway severely encroached on it, although the south part of the dam and the south edge of the pool have survived.

2. Upper Furnace Pool

Constructed to power the Upper Furnace. This was the first blast furnace in which coke-smelted iron was successfully used to make castings, a process developed by Abraham Darby. Darby took over the works in 1708, at which time they were in a state of considerable disrepair after the dam had burst causing the furnace to explode.

In 1864 a railway viaduct was built across the pool. The Upper works were abandoned in the early 1900s and the pool gradually became silted up.

3. Lower Furnace Pool

Built by Darby in 1718, although it may have been linked with earlier forging activity. Gradually filled in to accommodate the expansion of the Coalbrookdale Company, by 1927 it was reduced to a narrow linear watercourse.

4. Upper Forge Pool

This site is famous for experimental ferrous metal working activities. It was the site of the steelworks established by Basil Brooke in the 1620s, and was in use until the 1680s. Taken over by Darby in 1715, the pool was gradually infilled with industrial waste, leaving only a narrow watercourse by the mid 1960s, which was later culverted.

5. Boring Mill Pool

From the 1700s this pool provided power for Middle Forge and was subsequently linked to the Upper Forge complex. Steam powered engines were installed in the 1780s and by 1786 it was known as Boring Mill.

The elongated and narrow pool was enlarged in 1786, probably to create a reservoir for pumping water back uphill. Boring Mill ceased production in the 1840s after which the pool was gradually infilled.

6. Lower Forge Pool

This was probably the earliest pool on the system, dating from the early part of the 1600s. Over the years, the site has been used for plating, the manufacture of frying pans and nail making. By 1903 the pool was filled in and a workshop erected by the Coalbrookdale Company.

Since the 1930s the site of the forge has been a motor garage, the owner of which used water power to generate electricity to light up his petrol pumps.

Treasure Trove

Rex Key has been given sight of an interesting find of three old clay pipe bowls which were discovered recently in Little Wenlock. This is what he has to say about them.

These pipe bowls are extremely interesting, at least for some one like me! The first one (Fig 1) is a classic early 17th century pipe, of the style being made in Broseley around 1630-40. It has been made to a high quality, and the clay appears very similar to Broseley coal measure clay which was used in this village at that time. The rouletting around the rim (applied by a milled wheel attached to a wooden peg inserted into the bowl) is the finest I have seen during 35 years of pipe studying. Unfortunately the base (heel) of the pipe is missing. This almost certainly would have been impressed with the maker's mark or initials.

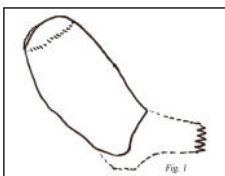


Fig 1. A classic early 17th century pipe

The next pipe (Fig 2) is nearly 100 years later. Again a classic Broseley type from the period 1710-20, and the bowl well burnished (usually with an agate stone) before firing. The maker's mark has been applied to the base of the spur. It looks much like "TH", with the marking tool having been degraded a little. Thomas Hartshorne was making this type of pipe at Benthall, recorded between 1690 and 1743, so it may have been one of his.



Fig 2. Thomas Hartshorne may have made this pipe

No doubt about the Bunch of Grapes (Fig 3). Made between 1881 and 1903 at the Crown Pipeworks, Broseley (now the museum) by Rowland Smitheman. It is a copy of a Southorn Bunch of Grapes design, but with the tiny branch attaching the stem to the bowl omitted, possibly to avoid accusations of copying Southorn's designs. The stem appears to show a "B" for the start of Broseley on Smitheman's stamp.

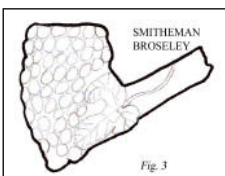


Fig 3. A 'Bunch of Grapes' made by Rowland Smitheman

Rex will be forwarding details of these pipe bowls to the National Clay Pipe Archive at Liverpool University.

Mailbox

Severn trows built in Bridgnorth

My wife and I live in Scotland but are of Kidderminster origin and in looking through papers belonging to her grandfather, who was born in Bewdley, we found the papers "Certificate of British Registry" for what looks like a trow built by Francis Oakes in 1818 in Bridgnorth; this was registered to a Joseph Jefferies of Stourport in 1831. The boat was the "Jane" of Gloucester. The boat was surveyed before purchase by a person named Coleman in Bridgnorth. A Thomas Davis was to be the Master.

I am looking for registers of such boats as well as any information about Joseph Jefferies and a possible son/relative named Benjamin Jefferies. Incidentally, we have in our possession a Coalport drinking mug, with the latter's name painted on it.

We should appreciate hearing from your Society as to where we could get further information about the boat.

Prof Lawrence Lowe

Tel: 01383 850033, Mobile: 07774 173925

e-mail: lawrencelowe@yahoo.co.uk

Broseley and Sutton Wood

I am researching my family history and find that I have two links from different lines having an association with the Iron Bridge area.

The first is George Jones who was a coal miner in the Black Country in the mid 1800s. His place of birth was Broseley in the early 1800s. Do company or other records exist of those who worked in the mining industry around Broseley in the early to mid 1800s? Do you have the name of the parish church at Broseley in the early 1800s where records may exist for local births and marriages? If available, I would like to trace George and his parents from historical sources.

A second, unconnected ancestor has Sutton Wood in Shropshire as her place of birth. Her daughter Emily Jenkins was born in Madeley, Shropshire in 1861.

Looking at Ordnance Survey maps for Shropshire, I can only see Sutton Wood as a named area near Coalport and Madeley. There is a Sutton Wood Farm just off the present Coalport Bridge to Madeley Road. Sutton Wood runs along the River

Severn on the opposite side of the road. In the woods, there is a big house called Sweyney Cliff House. A lodge associated with this house lies on the Coalport/Madeley Road and a drive leads to it through the trees. If this house is now a hotel, I cannot find a website. Further downstream, there is a caravan park site on the flats next to the river.

I am wondering if anyone can help me determine if there was a settlement in the Sutton Wood area in the early to mid 1800s, perhaps on the site of the present day caravan park, where my ancestor may have been born. A map of the area in 1887 gives an indication that there might have been some sort of building or buildings near there called Sutton Wharf. Do you have the name of the nearest parish church to Sutton Wood, which might help me trace the birth records for this ancestor?

Any help that you may be able to give to enable me to learn more about the life of my ancestors in this 'cradle of the industrial revolution', such as information or specialist contact names and addresses, would be very much appreciated.

David Jones
d.jones@csl.gov.uk

Legg's Hill

Seeing the picture of Legge's Hill on your website, I thought you might be interested to know that I have just received the birth certificate of an Edwin Legg, born in 1843 to Richard and Mary Legg at Legg's Hill. Edwin's marriage certificate (1886) says that his father Richard was a pipe maker!

Hope this might be useful background for you. Or maybe you know more than we do?

Brian Legg
DrBrianLegg@leggtronix.e7even.com

In response to this email Broseley's resident pipemaker, Rex Key, asks how many Leggs would Brian like!

Leggs or Legges of Broseley were among the founding fathers of the clay pipe industry in Broseley. They certainly date from 1675 when a Richard Legg was making clay pipes. There was also Ben Legg, Henry Legg, John Legg, Michael and Thomas Legg, all recorded as master pipemakers. Then there were several Sam Leggs.

There are some pipes in the British Museum made, it is believed, by a William Legg who was born in 1664.

An engraved stone used to be visible in the wall of a cottage at the Fox Lane end of Duke Street saying Richard Legg made pipes on the site in the 19th Century.

Salopian Vase

In the last issue Paul Lowe wrote regarding a vase which had been in his family's possession for some years. Roger Edmundson, author of Benthall Pottery, Shropshire and its Salopian Art Pottery, has some information on this for him.

Your vase with the diamond shaped SALOPIAN mark is a product of Benthall Pottery, Shropshire c 1880 – 1900. This diamond mark was usually reserved for high quality pieces of Salopian Art Pottery (see my book).

I have never seen an example of your vase shape and should be very interested to see either the piece or coloured illustrations of it.

Broseley brickworks

I am cataloguing some photographs of the area taken by a relative in the early 1980s. One shows a section of derelict wall with



two arches in an area of scrub; it is labelled 'Broseley brickworks'. From the sequence of slides I would think it was at the Jackfield end of Broseley. I wonder if anyone can help identify it?

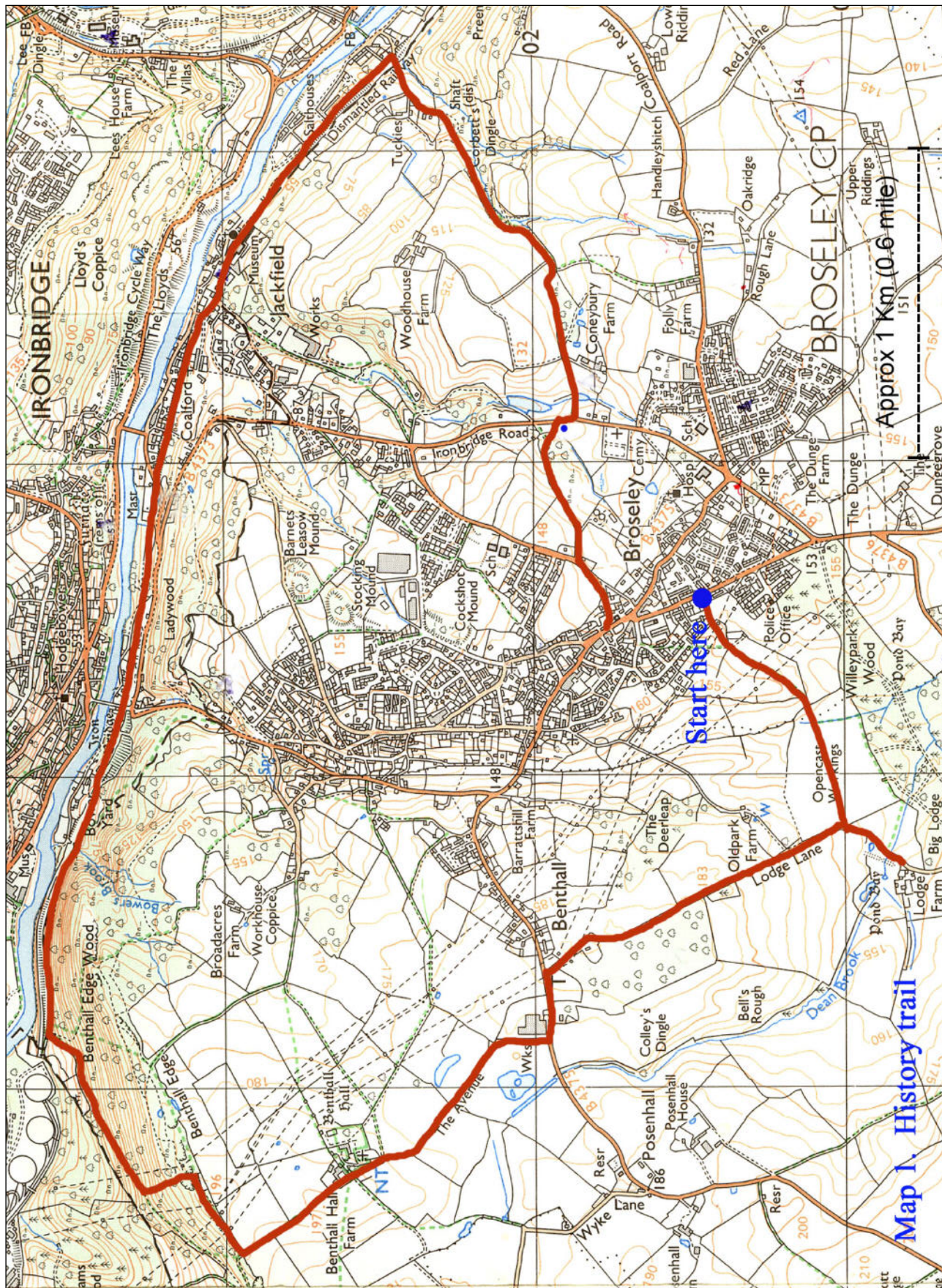
John Bevis
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Errata

The illustration of the Benthall loving cup, which appeared in the article on the Ceramics Industries in the Broseley area in the November Newsletter, was wrongly attributed to Roger Edmundson. Acknowledgement should have been made to Shrewsbury Museum.

Joint President of the Society Noel Ward, a thumbnail sketch of whom appeared in the November Newsletter, would like to point out that he was only called up for active service in 1941, and not at the beginning of the war as reported.

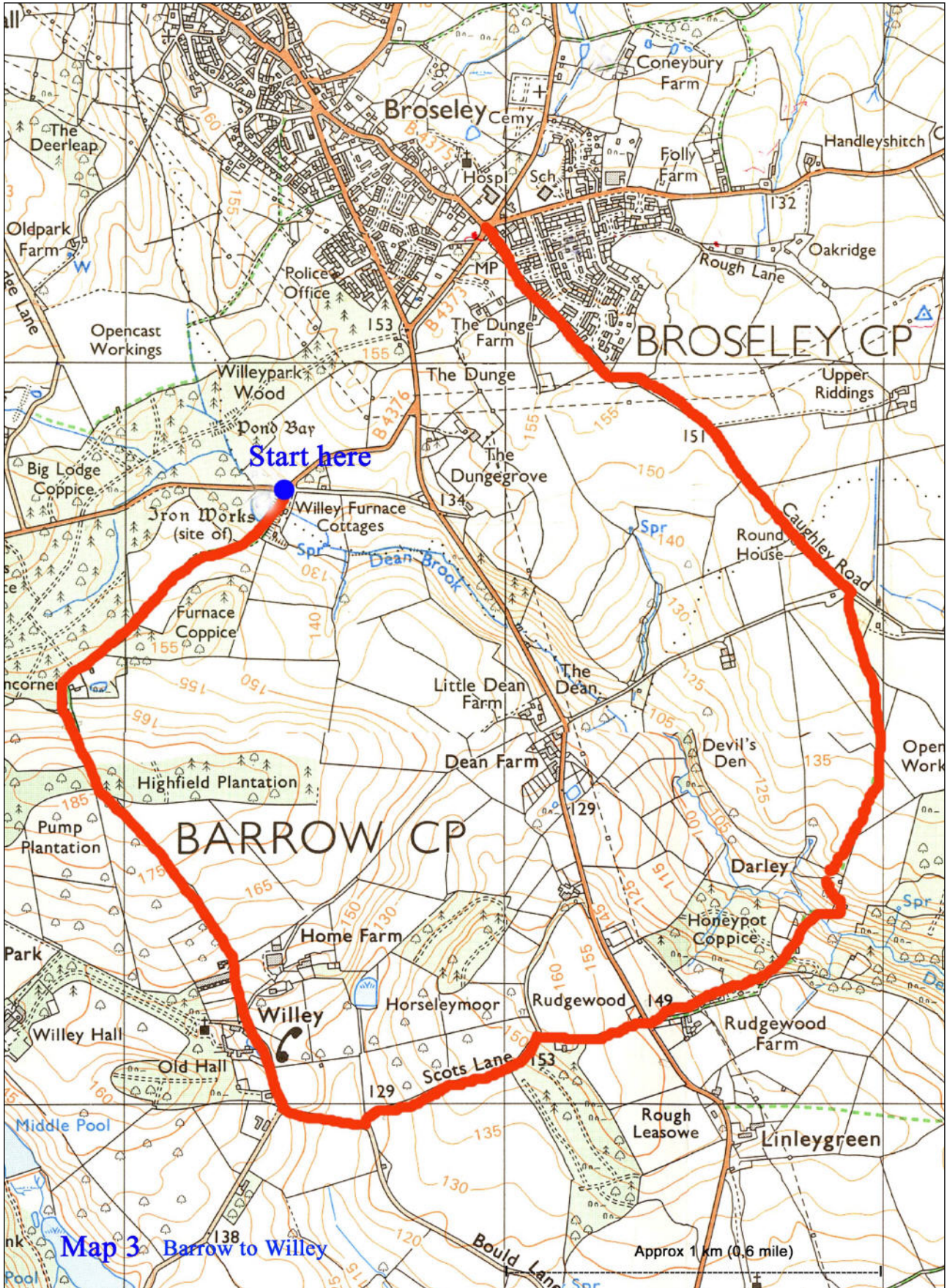
Map 1. History trail through the Fiery Fields, Lodge Lane, Benthall, Benthall Edge, Patten's Rock, Bower Yard, Jackfield, Corbett's Dingle, Coneybury Farm and Dark Lane



Map 2. Pound Lane, Caughley Road, Swinney Farm, Corbett's Dingle and Coneybury Farm



Map 3. Barrow to Willey, Darley and Caughley Road



Maps reproduced from Ordnance Survey Pathfinder series