

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."

Originally published at "The Salopian and West-Midland Journal" Office Madeley Salop,
1879

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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 as well as Pottery and Clay pipe manufacture.

The book still remains the main source of information on the history of Broseley and is particularly informative on family, medieval and industrial 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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Published at "The Salopian and West-Midland Journal" Office,
Madeley, Salop, 1879.

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
Mary Ann,
LADY FORESTER,
OF
WILLEY PARK.

MADAM,

The deep interest taken by you in matters relating to the past, when tending to elucidate opinions, manners, and customs in connection with the manors and estates of which the Right Honourable Lord Forester is the head, together with the respect felt for the Forester Family, render the dedication of this work to your Ladyship an appropriate and pleasing duty.

As Lord Forester has been pleased to intimate your Ladyship's willingness to accept such dedication, I will only express a wish that the perusal of the work may afford you gratification.

I have the honour to be
Your Ladyship's obedient servant,
JOHN RANDALL.

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To these are added in the higher priced edition
photographs of places of interest.



TOWN OF BROSELEY, FROM PRICTHARD MEMORIAL
[LOOKING UP HIGH STREET]

BROSELEY:

ITS PAST AND PRESENT ASPECTS.

Like many other places, of little importance in themselves, Broseley is known to very many inhabitants in distant parts of the kingdom who have neither seen nor expect to see it. Its modern aspect probably would scarcely answer to the conceptions formed of it, not that it is not an improved, a neat, and respectable little town enough, but because some of its industrial features are no longer what they once were. For such a sketch there are as may fairly be supposed to comprehend what it was and now is, it is essential that we dive a little into the hoary and mediaeval past, and then, as a connecting link, notice such of its features as we ourselves can remember, although such as now no longer exist.

Broseley, it is true, has no ancient structures or ivied ruins to tempt the class of students Pope in ponderous phrase sarcastically described in the well known lines:-

“With sharpened sight, pale Antiquaries pore,
The inscription value, but the rust adore.”

Still it has a venerable past, the aspect of which it is not difficult to reconstruct. Some, we are aware, may scarcely tolerate a digression of the kind, less perhaps from a disinclination to break up and penetrate the old surface crust of things than from want of leisure time to unravel them; yet there is a growing tendency, patent in many ways, of an increasing desire to lift the veil, to scrutinize the features of the men who went before us, to make out their household words and every day deeds, as a means of interpreting their thoughts, and discovering how like or unlike they were to ourselves. Not that we feel sympathy with those who would seek to clothe the advanced present in the well worn habiliments of the past; as nothing surely would more mar and cripple that inner acting principle which has progressively advanced from childhood to maturity. Broseley, as we shall see, was under the spiritual jurisdiction of the wealthy Priors of Wenlock; but whilst admiring the venerable ruins of the stately monastery the old monks raised with artistic taste and religious zeal, or reproducing a fair copy of an outward form of things suited, it may have been, to the infancy of this England of ours, we would by no means seek to restore the dreamy unreality which underlay what must appear to the reflecting mind but a strange quaint mixture of faith and superstition.

BROSELEY, WITHIN REGARD OF THE ROYAL CHASE OF SHIRLOT, A FEUDAL MANOR OF LAY LORDS &c.

Originally, Broseley formed part of the great primeval forest known as the Royal Chase of Shirlot, which extended to the Severn at Jackfield, and for many miles on either side, and of which “Broseley Wood” remained to within a few generations back a severed fragment, as similar woods skirting the river at Sweney, the Roving, and the Wren’s Nest do now. The ancient jurisdiction of this forest extended to Barrow, Benthall, Buildwas, Shineton, Belwardine, the Dean, Rowton, Caughley, Little Caughley, Sweney, Coalmoor, Stanley, Astley Abbots, and places as far down as the Knowle Sands, and Eardington. The Lodge (the old hunting lodge) between Broseley and Barrow, and the Deer Leap (Deer Loape) – the latter a contrivance in the form of a pit-fall for trapping game, are names which come down no doubt to us from those early times. There are still in the basement of the Old Lodge quaint substantial portions with evidences of extreme antiquity, which would lead one to suppose that they belonged to the original building, in which hunters of the stag and wild boar were wont to hang up their horns, refresh themselves, and tarry for the night. Many old yew-trees too, indigenous to the soil, rooted in rough broken ground where they grew in old bowmen days, may still be seen here and there, breaking the monotony of modern plantations by their sombre green.

It is generally however as some feudal manor, or as part of the ancient possessions of a wealthy monastery, that we get such a sufficient insight of the history of the place as to enable us to form an approximate idea of its social state. The account we get of Broseley from William the Conqueror’s Surveyors is this:-

“The same Helgot holds Bosle. Gethne held it (in time of King Edward) and was a free man. Here is I hide geldable. There is arable land (sufficient) for II ox-teams. In demesne is one (such team), and (there are) III serfs, and III boors, and I radman with I team. In time of King Edward, the value (of the Manor) was 16s. 1d., now it is 12s. He (Helgot) found it waste.”

The population of Broseley at this period, it will be seen, was small, and mostly servile, and the extent of ground under cultivation, also small. It was just emerging from its wild aboriginal

state, but had suffered a relapse, owing no doubt to the wars and unsettled state of the country, for whereas the manor was worth sixteen shillings and a penny in the time of King Edward the Confessor, it had become so impoverished as to be worth no more than twelve shillings at the time of the Survey, and Helgot, found it waste; or with no team-power to cultivate it; consequently realising nothing. How much was included in the *hide*, which meant just as much as the skin of an ox, raw or dressed, cut into strips would measure, is not clear; it included from 60 to 100, or even 700 modern acres. What ever it was it was *geldable*, subject to Danegeld, or the ordinary dues of the Hundred; and it was capable of employing more ox-power in ploughing than was employed upon it by the cultivators. There were four *serfs*, or slaves of the lower class, four boors, peasants, and one radman, who held over the boors, who are supposed to have supplied the board or table of their superior.



WARE found at Uriconium, supposed to be made of Broseley Clays.

The accompanying engraving is from a block used in "The Ceramic Art of Great Britain," by Professor Jewitt, F.S.A., who, speaking of the Broseley Clays, says:- "To the Shropshire potteries – those of the clays of the Severn Valley, probably at Broseley – a vast number of varieties of vessels are to be traced; and it is interesting to know that the same bed of clay which at the present day produces articles of daily use, produced fifteen hundred years ago the vessels for the table, &c., of the inhabitants of the then great neighbouring city of Uriconium. In the excavations which have been undertaken on the site of this ruined city immense quantities of fragments of pottery have been found, and with the exception of the Samian ware and the Durobrivian ware, it is not too much, perhaps, to say that the whole, or nearly so, has been made in the Severn Valley. Of these wares, two sorts especially are found in considerable abundance; the one white, the other of a rather light red colour. The white, which is made of what is commonly called Broseley clay, and is rather coarse in texture, consists chiefly of rather handsomely shaped jugs or bellarmine – shaped vessels, of different sizes' of Mortaria; and of bowls of different shapes and sizes, which are often painted with stripes of red and yellow. The other variety, the red Romano-Salopian ware, is also made from one of the clays of the Severn Valley, but is of finer texture, and consists principally of jugs not dissimilar to those in the white ware, except in a very different form of mouth; and of bowl-shaped colanders."

A group of this Romano-Salopian ware, from the Cemetery at Uriconium, is given next page
(Ed. ABOVE)

The feudal institution of villeinage, alluded to at an earlier stage, had then scarcely ceased to exist. One half the population, then two millions, in the reign of King John, were villeins. So late as 1382 we read of Sir Simon Burnley, a Knight of King Richard's Household, as he rode into Gravesend, is said to have seen a townsman, whom he claimed as the son of one of his female slaves. The man denied that he had ever been a slave to any one, and the crowd sympathised with him and took his part. Sir Simon refused to abate his claim for less than three hundred pounds of silver, a price he knew the friends of the bondman could not raise; and pushing on through the crowd, with two sergeants at law and a following of armed men, he ordered that the prisoner

should be taken to Rochester Castle. This led to a cry, down with the tyrants; and occurring about the time of Wat Tyler, served to fan the blame (sic) of insurrection which had already broken out, chiefly against villeinage and the Poll Tax. It is said that it has not been abrogated by statute to the present time; but the spirit of the times has been too much for it, and it practically ceased to exist many years ago. Knight Service, by which, as we have seen, landowners had to pay fines to the king on coming into their property, and by which they could not alienate one acre without the purchase of a license, were abolished by statute, and no relic was allowed to remain far on in the 17th century.

By favour of King Henry I., who, conscious perhaps of his usurpation, and who, feeling some insecurity for his position, thought it prudent to conciliate and draw to his side men of ability and known allegiance, rather than those of birth or descent merely, the manor of Broseley passed into other hands. In this instance the favourite was Warin de Metz, who by marriage was allied to the [10] Peverels, then a powerful family in the Marches, and who was the subject of the songs of the *Trouvères* from which a curious old chronicle, treating of de Metz, was compiled. Mr. Eyton, from whose invaluable work we take our main facts, and whom we propose copiously to quote, tells us that this chronicle states that Waren de Metz came into notice before the death of William the Conqueror. Having given the results of his researches with regard to the family of Fitz Warin and his coheirs, speaking of William Fitz Warin, of Burwardesley he says:— “It was doubtless the individual under notice, in whose favour the following precept of Henry II. was issued early in that King’s reign:—

“Henry King of England and Duke of Normandy to the Sheriff and his Ministers of Salopesire. I concede that William Fitz Warin may hold and have his assarts in Salopesire and may turn them to his profit at his own pleasure. Witness – The Chancellor at Faleise.’

“It was about this time (but specifically in 1170 or 1171) that Fulk Fitz-Warin I. the presumed elder brother of William, died. We are also fortunate in having proof that William was ere long succeeded at Broseley by another Warin. We thus complete a parallel between the two presumed brothers.

“This Warin the successor and almost surely the son of William, was a person of note in his day. The earliest mention I find of him is in a deed, which passed while Peter was Prior of Wenlock, *i.e.* between the years 1169 and 1176. This deed is attested by Warin de Burwardesley and Philip his brother.

[11] “About September 1176, the three Justices appointed to that circuit under the Statutes of Northampton, visited Shropshire, Amongst others they inflicted a fine of two merks on ‘Warin de Burwarley, because he was present when excuse was made about the death of John.’ A murder, I suppose, had been hushed up by the laxity of some manorial or provincial court, or jury, which should have investigated the case more fully, and of which Warin was a member.

“At Michaelmas 1177, Warin de Burewardesley appears as one of those who had been amerced by the King himself for trespass on the Royal Forests. His fine of ten merks, when compared with his position and that of others more heavily punished, indicates no very aggravated offence. He discharged half the debt in the current year and half in the year following.

“I now come to a most important entry relating to this Manor, the appearance of which on the Staffordshire and not the Shropshire Pipe-Roll is remarkable; but such transfers are by no means unprecedented.

“During a recent visit of the King’s Justices a fine had been negotiated by Fulko son of Fulko Fitz Warin which he had paid before Michaelmas 1183. He had proffered ‘one merk that he might prosecute in the King’s Court (instead of before the Justices) the suit which he had concerning one hide of land in Burewardesley.’

[12] “We have here not only a satisfactory correspondence between the *Domesday* measurement of Bosle and the subsequent contents of Burwardesley; but, according to my view, hitherto presumptive, we have the son and heir of the elder brother suing his first cousin, the son and of the younger brother, for his inheritance.”

THE LORD OF BROSELEY FINED BY JUSTICES OF THE FOREST,
AND BEING GUILTY OF TREASON FORFEITS HIS POSSESSIONS,
BUT PURCHASES THEM AGAIN OF THE KING.

At the Michaelmas Court, 1188, Warin de Burwardesley was fined by the Justices of the King’s Forest for building a mill without proper license to do so; and shortly after he is found

aiding the treasonable designs of John Earl of Moreton, by going into the employment of that Prince at Nottingham, and on the surrender of castle in the March of that year is found amongst the garrison. His manors and effects were consequently seized into the king's hands. The records, (Escheat Roll of Divers Counties inserted in Rot. Pip. 6. Ric. I., as quoted by Mr Eyton are as follows:— "At Michaelmas 1194, the Custos of the King's Escheats, under the head of "Salopescire" renders account of the following receipts, viz – of £3. 8s. 6d., of the *ferm* of Warin's Burwardesley, for half a year;— of £10. for the corn of the same *vill* which had been sold;— of 17s of the *ferm* of the same Warin's Bradelea (Bradley);— and of 6s. 8d. for hay of the same *vill* which had been sold.

"At the same period (Michaelmas 1194) 'Adam de Beissin accounted five merks for pardon, whereas he had married Mabel le Strange of Burwardesley without the King's license and for having his lands in Shropshire in peace.' He had paid the whole fine.

"This requires some explanation. Adam de Beysin of Billingsley, Wrickton Wakerslow, and Ashfield, the last three of which he held *in capite* of the Crown, had married Mabel eldest daughter and eventually coheir of Warin de Burwardsley. This being without license he was liable to fine and forfeiture, not because he had married an heiress or ward of the Crown, which was not yet Mabel's condition, but because he himself was a tenant *in capite*. But a still more important hint is contained in this Exchequer entry – Mabel daughter of Warin de Burwardsley is called 'Mabel le Strange.'

"This, in conjunction with our previous assumptions, reminds us of the inferences drawn from the Fitz Warin Chronicle, viz. that Warin de Metz was not only akin to the family of Le Strange, but might himself be well described by a name, which, if I mistake not, was originally borne by or applied to more than one family.

"Very shortly after Michaelmas 1194, Warin de Burwardsley redeemed his forfeited lands, for the Escheator who accounted at Michaelmas 1195, had received nothing therefrom during the past year. Moreover among the fines which had been offered and accepted by the King since "his return from Almage" was one to the following effect – ' Warin de Burwardesle renders account of 20 merks for having the King's goodwill and his land, who was with Earl John in Nottingham Castle. He has paid it and is quit.'

"At the same period (Michaelmas 1195), Warin de Burewardesle is entered as owing 2½ merks, a further fine which he had proffered 'for having trial about half a knight's fee in Rowlton and Ellardine, against Griffin, son of Hereverth (so written for Gervase). Warin's pledge was John le Strange. The whole of this fine was not discharged till Michaelmas, 1201.'"

In the reign of King John, Warin de Burwardesley was fined twice in the sum of twenty merks, in one case for a breach of the severe forest laws of that period; he paid three parts of the fine, and the king excused him of the remainder. He held the manor for forty years, and was succeeded by his son Philip, who also had the misfortune to incur the penalty of a fine under Henry III. May 20, 1220, he paid a palfrey to the king, then at Shrewsbury; and a writ, Oct. 2, of the same year, ordered the Barons of the Exchequer to discharge the debt from the accounts. He again offended however, and was amerced in five merks by the Justices of the Forest, because his dogs coursed without a license. He paid two merks and discharged the balance the following year.

THE QUARRY WHERE THE BUILDWAS MONKS GOT THEIR STONE.

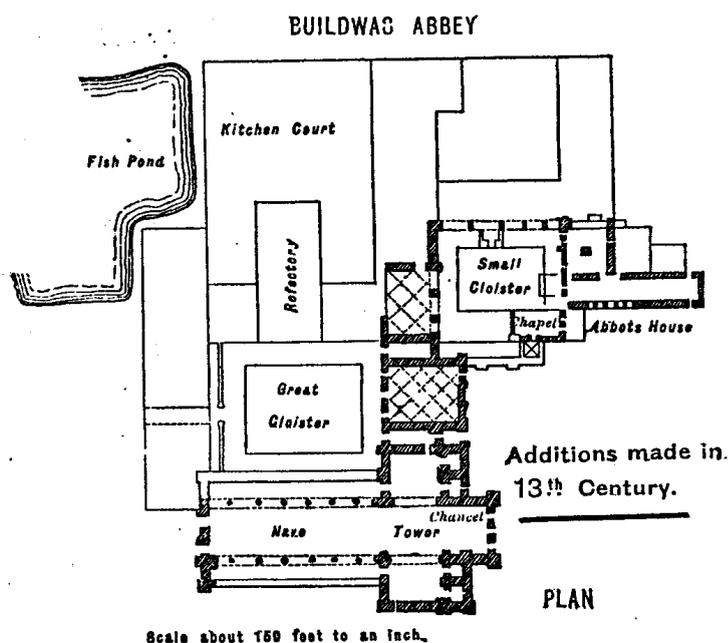
In 1220 Philip de Burwardesley is found granting a deed to the Abbey and Convent of Buildwas of a right of quarry and road through his wood of Burwardesley, towards the construction of their buildings. By this deed they were to have right of road from their quarries to the Severn, and were to cut down trees for that purpose, but to leave the timber on the ground.

This was clearly at a time subsequent to the erection of the Abbey itself, which is supposed to have been founded in the last year of Hen. I., A.D., 1135; and must have occurred at a period when the monks contemplated some alteration or addition to the building. May it not have been when the Great Hall and the Abbot's House were built, which it is supposed took place during the earlier half of the thirteenth century, a point prior to which it is considered doubtful whether Cistercian Abbots were allowed to live in separate houses. It is clear that the original and subsequent erections were of coal-measure sand-stone chiefly, and the probability is that the Broseley Quarries supplied the materials. The Quarry alluded to is on the pitch of the hill, near the Seven Stars public-house, and although trees have grown and houses have been built upon the

spot, for hundreds of years, it is still called "The Quarry," and the houses are so described in the rate-book. From this part of Broseley Wood it is clear that there was then no road down what is now the Ironbridge Bank; but the industrious monks of the Abbey made one; the descent to the Severn would be favourable for them to take the stone to the barges they had on the river, and which they would then draw against the stream.

On the next page (*below*) we append a plan of the original buildings of the Abbey, and of the additions subsequently made, and which it is supposed were in contemplation at the time this privilege was applied for by the Buildwas monks. The more recent erections alluded to, it will be seen, we have marked near the bottom of the plan.

[16]



This said Philip de Burwardesly is found making other grants and attesting other deeds, some of which are still at Willey and elsewhere. He was succeeded by his brother, Roger de Burwardesley, who seems to have died in 1243. Mr. Eyton says "that the three sisters of Roger, Mabel, Alice, and Margery were his heirs." Mabel had been married to Adam de Beysin, prior to her fathers death. This Adam, at his death left by Mabel, Adam, his son and heir, and a daughter Margery, who about 1225, had married Thomas de Bagsore. Adam, son and heir of Adam de Besin, died in 1243, leaving Robert, a child sixteen months old, as his heir, who became a

[17] ward of the Crown, and of whom the jurors of Wenlock report in 1255 that he is Lord of Burwardesley, of Arlscot and Bradley; that he held of the prior of Wenlock and did suit in his court, as before Richard I's. time his ancestors did suit to Munselowe Hundred.

According to the Rot. Hundred, ii, 84, 86, "The tenure by which Broseley was held of the Prior of Wenlock, was peculiar. The Lord of the *vill* was to dine with the Prior on Saint Milburg's Day and carve the principal dish at table. This service seems to have been discharged by the Beysins, as representing the eldest co-heiress of Broseley. It is mentioned in several Inquisitions but with some variety; for instance, in time of Edward II., the day on which the service was performed was Christmas Day, and the Beysin of that time was to pay a three days' visit to the Prior, and be entertained, together with his suit, at the Prior's charge."

RESULT OF MARRYING WITHOUT THE KING'S LICENSE; RUDENESS OF THE TIMES, &C.

Robert de Beysin at the age of 13 seems to have married a daughter of Philip le Bret; and he appears to have died before he completed his 25th year, September 19, 1267. The King granted marriage of his widow, Isabella, to Hugh de Beaumes; a precaution very essential in those days to take, as this lady afterwards found to her cost, for having remarried Robert de Turberville in 1272, without applying for the King's consent to do so, their lands were ordered to be seized. Alice, one of the three sisters above mentioned, was succeeded in her share of Burwardesley, which was a third, by her son, Roger de Eyton.

[18] The Assizes of October 1272, disclose something of the lawlessness of the period. "The Jurors of the Wenlock Liberty reported how Roger de Eyton and Petronilla his daughter had previously accused, in the County Court, Robert de Benethall, Hugh his brother, and John de Kantreyn of rape and robbery, and Phillip de Benethall of aiding and abetting. The case, it appears, had been carried from the County Court to the hearing of the King, but had not yet been settled." From the proceedings it appears that on June 9, 1269, Petronilla appeared to prosecute the four defendants for rape and breaking the King's Peace. The Sheriff was ordered to arrest them and keep them in custody till October 6, and then to have their bodies before the king. On

that day (Oct. 6,) Petronilla again appeared in support of the charge of rape and robbery. The Sheriff, in case of not finding the defendants, was in the usual form to order them to appear before himself and the Keepers of the Pleas, and to outlaw them. He now reported that Robert de Benethall and John de Kantreyn could not be found, and he was again ordered to outlaw them and to have their bodies in court on Nov. 18. The parties it is said subsequently accorded among themselves; but the King's *Peace* being involved in the question the Jurors were compelled to prosecute. They acquitted the defendants of robbery, but found them all guilty of a forcible attack on Roger de Eyton's house at Broseley, and the abduction of his daughter. Hugh de Benthall, being guilty of the further crime charged above, was ordered to be instantly arrested or retained in custody. "At the same Assizes, the Stottesden Jurors reported that Roger Fitz Denys of [19] Burwardesle, having accused Philip Mouner of Benthall of robbery, and being in pursuit of him, the latter turned to defend himself on the bridge of Brug, and was killed in the conflict which ensued."

Margery, the youngest of the three sisters, whom we have previously mentioned, who succeeded to her share of Broseley, and who married John Bagot, gave to her son Ralph de Covene, and Margery her daughter, this share, to hold which they gave one *sore* sparrow-hawk. This Ralph derived his name of Covene from Coven near Shareshill in Staffordshire, a manor he held under the Barons of Stafford. He appears to have been appointed Justice for gaol-delivery at Bridgnorth 1249. He was Lord of Covene and Seneschall of the King's Forests in Staffordshire in 1255; and he held the same office in the Royal Forest of Feckenham in Worcestershire the year following. Subsequent to this date he concurred with his wife Margery in demising their interests in Broseley for a term of years to Geoffrey de Pichford; and somewhere about that period, according to the Forest Pleas, he was *amerced* 12 merks for having hounds within the limits of the forest without warrant. At the same Forest Assizes he was amerced for some default levied by the Justices at Arlscot.

After the death of Ralph de Covene, his widow married William de Drayton, and Alice, the eldest of the daughters, according to a document at Willey, upon the death of her husband, Robert de Pendford, transferred the interest she had in Broseley to Geoffrey de Pichford, by means of the following grant:— "Know all men that I, Alice, eldest daughter of Sir Ralph de Covene, in my [20] liege widowhood, of my certain knowledge, and by the advice of my friends, and not under constraint, have given, &c. to Geoffrey de Pichford and his heirs all my land of Borewardeslee which my Lord Robert de Pendford and I formerly made over to him with the third part of the Advowson of the Church, and the third of the Dower of the Lady (Emma widow of Philip de Burwardsley) when she shall chance to die. — Rendering to me and my heirs 40s. annually under the same distraint as is more fully contained in the Charter which passed between my Lord Robert de Pendford and me and the same Geoffrey on the subject. — Witnesses: Hugh de Bolingale, William de Perton, Philip de Beckebur, John de Grenehul, William de Umfreston, Ralph de Kachylee, Philip de Swyneye, John de Bispeston Clerk, &c."

Alice, the widow of Robert de Pendford, next married Thomas Sany and litigation ensued, which after an interval, consequent upon arrangements come to, was renewed in Hilary Term at Westminster, 1272, by Thomas Sany (Sayne) and his wife Alice, suing Geoffrey de Pichford and his wife Mary for performance of customs, rents, and services due in Barwardesle. The plea was afterwards altered, and the prosecution finally withdrawn, and a compromise effected, Thomas and Alice surrendering their rights to Geoffrey for a consideration and one clove yearly. This Geoffrey de Pichford was Seneschall of all the king's forests in Shropshire in 1271; and in 1280 [21] he appears to have been charged with the sale of all old oak-trees within and without the king's park at Windsor. In 1281 he was appointed Sheriff of Surrey and Sussex; and in 1283, he appears as Constable of Windsor Castle. He was succeeded at Broseley by his son Richard, who in 1312 conveyed to Richard de Harlee and Burgia his wife all his land in Borewardeslee, with the capital messuage, Advowson of the Church, homages, services, suits of free men and natives, and two mills near the Dene, to hold to them and their heirs, rendering to the chief Lords all due services.

During the reigns of Edward III., Richard II., and those of still later sovereigns, many changes and much litigation appear to have ensued as to the respective rights and claims set up to lay and ecclesiastical privileges, with respect to which we shall content ourselves with the summary given by Dukes in his "Antiquities of Shropshire":— "A fine was levied 6th Edw. III, between Bridget the wife of Richard de Harley complainant, and Malcolm de Harley defendant, of the third part of the manor of Borwardesley and of the advowson of the church, jus Philippi de Harley haeredum 17th Edw. III. n. 151, a fine between Walter de Besin, Chevalier, and Alice his wife complainants, and Henry de Mortimer, sen. for two parts of the manor of Borwardesley and

advowson of the church, to the use of Walter and Alice for their lives, the remainder to John the son and heir of the said Walter and the heirs of his body, the remainder to the right heirs of the said Alice. 23d Edw. III. William de Baggesore, son and heir of Philip de Baggesore, paid the king a relief of 6s. pro virga terre et dimidio in Bordesley, the escheat of Robert de Bellem dudum Comitum Salopiensis. 37th Edw. III. John, vicar of the church of Wenlock, was seized of Burgh Wardesley. A fine was levied, 43d Edw. III, n. 51, between Roger de Cherleton and Elizabeth his wife complainants, John de Stoke and William de Hereford, of Ludlow, defendants, of the manor of Borwardesley to the use of Roger de Cherleton and Elizabeth his wife for their lives. A fine, 5th Rich. II. n. 60, between Robert Dansere, complaintant, and John de Morhall and Agnes his wife defendants, of two parts of this manor and of the advowson of the church. 7th Hen. V. n. 9, a fine between John de Beysin and William Clopton, Knt. of a moiety of this manor of the advowson of the church. Esch. 3d Hen. IV. n. 30, Anne the wife of Thomas Latymer had an interest here; so had John Crew, Esq. Esch. 6th Hen. V. n. 31; and Agnes the wife of Thomas Herbert, Esch. 32d Hen. VI. A partition bears date the fourth day of February, 25th Hen. VIII. between Elizabeth, Bridget, and Agnes, the daughters and co-heirs of John Harwell, whereby it appears that Elizabeth, the eldest daughter, had married with Anthony Ralegh her first husband, and that Leonard Rede was her second husband, and that she had for her share (inter alia) the manor of Broseley, with lands in Billingsley. That Bridget, the second daughter, had married Thomas Aston, of Ashton, in Cheshire, the manor of Billingsley being her purparty with 23s. 4d. rent issuing out of the manor of Thonglond. That Agnes, third daughter, was the wife of John Smith, one of the Barons of the Exchequer (from whom Lord Carrington is descended), and that she had the manor of Millichop with lands in Hungerford, Postern Magna, Postern Parva, Munslow, and Dydelbery, with 10s. 4d. rent out of the manor of Thonglond, for her purparty. 5th Eliz. John Munslow, Gent. had leave to alienate the manor of Buwardsley alias Broseley to Richard Cooper, Esq. and his heirs for ever.”

The Dene and Sweney appear also to have been associated with the manor of Broseley, and to have been disforested with it about the same time, that is about the year 1301.

When the manor was broken up the Earl of Essex, the favourite of Elizabeth, or some nobleman subsequently bearing that title – most probably the latter, appears to have come in for a share, and to have resided at the Amis. This is an old half-timbered mansion now in ruins, only the kitchen portion now remaining. It has been suggested that the name has a French origin *Les Amis*, (*Les Amies*), indicating it might have been the gift of a friend. A high wall which, like the old mansion, is going to decay, surrounds the grounds.* We believe that this was the old manor house which, with the estate, being added to the Willey property, gave the patronage of the living to the present owners, the Foresters, who bought it of the Purcells.

In 1684 there was a John Langley de Amies Gent., whose name appears as one of the Bailiffs of the Borough. This name occurs however at a much earlier period. In 1250 Geoffrey de Langley and some other justices were commissioned to visit several counties for the purpose of fixing an annual rent on all those portions of the King's Forests which had been reduced to cultivation by private individuals.

The name of Langley occurs frequently. In 1620 Thomas Langley Gent. is described as Balli. (Bailiff). And in the 40th year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, Richard Langley and Richard Wilcox were Bailiff's Peers. These elected Thomas Adams de Broseley to be Bailiff the following year. The name of Adams occurs frequently. The Langleys are sometimes described as of the Amis, and sometimes of the Tuckies. In 1674 a Samuel Langley de Broseley, Gent., and in 1672 an Andreas Langley de Woodhouse are mentioned. One A. Langley left a sum to be paid yearly to the minister & C. wardens out of the Woodhouse estate.

We have before us an old and rather lengthy document, being the answer of Elizabeth Langley, an Infant, by her Guardian Nicholas Harrison, Henry Mayor, and John Lacon, to the bill of John Berry and Martha his wife, which is interesting both from the names of places and those of Lords of the Manor, as well as from the information it contains and the reference we find in it as to coal-mines, at that early period. It is in a dilapidated condition, and not being an adept in deciphering old documents of the kind, with their abbreviated words, we are unable to give it complete. It sets forth that “ye sd Eliz: Langley hath heard ye sd. Manor of Broseley is a large quantity of a great yearly value, and ye great quantity of land called demesne land be parcell [25]

* Within the enclosure T. G. Thursfield M.D. found *Fritillaria alba* growing. Its rarity however has tempted so many pilferers that it has disappeared.

thereof, and ye other great quantities called priory Lands were reputed to be part of ye sd. manor. And ye other lands called Calutts (qy. Calcutts) and perry tree hill end, ye one James Clifford, Esq. was in King Charles ye First's time seized in Fee of ye sd. manor & joining lands, about ye fifth of the late King James made a grant of ye sd. manor and divers lands in and about Broseley (In which comprised ye Calut and perry tree Croft) to Sir Charles Fox¹, Knight, and others for ye term of 80ty years, determinable upon the deaths of Sir Charles Fox² and Elizth. Woodroffe, and in ye 10th year of ye reign of ye sd. King-James was assigned by Sir Charles Fox to William Porter, ye sd. Wm. Porter obtained a further² lease of ye sd. manor from John Cage and Mary his wife ye daughter and heir of sd. Clifford for 21 years to commence from ye determination of ye lease for 80ty years. – Porter borrowed a £1000 of Matthew Rogers about 14th of ye sd. King assigned ye leases of 80ty and 21 years to sd. Rogers to secure³ sd. £1000 sd. Clifford and in 10th year of sd. King's Reign leased the sd. priory lands to one Wm. Morse⁴ – years without impeacht. of Wast sd. James Clifford afterwards about 12th May in sd. King James's reign made a lease in reversion of sd. priory lands to Anthony Clifford for a £— to commence from ye expiration of ye sd. 99 years." It then proceeds to give details as to the power to sell the inheritance of the priory lands to John Weld and also several messuages and farms to divers other persons reserving to himself the Calcutts and pear tree Crofts &c. Certain assignments are then made to Wm. Whitmore, afterwards Sir Wm. Whitmore, in trust, of priory lands disengaged of all [26] encumbrances, and the said Calcutts and perry tree Crofts and "Cole Mines." The document then proceeds at some length to trace the claim through Samuel Langley, Morris Langley, Herbert Langley, to Elizabeth Langley, the Ward or Infant above named, as against Wm. Younge and others.

The Lacons were at one time proprietors of Willey, and of Linley. The name is frequently spelt Laken. A John Lakin was admitted a burgess, with John Walton, and Thomas de la Ford, in the reign of Hen.VIII. The name of Crompton of Broseley is not unfrequently found among the Bailiffs. In 1665 William Crompton de Broseley occurs among the Bailiffs. In Broseley Church is a handsome monument to the memory of Mrs. Elizabeth Crompton, daughter of Thomas Crompton, of Stone Park, Lord of the manor of Stone, by Ursula his wife, eldest daughter of Sir Walter Wrottesley of Wrottesley, Baronet. She died unmarried, 1747, aged 60; and but for the remark upon the tablet that she was the last heir of this ancient family, we should have been inclined to ask whether these were the ancestors of the Crumptions who half a century since had the ferry at Coleford?) The names of Legge and Southorn in one instance, in 1558, occur together. The former is sometimes described as of Wenlock and sometimes of Broseley. Stephens is another name which occurs, as are the names of Boden, Patton, Yates, Hagar, Littlehales, Smitheman, Roden and Smyth.

Edward Blakeway of Broseley Gent. was Bailiff in 1773. Thomas Turner of Broseley was [27] Bailiff in 1784, and Ambrose Gallimore of Caughley was Bailiff in 1785. The name of Hartshorne also occurs occasionally. Nicholas Hartshorne Gent. of Broseley, was Bailiff in 1750. Morris Hartshorne, and John Hartshorne junr., and a John Pisons, or Pisens were among the Burgesses admitted in 1658. The name of Charleton, or Cherleton occurs, and those of Weld, Forester, and Lawley, as Bailiffs.

We shall mention other old Broseley names when we come to speak of the registers.

SPIRITUAL JURISDICTION

Broseley originally was part of the large parish of Holy Trinity of Wenlock; and its church had no cure of souls. This was proved before the commission of Jany. 18, 1333, by a witness who stated that he had often beat the boundary of the parish of the church of Wenlock, and who gave a detailed account, shewing that the parish of Wenlock was bounded on this, the east side, by Madeley, Sutton, and Stockton.

Benthall also was included within the parish of Wenlock; its chapel is said to have been one of those which were founded and fostered by the Lords of the Fee in troubled times, under a presumption that they would remain independent; but in course of time the endowment of the daughter became an object to the mother church; the old plea of parochial jurisdiction was set up, and the said endowment confiscated. It appears to have been built prior to the year 1221, when some indefinite, but nearly valueless claim to the advowson thereof was conceded by Robert de Benthall to the prior of Wenlock, which resulted in annexing the endowment to the vicarage of [28] Holy Trinity of Wenlock.

The exact date of the foundation of the Broseley Chapelry is not known; but the erection of

the church, probably by one of the lords of Burwardesley, is supposed to have been somewhere in the twelfth century. In taking down the old church in 1844 Mr. Exley says he came upon the foundations of the original structure, which were of good solid masonry. The incumbent in acknowledgement of the affiliation of his chapel or church to that of Wenlock paid the annual sum of 2s., on the feast of St. Nicholas, to the Sacristan of that church. In 1201 the church or chapel of Burwardesley, in the Deanery of Wenlock, was valued at £6 13s. 4d. per annum, and the rector was beneficed elsewhere. This was the basement of an assessment of the parish in 1341; but an abatement was made by the Assessors on account of the growing corn having been destroyed by great tempests, because a large proportion of the parish lay uncultivated, owing to the poverty of the tenants, and because the glebe and small tithes of the chapel contributed to swell the greater sum (10 merks) and were not ratable on that occasion.

[29] The names of some of the early incumbents are preserved. "William Parson of Burwardesley," 1230; Ralph Cutuel, Clerk 1242; "William," (probably William de Haya), Parson 1272. Some dispute appears to have arisen as to the right of presentation in 1279, when the Bishop of Hereford collated John de Brug subdeacon, and decided the right of patronage to be vested thereafter in Sir Geoffrey de Pychford. Robert Turburville was rector from 1290 to 1300; he held also the parish church of Wheathill, which had a cure of souls. Richard de Pychford was the next incumbent; and in 1310 Geoffrey de Pychford his brother was instituted by the Bishop. Both of these held *Curative* Churches elsewhere. In 1332 the Chapel of Broseley and the Church of Madeley were held together by Sir John Aaron. Sir John was subjected to some proceedings as a pluralist by his bishop. The case was heard in the church of Wenlock, where witnesses were examined as to the non-curative nature of the chapelry, which seems to have been established. In 1359 the king was Patron in consequence of the Priory of Wenlock being in his hands owing to his being at war with France, and requiring money; Roger de Knightleye was then admitted to this "Free Chapel." Two other presentations by the Crown succeeded; one, James de Byllingford, instituted 1383, being called Rector, Custos, or master of this Free Chapel. In 1535, when Edmund Mitchel was Rector of Broseley and Linley, the value of his glebe and tithes averaged £8. 5s. 8d. per annum.

This seems to be the rector of Broseley whom Sir Thomas Butler or Boteler speaks of burying, when he was solicited to allow burials to take place at Broseley, instead of having to take the corpse to Wenlock, as was customary. In Sir Thomas's memorandum of the circumstance he is called Sir Edmund. We quote the incident from our Guide to Wenlock p. 141.

[30] "1542. Feb. 3rd Mem. at the same time in this Chancel of the Holy Trinity that I went to bury the Corpse of the sd John, Sir Edmund Mychell Parson of Browardesley aforesaid, in the presence of Rowland Wilcocks of the same Browardesley, willed me to give my consent that they of Browardesley might have their chapel there dedicate for the Burial there so to be had; unto whom I answered (if the law would so bear me) I would not consent to the dedicating of that their Chapel of Browardesley nor of none other annexed and depending unto this the Mother Church of the Holy Trinity of Moch Wenlock."

It will be seen by this how jealously the vicars of the Mother church guarded their privileges where fees were concerned. Sometime between this period, 1542, and 1570, the privilege of burying seems to have been accorded, as the register goes back to that time. There is a headstone in the church yard – the oldest the sexton informed us the graveyard contains, with the date 1628.

[31] The successors of Sir Thomas no doubt took wider views of duty, influenced by the altered state of things they saw growing up around them. They saw men reliant upon their own interpretation of scripture banding themselves together against ecclesiastical assumption, and however strong they may have hitherto been in immemorial usage they saw reasons for believing that great changes were at hand. It is not unlikely even that thus early some stern disciples of the Puritans, who under the reign of Elizabeth found greater freedom of action than heretofore, had been casting about and looking for a place in Broseley on which to settle down and erect a conventicle. However this might have been, a change in accordance with the spirit of the times seems to have taken place, for we find the pastor of Wenlock, George Adeney, and the parson of Broseley, Edmund Barton, who calls himself pastor of Broseley, among those who signed the "Testimony borne by the ministers of the Province of Salop, to the Truth of Jesus Christ, and to the Solemn League and Covenant; as also against the Errors, Heresies, and Blasphemies of the times, and the Toleration of them." (1642.).

HOW BROSELEY WAS GOVERNED

There were, as we have seen, first, the King's Courts at Westminster, and the County or Hundred Courts;* but by a grant of Richard I. the prior of Wenlock and his tenants were privileged with some exemptions with regard to *suits* in these. When the Inquisitions of Hundreds were taken in 1255, all manors in the Liberty of Wenlock were said to be under the Prior, and to do *Suit* to his Court only. He was Lord of the *Fee*. (In 1250 the Prior himself was fined for *assarting* lands, or plucking up trees by the roots in forest lands at Broseley).

Very glad no doubt the Broseley inhabitants were when Broseley was disaforested and they were removed from the cruel laws of these Courts. It was woe to the poor tenant into whose holding or garden a royal stag or wandering fawn happened to stray, if they received any injury. At the Forest Assizes of 1262, the verderers represented that a kid, wounded by an arrow, had [32] been found dead in the field of Atterley; and the arrow having been "given to the keeping of the *vills* of Atterleg, Walton, Monkley, and Barrow," and these *vills* not having appeared before the Justices or produced the arrow in court, they were all said to be in *misericordi*, subject to amercement or fine. Stags were royal beasts carefully guarded, and could not be injured without risk of mutilation or death. A dog must not be permitted within the sacred shade of the forest without being first *expeditated*, that is without having the balls of the feet cut off, otherwise its owner was liable to heavy penalties.

COURTS BARON AND COURTS LEET

Then there were the manorial courts, where the lords of Burwardesley or their stewards held a *court baron* for cases of misdemeanors, nuisances, and disputes about *tenures or tenancies*, and where freeholders sat as judges. Court Leet or view of frank pledge, was a court of record within a Hundred, a lordship, or a manor, before the Steward of the Leet. It was a king's court granted by Charter; and its original intent was to view the frank pledges, that is the freemen within the liberty, who according to the institution of King Alfred the Great were all mutually pledges for the good behaviour of each other.

The preservation of the Peace and the chastisement of divers petty offences against the public good were chief objects of this court. The objects of their jurisdiction were numerous, from common nuisances and other offences against the king's peace and public trade down to eaves-dropping and irregularities in public commons. A dinner was usually had on the occasion, called [33] a Court Leet Dinner. At the Court Leet presentments of various kinds were made.

There was also the Court Baron, a court which every Lord of a Manor had within his manor – *Curia Baronis*. It is always incident to a manor and must be held by prescription, and cannot now be created.

There were two kinds of Court Baron: the Baron or Freeholders Court, and the Customary Court. The Court Baron of Freeholders had jurisdiction for trying actions for debt, and the other Court Baron for taking property, estates, surrenders, admittances &c. In this Court the Jury inquired into and took care the Lord did not lose his service, duties, or custom, that the tenants made their suits of court and paid their rents and Heriots. They could present all nuisances prejudicial to the Lord's Manor. Also ascertain as to the Lord's woods, profits &c. In the absence of the Lord the steward presided over the court and admitted all copyholders to their estates in the name of the Lord according to the custom of the manor.

These court barons and court leets have lingered on to the present, but are now mere matters of form; no such courts with all their incidents and franchises, having been granted since the reign of Edward III.

There were three courts formerly held in Broseley. One, the Hundred court of Burton, (a court leet) the manorial court of Broseley, (a court baron) and the Court Leet of the Marsh, the only one now held, the former having fallen into disuse. It was at the Marsh that the Prior of [34] Wenlock had one of his principal Granges. The surrounding lands were held in *demesne*, but the manorial court which sat there exercised more extensive jurisdiction, as Broseley, as well as Benthall, Posenhall, Barrow, and Atterley were included. Besides these, Wigwig, Homer, Bradley, and part of Harley are now included in the Constablewicks. The court is held still at the Lion; 31 Constables are appointed, to whom are assigned the duties of making presentments, and

* At Inquisitions in 1247, William de Burwardesley Anien de Burwardesley, with Alice and Matilda, his wife and daughter, Enota Coly, Philip de Benthall, and the vicar of Wenlock, appeared to complain of several acts of extortion and wrong by the baliffs or beades of the Hundred

these forms are still gone through, but only as matters of routine.

The Prior's Court. At an Inquest, examination, or judicial Inquiry in 1274, the House of St. Milburgh was said by the jurors to have had Gallows (or right of hanging) and *Assize of Bread and Beer* within its Liberty, and to have had such privilege beyond the reach of living memory. The Prior claimed to hold two courts yearly in Wenlock or Eton, to try all pleas which a Sheriff ordinarily tried (in his Tour or Circuit, then made twice a year, and to take *infangethef utfangethef, sac soc &c.* Gradually, and by concessions of the monks, corporate privileges and corporate government sprang up, and about 1267 we read of there being a Provost.

COURTS ESTABLISHED BY VIRTUE OF THE CHARTERS OF INCORPORATION.

[35] Next, there were the courts, established by the Charter of Edward IV., A.D. 1468, and that by the Charter of King Charles I. Broseley being an integral part of the parish of Wenlock it shared in its privileges, and those of the priory. An effort at one time was made by Sir W. W. Wynne to oust Broseley of its share of these privileges by laying stress upon the wording of the Charters where they speak of "men and residents of the town of Wenlock;" and Counsel's opinion was taken on the subject, but the attempt failed, and Broseley with other outlying districts continued to enjoy all the privileges of the franchise. The Charter of King Edward, passed in the eighth year of his reign, commences thus.

[36] "The King to all Archbishops, Abbots, Priors, Dukes, Earls, Barons, Justices, Sheriffs, Magistrates, Ministers, and to all Bailiffs and Liege People Sendeth Greeting. Know Ye That we at the request of our well beloved and Trusty Chancellor, Sir John Wenlock, Knight, Lord Wenlock, and calling to mind the laudable and acceptable services which our well beloved and faithful the Liege Men and residents in the town of Wenlock, in the county of Salop, have performed to us towards our obtaining of our Rights to the Crown of England and which for some time hath been withholden from our ancestors: Being willing therefore to confer upon the same Men and residents our Grace and Favour, of our special Grace and from our Royal Bounty. We have Granted and by these presents do Grant to the Men and residents aforesaid that the same town shall be a free Borough Incorporate for ever in Deed and in name of one Bailiff, the Burgesses and Commonalty of the same Borough; and that they the Burgesses shall be called and named the Burgesses of the Borough of Wenlock, and that the same burgesses at their will after the date of these presents, may elect and chuse from amongst themselves for the wholesome rule and government of the said town, one Bailiff." It then proceeds to grant fairs and markets, and to enumerate taxes from which burgesses are to be free, and continues as follows:—

"That they shall have cognizance and recognizance of all and all manner of pleas of lands and tenements, within the said Town, and the precinct of the same, as well of assizes, novel, disseizin, mort d' ancestor, certificates, and attaints, as of debts, account, trespass, covenants, falsities, and detentions, as well by deed as of deeds, and muniments and all other pleas, &c., within the same Town arising, to be holden before the Bailiff for the time being, with all the profits of such pleas, without any let, or hindrance whatsoever.

That they shall have a Court in the Town or Borough aforesaid, to be holden on Tuesday in every week, before the Bailiff of the said Town, for the time being.

That the Bailiff and such fit person (being a Lawyer) as the Burgesses are willing to choose to be the recorder or Steward, shall be Justices of the Peace within the Borough aforesaid, to hear and determine felonies, trespasses, &c., as any other Justices of the Peace in any County, so that the Justices of the Peace being in the County of Salop shall in no manner intermeddle in any felonies, &c., arising within the said Town and precinct.

[37] That they shall have an assize and assay of bread, wine, and beer, and all other victuals, within the said Town and precinct, with the amendment thereof and punishment of delinquents. therein."

A Charter of King Charles, given in the seventh year of his reign, fixed the court to be held once in two weeks.

"That they may have a Court of Record upon Tuesday for ever, once in two weeks, wherein they may hold by plaint in the same court all kinds of pleas whatsoever, whether they shall amount to the sum of forty shillings; the persons against whom the plaints shall be moved or levied, to be brought into plea by summons, attachment, or distress."

"That there shall be a general Sessions of Peace to be holden by the said Bailiff and Justices in any place convenient within, the Borough aforesaid, from time to time for ever; so that they do

not proceed to any matter touching the loss of life or member in the said Borough, without the presence, assistance, and assent of the Recorder of the said Borough. That they shall have all fines, &c., imposed as well in the said Sessions aforesaid, as in all other Courts to be held within the said Borough.”

SESSIONS HELD AT WENLOCK, JULY 21st, 1653.

At a Sessions held at Wenlock, at the above date, two of the defendants we find were colliers; one charged with disorderly conduct in the Birch Leasow, Broseley, and the other with an assault at Benthall; a third was charged with stealing grass for his horse from a field at Much Wenlock, and a fourth, William Newell, yeoman, of Little Wenlock appears to have been summonsed for “a debt of £20 owing to the King, by Act of Parliament,” and £10 he owed to Solomon Ball, of Much Wenlock. The names of the Bailiff and Recorder, and those of the Jury, as well as of the Constables of the different Allotments, are given. The following is a copy of the names in the order in which they occur. [38]

“WENLOCK. NAMES OF THE BAILIFFS, JUSTICES OF PEACE, AND OTHER OFFICERS IN THE LIBERTIES

John Mason, Gent.	Bayliffe
Humphrey Mackworth, Esq.	Recorder
George Ludlow, Esq.	} Justice of Peace
John Waram, Esq.	
Henry Mitton, Esq.	} Bailiff's Peers.
Thomas Kynnersley, Esq.	
Ffrancis Adams, gent.	
John Huxley, gent.	
Ffrancis Harrington, gent.	
Audley Bowdler, gent.	
George Langley, gent.	
William Walker, gent.	
Edmond Bullock, gent.	
John Corfield, gent.	} Coronr. Treasurer
Andrew Langley, gent.	
George Hayns. gent.	
Roger Parsons, gent.	

The names of ye Towns and Constables.

Much Wenlock Allotmnt.	Thomas Morrall & Walter Patton.
Priors Ditton	William Taylor, const
Middleton & Longville	Wm. Morris, gent.”

Then follow the names of Constables from the Moor and Downton, Stanton, Hopton, Stoke, [39] and seven other allotments, but the parchment has been damaged and the names are illegible. These are succeeded by the names of the constables for Eaton, Lushcot and Longville, Hatton, Hungerford, Millichop, Broseley, Willey, Barrow, Benthall, Posenhall, Wyke, Madeley, Burton, Calloton, Weston, Oxenbold. Mawley, Walton.

“The names of the Grand Jury returned to _____ by the authority of Parliament and the body of this corporation

Hugh Draton, gent.	} Sworn.
John Mayer, gent.	
Richard Taylor, gent.	
William Clarke, the younger	
John Turner, gent.	
Thomas Challmor	

Francis Cooke	}	Sworn.
John Ffosbrooke		
Thomas Loodum		
William Taylor		
Roger Davis		
John Cowper		
Thomas Hotchkiss		
Wm. Blakeway		
Wm. Parsons		

Geo. Haynes Coronr.

[40] The Borough, it will be seen, was then divided into Constablewicks or Allotments, and not as now into Wards. In each of these Constables were appointed to carry out the instructions of the Bailiff, the Recorder, and the Serjeant-at-mace, to execute summonses &c. At the time we speak of, these officers seem to have been selected from men of standing and position, or at least respectability.

ENACTMENTS IN FORCE.

[41] Some of the enactments on the Statute book, at the period we speak of, and even down to the end of the last century, were none of the mildest, whilst some will no doubt sound strange to the ears of the reader who, had he lived in those times, might have thought himself fortunate to have had ears at all. By the 5th and 6th of Edward IV., who granted the Charter of Incorporation, “every person convicted of drawing or smiting with a weapon in a church or churchyard is to have one of his ears cut off, and if the person so offending have none ears whereby he should receive such punishment, that then he should be marked and burned in the cheek with a hot iron, having the letter F therein, whereby he may be known and taken for fraymaker and fighter.” It is easy to conceive that a person having a spite against another might so provoke him as to lead him to commit himself by drawing or smiting with a weapon in hot blood. Then there were the Criminal Laws; the 10th and 11th of William III., c. 23, made it a capital felony to steal to the amount of 5s. from a shop, warehouse, stable, or coach-house; and 12 Ann 24 Geo. II. made it capital to steal privately from dwelling-house, or on board a vessel in a navigable river, to the amount of 40s. Hanging indeed seems to have been an amusement invented for the gratification of the elite who, says a writer in “All the Year Round,” speaking of the executions at the Old Bailey, “hired rooms or windows on the preceding night, which was passed in feasting and card playing, and at eight o’clock in the morning titled ladies as well as be-ruffled beaux would take their seats at a window to witness the execution of some criminal, or, it may be half a dozen criminals in one batch.” Hangings were so frequent at last that the country got sick of them, and even the judges when they passed sentence of death came to write on their notes, “to be imprisoned for twelve months.” Jeffreys – who was not altogether unconnected with Shropshire, and whose portrait till a few years ago hung in Belwardine Hall, from where he married his wife, had no such scruples; during what was called the Bloody Assizes, he hung on circuit it a number that has variously been estimated at 320, 600, and 700. We have heard old people say that seven men of Broseley and Barrow who had gone on a poaching excursion to Patsull, with a horse and cart, the feet of the former and the wheels of the latter being muffled, and who were tried and convicted, were hung at one time, they having added sheep stealing to their other offences.

[42] Then there were the Excise Laws: the duties imposed upon bricks and tiles, upon glass, upon salt, and a thousand other things. The great law against importation 3 Edward IV. c. 4. is an excellent specimen of others passed on subsequent similar occasions. The remedy provided for want of trade was the prohibition of the importation of almost every wrought article of use or ornament at that time known. In furtherance of the principle which introduced this law, the legislature advanced step by step, until there was hardly one branch of trade or manufacture that was not depressed or elevated by a prohibition or a bounty. Then there was the preposterous encouragement given to the woollen manufacture by the act of Charles II., which obliged all persons whether they could afford it or not to bury in woollen, an act which would have remained forgotten had it not been for the conviction which unexpectedly took place some years ago, and which led to its repeal.⁵

Here are the articles which the Constables were to present upon oath:–

1. - “What felonies have been committed and what default and by and in whom.

2. - What vagrant p'sns. and sturdy beggars have passed through yo'r. limitts unpunished, and whether the same and impotent poor of yo'r. p'sh are provided for, and poor children bound apprentices according to Law.
3. - What Recusants of about the age of sixteen are in yo:e limits and who absent themselves ^[43] from church on ye Lord's Day, and how many sabbaths.
4. - Who have profaned the Sabbath by swearing, labouring or otherwise.
5. - What Ingrossers, forestallers, or regards of the market, of cow or cattle, or other dead victuals are within yo'r limits or any Badgers or Drovers of cow or cattle.
6. - Who make mault to sell of corn or grain or tythe or tylth not being their own and are not licensed thereunto.
7. - What Masters or Servants give or take greater wages than is appointed by Justices of the Peace according to Law.
8. - What cottagers or inmates are evicted, removed or maintained, and by whom, and how long.
9. - What unlawful games, drunkenness, tipling or other evil rule or disorder hath been in inns, ale houses &c. and by whom.
10. - What Servants have departed from their masters, and what masters have put away their servants within the compass of their time.
11. - Who used gunns, or take or destroy hawks or hawk's eggs, of pheasants, partridges, younge deer, hares, snipes, fish, or fowl, with snares or other engines whatsoever for that purpose against the Law.
12. - Who use unlawful weights or measures or buy by a greater and sell by a lesser weight or ^[44] measure.
13. - Whether watch and ward be duly observed and kept according to ye statute; that is to say, between Ascension Day and Michaelmas in convenient places, and who has made default therein.
14. - What highways have been repaired and what have been neglected.
15. - Who have sold beer, or syder, or perry, &c. unlicensed or who hath evaded ye assize of bread and drink unlawfully, either the bakers or assizers.
16. - What butchers have killed or sold meate on the Lord's Day, or sold any unwholesome flesh at any other time.
17. - Who have any assault, battery, or bloodshed.
18. - Who have profanely sworn or cursed, and how often.
19. - What common brawlers, drunkards, scoulds, eavesdroppers, talebearers, and such disordered p'sns are within y're limits.
20. - Who have sold ale or beer on the Sabbath day, or who have been drinking or tipling in any alehouse on that day."

Sir William Petty says (1685) four shillings per week were fair agricultural wages about this time; they were fixed at the Sessions, and by the power given by an act of Elizabeth the Justices punished employers if they gave more, and labourers if they received more. From Sept. to March the wages were 3/6; in each case without food. Weavers could not earn so much. Speaking of the wages of the clothing trade, an old ballad makes the master say of his workmen:-

"We will make them to work hard for sixpence a day,
Though a shilling they deserve if they had their just pay;
If at all they murmur and say 'tis too small,
We bid them choose whether they'll work at all."

That the law passed to protect the woollen trade, referred to on another page, was in force is evident from the instructions to the constables, signed George Weld and Thos. Crompton, issued 1693, one of which was, "what burials have taken place with linen or otherwise than in sheeps wool;" what sums of money have been received for such burials, and how disposed of. They were also requested to collect the quarterly poll tax from the "ablest and *sufficientest* Inhabitants." Macaulay says that the wages of labour, estimated in money, were not at that time (1685), as high as they are now, and that the great majority of the nation lived almost entirely on rye, barley, and oats.

The selling of bread unless twenty-four hours baked could scarcely be prevented, from the difficulty of proving the facts, and the breach of the law must often have been more humane than

its observance. The prohibition of the making of starch from potatoes, and cultivation of potatoes in common fields, were among the silly laws of the same reign. Then the law was hard upon forestallers

[46] Forestallers, Badgers, and Engrossers are terms which formerly occurred frequently in corporation records, and regulations regarding markets, buying and selling &c., and although now classified as unused terms, their meaning may be gleaned from a Royal proclamation, the substance of which appeared in the newspapers in November, 1755, which was as follows:

[47] "In Consequence of a Resolution taken in a grand Council at St. James's, last Friday, a proclamation was published in Saturday's Gazette for putting the Laws in speedy and effectual Execution against Forestalling, Re-grating, and Engrossing of Corn; particularly the Act 5 and 6 Edward VI. by which the Buying or Contracting for any Corn before it actually arrives in some Market, City, &c. is prohibited, and adjudged Forestalling; and the Obtaining any Corn at any Fair or Market, and selling it in a Fair or Market in the same Place, or within four Miles thereof, is adjudged Re-grating; and the Buying Corn to sell it otherwise than is therein particularly allowed, is judged an unlawful Engrossing thereof. The Punishment for the first Offence against this Act is Two Months Imprisonment, besides Forfeiture of the Corn; for the second, Half a Year's Imprisonment, and loss of double the Value of the Corn; and for the third Offence, Setting in the Pillory, and Forfeiture of Goods and Chattels, and Imprisonment during the King's Pleasure. By this Act it is farther enacted, That every Person who shall have a sufficient Provision of Corn for his House, and for sowing his Ground, and shall buy Corn in any Market for the Change of his Seed, shall the same Day bring to Market as much Corn as he bought for Seed, and sell it at the Market Price, on Pain of forfeiting double the Value of the Corn so bought. This Proclamation also expressly enjoins the putting in Execution an Act of the 5th of Elizabeth, by which it is enacted, That the Licences to be granted for buying Corn, pursuant to the Act 5 and 6 Edward VI. shall only be granted at the General Quarter Sessions for one Year, to none but a Householder, a married Man not under the Age of Thirty, and not less than three Years resident in the County, who shall give Bond not to forestall, or engross, or do any Thing contrary to The aforesaid Statute of Edward VI."

The object no doubt was to prevent the price of articles used as food being unduly raised, and it is a question whether these laws are not still on the statute book unrepealed, although the spirit of them is entirely opposed to the free dealing notions of the present day. We are told that even as late as in Aug. 1800, in some neighbouring counties, the magistrates "exerted themselves with the utmost vigilance to detect and prosecute Badgers, Forestallers, and Re-graters, both in and out of the markets," and Associations and Committees were formed by the inhabitants "for the same laudable purpose"

Recusants and others were they who refused or neglected to attend church, or to acknowledge the supremacy of the King as its head.

[48] Vagrants and sturdy beggars were to be strictly looked after; they swarmed through the county, giving themselves up to pilfering; the women breeding children whom they brought up to the same idle way of living, so that, according to one writer, (1677) there were 100,000 paupers in England. Harsh measures were therefore resorted to: the law of Settlement was passed, and once more the poor were reduced to bondage to the soil from which they had been emancipated a century or two before. By this law, which remained in force 30 years, and which was not repealed till the close of the last century, the poor were imprisoned within their allotments; and upon the complaints of the Church wardens or Overseers, any two Justices of the Peace had power to lay hold of the new comer and within forty days remove him to the Parish in which he was last settled, unless he could prove that he was neither a pauper nor a vagabond, or that he rented a tenement of the value of £10 per annum.

Probably too there were other reasons for the strict enquiries by the Bailiff, as the feudal bondage to which the poor were reduced was closely interwoven with the thriving-traffic of Shipping young paupers to American Plantations, by those who held out to the poor wretches the alternative of leaving England or being flogged or imprisoned.

It may perhaps be a redeeming feature in the character of that "ermined iniquity and prince of legal oppressors," as Judge Jeffreys was called, to say that as Lord Chief-Justice he exerted himself successfully to put down this abomination. Still, nothing beyond the repression of beggary, and the pauper police, appears anterior to the reign of Elizabeth. In her fifth year, (1563) a compulsory assessment for the relief of the poor commenced, and this well-intended law was regulated and enforced by successive enactments of the 14th, 18th, and 39th years of this queen's

reign, till, in her 43rd year, (1601) the system was consummated by the statute which introduced the important principle of compulsory provision for the impotent which is in force in our own day. The poor-rate continued to increase, and to press most heavily upon parishes, and with a view of lessening the pressure the system of farming the paupers at so much per head was introduced. This was done at Broseley and Benthall, and revolutions on a small scale now and then broke out among the refractory paupers, who would go in a body and smash the windows of the unfortunate contractor, under the impression that he was unduly harsh, from a desire to make money out of them. By minutes of a parish meeting held in the Town Hall, Broseley, in 1827, it was agreed to farm the poor of the parish to Samuel Pugh for £850, for one year; and in 1829, it was agreed to farm them for £1,000. Each parish, in most cases, maintained its own poor, down to the introduction of the New Poor Law hence the presentations to be made, as we have seen, by the constables in their several allotments. In 1693 we find, for instance, that they were to ascertain what monies they had received towards the relief of the poor, and what poor they had set to work. In this year we also find that they were to “give warning to all Alehouse keepers and Innkeepers within their allotments to appear personally before the Bailiff and Recorder at the house of Humphrey Powell Sergeant-at-mace, and to bring with them a certificate of their fitness and honest behaviour in keeping their alehouses and victualing houses, under ye hands of ye minister, church-wardens, &c.” [49]

William III. abolished one very obnoxious tax which gave great trouble to the constables, in the early part of his reign – the Smoke Penny, sometimes called the hearth-tax, and the chimney tax; and which was all the more odious from the fact that it was sometimes farmed to contractors. One old ballad, quoted by Macaulay, commences thus:–

“The good old dames, whenever they the chimney man espied,
Unto their nooks they haste away, their pots and pipkins hide–
There is not one old dame in ten, and search the nation through,
But, if you talk of chimney men, will spare a curse or two.”

Sneering at King William’s generosity the official biographer of James II. says:– “ He wheedled them [the Commons] with a remission of chimney-money, when he was well assured he should be no loser by his generosity, and that it would be only like throwing water into a dry pump to make it suck better below, and cast it out with more abundance above.” If we turn to the presentments of the constables we find pretty good indications that this was so; for they were in all lawful ways and by all lawful means they could to inform themselves of the “true and full yearly value of all manors, messuages, lands, quarries, mines of cole, ironworks, salt springs and salt works, warrens, woods &c, and of estates in ready money or money owing, and assess for every hundred pounds twenty-five shillings, and so for every quarter of such sum or quantity. “Every papist of ye age of 16 years or upwards who hath not taken the oaths required to be taken by an act of parliament, made in the first year of ye reign of their ma’ties. entitled an act for abrogating the oaths of supremacy and allegiance, and appointing other oaths, you are to assess at double ye sums and rates above mentioned.” Others who had not taken the oaths or who refused to do so were to be similarly assessed.* Then there was the quarterly Poll-tax of 4/- in the pound to be collected; and the “sums of money Granted to his Majesty by virtue of an act of Parliament made in the 6th and 7th years of his reign, entitled an act for granting to his Majesty certain rates and duties upon Marriages, Byrths, and Burials, and upon Bachelors and Widows, for ye term of five years for carrying on the war against Ffrance with vigour.” “That is to say: for and upon the burial of every person within the allotment, and above all other duties the sum of four Shillings.” The figure rose according to rank and position, to 12/-, 20/-, 30/-, and 50/-; but “for and upon ye birth of any person and child (except ye child or children of such as widows alms) within the said Allotment 2/6.” [51]

WATERMEN TO BE PRESSED.

Men as well as money were required to carry on the war. The lord lieutenant and the deputy lieutenant were urgent upon the Bailiffs, and these upon the Constables for men, whom they were to impress and bring to Wenlock to be sworn in. “We whose names” &c., His Ma’ties Justices of the Peace, having received a summons from the Deputy Lieutenant of the county, together with a copy of a letter from the Lords of the Privy Council &c., Command you to make diligent search for all stragling seamen, *watermen*, or sea-faing men, and to impress all such, giving each *one* [52]

* About 400 clergymen refused this oath and lost their benefices.

shilling, impressment money, and to bring the same before us, to the intent that they may be sworn and provided for, as by the said letter directed; and You, the sd. Constables are *not to impress any old or crasy, or unhealthy men, but such as are younge, and of able healthy bodies*, fit for se'vice; and herein you are to use yor'e best endeavours as you and any of you will answer the contrary. Given under our hands &c.

Jas: Lewis, Balf.

“You are to take notice that what monye you shall lay out of yo'e: purse upon this service we will take care the same shall be speedily repaid you according to the order of their Majesties Privy Council.”

Geo: Weld.
Tho: Crompton
(1693)

We have no means of judging of the number of men employed on the Severn at that time, but we know that the Collieries of Broseley and Benthall were in operation, and that half a century later, as we shall see, there were 55 “owners” and 87 barges on the Broseley side of the Severn, besides about half that number at Madeley Wood, employed in carrying 100,000 tons of coal, besides other things; upon the whole of the navigable part of the river there were 400 vessels, each of which would require on an average a crew of four or more hands. These were, as a class, bold, resolute men; so that the Severn at that time was looked to as an important nursery of seamen.

[53] **FURTHER PARTICULARS RELATING TO THE MANOR OF BROSELEY;
OLD FAMILIES &c.**

Having brought down the history of Broseley to the 17th century it may be well before proceeding further to say what we have to say about the manor, which we had traced from the Norman Conquest to the reign of Elizabeth, and to fill in the outlines as we left them, (page 23), with such details as may serve to give a faithful representation of the place at that and subsequent periods. According to the quotation we gave, John Munslow had leave to alienate the Manor to Richard Cooper, Esq., and his heirs. However that may have been, we have it on equally good authority that at a later period, during the reign of that monarch, that it was at the disposal of Robert Sidney, first Earl of Leicester, who as before hinted is reputed to have received more than usual favours from his royal mistress; and who married the mother of the young Earl of Essex. This nobleman had good reason for being favourably disposed towards his Salopian admirers. They gave him a warm and little short of a regal welcome when he passed through Shrewsbury on his way to his castle at Denbigh, May 25, 1584; speeches charged with high flown flattery were delivered by young, afterwards, Sir Thomas Sidney, brother of the famous Sir Philip Sidney, and young Hord, fifth son of John Hord, of Hord Park then at the Free School; and what was better the Bailiffs presented him with a double gilt silver cup, which had for its contents twenty pounds in gold, besides “an hogshead of wine and banketing dishes.” He no doubt had equal reasons to be grateful to a Broseley member of the ancient family of Langley, who had acted as his confidential servant, and who would have, no doubt, delicate, if not difficult missions to perform under such a master. Mr. Blakeway, in his “*Sheriffs of Shropshire*,” in speaking of a descendant of this family, then resident at Shrewsbury, says:— “Jonathan Langley of the Abbey, Shrewsbury, was fifth in descent from William Langley of Shrewsbury, tailor, who bought the site of the Monastery, July 23rd, 1546. It appears that the abbey being in a very dilapidated condition and in great danger of falling, the corporation took upon themselves to sell it a few weeks before the Dissolution, and they found a customer in this wealthy tailor, who was the son of Roger Langley, tailor, of Madeley. This Roger Langley of Madeley was third son of Henry Langley, of the Tuckies. Thomas Langley, of Golding, in the parish of Cound, who left a rent charge of £2 10s. to the poor there in 1694, was fifth in descent from John Langley, of Broseley, apparently of the same family with Henry Langley, of the Tuckies, living in the reign of Henry VII, ancestor of the Sheriff of 1689. John Langley, grandson of the former John, was of the Amies, by gift, as we have seen, of the Earl of Leicester, to whom, Mr. Blakeway adds, he had been a confidential servant.”

[54] Mr. John Langley, aged 86, was living at the Tuckies in April, 1667; John Langley, aged 68, born at Swinney, was living at Swinbatch; John Langley of the Amies; Samuel Langley, of [55] Broseley, eldest son of John Langley of the Tuckies, aged 55, and John Langley, and Lawrence Langley, second son of John of the Tuckies, were all living at the above date, and gave evidence before a Commission of the court of Chancery, held at Barrow, in connection with a trial of property of the Rowton Estate, which we shall notice presently.

It further appears that Herbert Langley (whose widow, Mary Langley, was living in 1728) was possessed of the manor of Broseley; also that it afterwards passed to Edward Purcell, who married their daughter, Elizabeth Langley, in favour of whom the claim was made in the old document given on page 25.

About this time each member of the family as he came into possession appears to have done his best to plunge the estate into debt. Henry Langley and Eleanor his wife, according to an indenture dated the 18th of October, in the 9th year of the reign of William III., effected a conveyance for £260 with William Taylor, of the Heath in the parish of Badger, on that part of it described as the Copy House, orchard, and garden, meadow ground – called Beard’s, and a horse malt mill, in the possession of Mrs. Easthope, widow; other buildings also are mentioned in the possession of Henry Onions, John Pugh, Edward Ashwood, William and Thomas Beard, John Walton, and others. The mortgage also included Coal Mines, open or covered, “until the full end of five hundred years, at one peppercorn rent, payable on the anniversary of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin &c.” So far from redeeming the property this Henry Langley appears to have borrowed other sums upon a succession of bonds at different times during the years 1700 and 1702, amounting altogether to a large sum. [56]

In 1728, it appears from an indenture before us that Edward Purcell of Stafford and Eliz. his wife, and Mary Langley, relict of Herbert, late of Broseley, (father and mother of the said Eliz. Purcell), Christopher Ward, and Phillip Purcell, both of Stafford aforesaid, Gent., of the one part, and Michael Stephens of Broseley, in the County of Salop, agreed to a certain release of incumbrances of £2,990, with regard to certain tenements and lands at Broseley, by a sale of a portion of the premises of the Manor of Broseley. About 112 farms, messuages, houses and lands, and names of tenants are mentioned; the latter may be interesting as shewing the families resident in what is described as the Lordship of Broseley at that time. They are as follows:- Benjamin Buckley, Thomas Boden, Samuel Brown, William Darby, Michael Griffiths, Thomas Harrison, Wm. Jones, Wm. Millichap, Francis Oakes, Tim. Roper, Tho. Symonds, Michael Stephens, Gent., John Wilde, Thos. Aston, Hugh Allen, Emanuel Aston, Francis Barrat, David Brown, John Bradely, Beddow, Widow, Gray Beddow, Beddow, Widow, Thos. Beddow, George Bryan, John Bembow, Sarah Crump, Crump, widow, Jeremiah Crump, Samuel Cartwright, Wm. Cooper, Francis Cox, Cox, widow, Cyprian Cleobury, Edward Crump, Edw. Deacon, Jonathan Davis, Owen Davis, Rich. Evans, Rich. Evans, John Evans, Thomas Edwards, John Evans, Wm. Evans, Thomas Evans, Edward Harper, Thomas Fareley, Susanna Gough, John Hill, Jon. Hartshorn, Ann Harris, Edward Hill, Sampson Hartshorne, Homes, John Hare, Harris, Wm. Holmes, Thos. Hanley, Samuel Hartshorn, Richard Hill, John Jones, Francis Jones, John Jones, Samuel Jones, Jenkins Morris, Wm. Morris, Thos. Johnson, Samuel Lee, Robert Loyd, John Legg, Samuel Legg, Wm. Loyd, John Loyd, John Leadbetter, Susanna Littleford, John Legg, Thomas Legg, Benjamin Legg, Cobert Love, Richard Lister, Thomas Lister, Francis Legg, Joyce Mayor, Joyce Murrall, John Matthews, John Millichap, John Morris, Mrs. Mountfort, William Pearse, Richard Pearse, Daniel Powel, Joseph Pinner, Ann Pearse, Wm. Perry, Richard Perry, John Perry, Roden, Richard Roden, Wm. Rodes, John Spragg, Samuel Simpson, Shaw, Richard Shaw, John Simpson, Tho. Shaw, David Taylor, Thos. Williams, John Whitwick, Wm. Weld, Leonor Wedge, John Wedge, Rich. Watkis, John Watkis, James Garmston, Edward Hill, Richard Pearce. The case was appointed to come before the Court of Common Pleas Westminster in Easter Term, 1728. [57]

It appears also that Purcell got deeper into debt, and that Michael Stephens, who resided at the Amies, and to whom Purcell was indebted, having taken proceedings, the estate was subject to much litigation. Some of the documents and Inventories are interesting from the particulars we get of the effects. One of these sets forth that besides the messuages and lands and a hundred cottages,

“Purcell is also a partner in a Colework called the Ffootrid, having a 3d. share, his part of all tools, wagons, and implements of the colliery now worth “	£30.
“Also is a partner wth. Wm. Crompton and Wm. Ashwood in several pits, his 3d. share of Gins, Ginhorses, Ropes and Barrells, Waggns. and implements of colliery there are worth at least” .	£30.
“Also hath a 4th share in a work called Woonhay Colework, his share of those implements of colliery are worth	£30.
“Also has a share of several Gins and other materials at a work called Garmston’s work, worth	£05.

“Also has a work with Wm. Stephens in several Gins and materials of colliery worth £02.

“The above Coleworks get great quantities of coles which might make good proffitts; his share of these works has been formerly worth £160 per annum, and might be worth near as much now. One Edward Ward is clerk or manager of ye above works, and can prove him a partner and what the proffitts are.”

The document goes on to shew that he was now indebted to Mr. Stephens in two bonds; one for £60 and another for £50; “he had at different times lived with Mr. Stephens, and kept a servant and two horses, and had washing and lodging, meat and drink for himself, servant, and visitors, most of the time for twenty years, and for which he, Stephens, had obtained judgment for £200.” It concludes by saying that “Mr. Stephens delivered him a Bill 5th Decr. 1739, wch. is really and justly due

£951 6s.

[59] “Mr. Stephens was bound for Purcell to one Mr. How for £100, and about two years ago was forced to pay it, and £40 interest £ 140.
Which is a schedule debt, and lands sufficient to pay £014.
“There is really due indeed £1105 6s.”

The affairs of the parties became more complicated, counsel’s opinion was taken, and a Mr. Jones of Lincoln’s Inn advised all the parties “to have the direction of the Court of Chancery on an Amicable bill, and to charge by such Bill that all the debts are paid, except Mr. Stephens’, and to pray thereby that the whole estate may be conveyed to the person claiming the inheritance thereof, subject to trusts &c.” The date of the opinion here given is December 26, 1766.

[60] The mineral resources of the estate were now being developed, and with proper care and even ordinary discretion might have produced a considerable revenue. In October, in the 13th year of the reign of his Majesty King George I., (1726) Edward Purcell and his wife Elizabeth, just mentioned, leased to Michael Stephens and Thomas Harrison “all those Coals called Clod Coals situate lying and being in or under any of the Waste Lands or other Lands of him the said Edward Purcell and Elizabeth his wife or where they had any Right in Broseley aforesaid in the said County of Salop. And also all other Coals of him the said Edward Purcell and Elizabeth his wife in the said parish of Broseley that were not Comprehended in the Articles of partnership relating to the Footroad called the new Footroad or that are left ungotten and cannot be reserved to be gotten through the said Footroad, for a term of 99 years; paying ten pence per ton for every customary ton that should be gotten in the name of a rent or royalty quarterly, and also reserving to the above one third part or share of the profit of the said works, he being at a third share of the expences in sinking pitts and other disbursements in getting the Coal and exposing the same to sale &c.”

At a subsequent period* Edward Purcell and his wife Elizabeth assigned their shares in the works to Henry Rainsford of Much Wenlock for a ‘certain consideration and four pence per ton out of the profits, that is for every 48 hundred weight, over and above the royalty. The document then proceeds to assign to the above and to Mary Langley the sum of two shillings for every stack of Coal gotten over and above the royalty. The agreement concludes with stating the term of the lease to be 21 years, also that “one shilling shall be paid for every Twelve Horse Loads or 48 hundred weight, and that the Bottom and Top Coals in the said lease shall be reserved &c., and that in case the works should be wilfully neglected for three months or he Rainsford should employ Francis Lloyd ground collier the agreement is to be void.”

MR. AND MRS. PURCELL’S RENT ROLL FOR THE YEAR 1744-5.

“A RENT ROLL MADE FOR MRS. PURCELL FOR THE MANOR OF BROSELEY FOR THE YEAR 1745.

FREE HOLDERS						£	s	d
George Weld Esq. for the Woodlands	...	...	...	...	...	0	10	0
Mr. Littlehales de Aimas	...	...	...	...	...	0	6	8
Mr. Edwards de Routon	...	...	...	...	...	0	5	8
Mr. Squire de Woodhouse	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	4
Mr. Langley de Sarnbach	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	4
						<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>

* 1758

Broseley and its Surroundings by John Randall

								Lease Tenants		
William Morris	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	10	0
Francis Loyd by Crumps	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	8	0
Thomas Beard	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	10	0
William Cartwright	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	5	0
								<u>1</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>0</u>
								Cottages at the Hill		
John Rooper	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	3	4
William Roper	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	3	4
Edward Jones	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	5	0
Thomas Jones	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	6	8
Richard Pew	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	10	0
Christopher Pickering	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	5	0
Widow Crump	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	8	0
Her Daughter	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	2	6
William Milner	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	2	6
Humphrey Crumps widow	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	4	6
Edward Yarley	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	6	8
Thomas Yarley	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	3	4
Mary Haddon	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	8	0
Jane Lee	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	7	6
William Lee	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	3	4
Charles Lee	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	3	4
Samuele Cooper	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	3	4
Mary Jones, widow	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	3	4
Ralph Hare	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	3	4
John Guest, grocer	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	3	4
Daniel Onions	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	3	4
Thomas Aston	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	3	4
Francis Smithes	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	3	4
								Cottages in the Wood		
Richd. Hartshorne	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	10	0
Joyce Davies	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	10	0
Henry Davies	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	5	0
Robert Williams	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	9	8
Thomas Simpson	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	10	0
John Cooper	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	5	0
William Cooper	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	3	4
A Widow by Coopers	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	3	4
John Hare	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	10	0
John Powell	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	5	0
Widow Perry	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	10	0
Mary Holmes, widow	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	3	4
Robert Holmes	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	3	4
Richard Lyster	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	3	0
Late Widow Jones 2h.	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0	0
Samuele Leg	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	5	0
James Roden	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	4	6
Widow Lyster	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	10	0
Widow Lyster, junr.	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	3	4
William Jones, peddler	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	6	8
Benjamin Legg	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	12	0
John Legg	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	6	8
Tho. Blakemore	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	10	0
								<u>13</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>6</u>
Thomas Hill	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	6	8
Hartshorne by Davies	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	1	.
Jones Thatcher	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	10	0
Edward Sockett	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	10	0
Wilde ye sawyer	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	11	0
								<u>1</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>8</u>
Freeholders yt. have purchased and Owe Suit and Service, and one penny Reserved Rent										
IN YE RUFF LAND										
George Weld, Esq. for Smiths	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Widow Goughs	...	...	...	18	...	...	...	1	6
Widow Crumps	...	...	...	18	...	...	...	1	6
Thomas Edwards	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	2
Wilde	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	2

[62]

Broseley and its Surroundings by John Randall

[63]	Mr. Stephens for Copy	...	...	2	...		
	Ditto for the Cross	...	...	6	22	11	0
	Ditto for Johnsons	...	...	...	...	1	10
	Ditto Browns Yard	...	...	...	...	1	10
	Ditto Hough Allens	...	...	2	...	3	8
	Ditto Joh. Hare	...	...	2	...	3	8
	Ditto Samuele Legs	...	...	1	...	1	10
	Ditto Richard Gear's	...	...	16	...	1	4
	Ditto Garmstons field	...	...	...	...	1	8
	Ditto Coxe's Leasow	...	...	...	...	1	8
	Lampors Leasow	...	...	...	...	1	8
						<u>1</u>	<u>22</u>
							<u>0</u>

AT The Hill

					h.	y.	
	Widow Harrison	...	...	...	2	3	6
	Thomas Boden	...	...	...	2	21	3 6
	Newell Edwards	...	...	...	1	21	1 9
	Thomas Shell	...	...	...	2	1	2
	Rooper Timothy	...	...	...	1	1	1
	William Lewis	...	...	...	1	21	1 9
	Mary Bedow	...	...	...	1	16	1 4
	Richard Henshaw	...	...	...	2	20	3 4
	Widow Wilde	...	...	...	2	20	3 4
	William Wilde	...	...	...	1	18	1 6
	Young Loyd	...	...	...	1	19	1 7
	Paul Loyd	...	...	...	1	16	1 4
	Vigo Loyd	...	...	...	1	12	1 0
	Thomas Wilde	...	...	...	1	12	1 0
	Jonan. Davies	...	...	...	4	22	7 4
	Hy. son Wilde	...	...	...	1	10	0 10
	John and Rd. Leg	...	...	...	4		1 4
	William Hall	...	...	...	2	2	9
	John Holland	...	...	...	2	2	4
	Execut. of William Pearce	...	...	...	2	3	6
	John Pearces shop	...	...	...		12	1 0
	John Barber	...	...	...	8	8	5 4
	He has built his house, shop and pig-stys on the waste						
	Owens houses	...	...	...	3	22	5 6
	Thomas Matthews	...	...	...	1	22	1 10
	His Inclosure.	...	...	...
	Thomas Shaw	...	...	...	2	22	3 0
	Leadbetter ...	...	...	...	1	6	6
							<u>2</u>
							<u>10</u>
							<u>2</u>

[64] Succeeding these are the names of the following persons, with various amounts attached as before:-

“Widow Shaw	By ye Bulls
Thomas Yarley	Wm. Williams
Thomas Boden	Jones by Newels
Emanuel Aston	Mr. Stephens by Hockley
Mrs. Barrett	Thos. Watkis shop
Two Evas's	Hartshorne for ———
Austin Cleobury	Wm. Pearce, junr.
Cleobury by Allens	Robert Wilde
Francis Edwards	An house yt. Lowes live in
by ye Quakers	on Harris green.
Widow Beddow	All that parcell where
Richard Hill	Pearces shop and houses and
Cranidge	Hartshorns houses were
Griffith Dixon	taken of ye Common and
Saml. Hartshoend	did not belong to Clench
Joseph Carrington	Acre..
John Morris	An Inclosure by the Quakers
William Morris	meeting house.
Robert Evans	Joseph Whitfoot's folly

Guy James	The Barnard Inclosure by
Roden and Sister	Wilmores
Ralph Smith	A Cottage by Pits
Assignes of Walker	One other Inclosure there
John Walker	Tuder Richard
George Alsop	Whip frogs
Cottages yt. pay	Roopers round about
noe Rent	Mr. Stephens new house by
By ye pound	Hockley.”

Other names occur on the back, among them those of John Guest, Maltster, Andrew Hartshorne, and John Loyd near Severn, Thos. Loyd over Severn, Samuel Smith, Tow dressor, Thomas York and John Purchase.

In the above we have been careful to preserve the orthography of the original. [65]

The estate passed to Michael Stephens, who was an attorney, and to whom it was indebted, of whom we have already spoken, and who lived at the “Amyas” or Amies in 1824. From him it passed by a deed dated 13th of June, 1795 to his descendant, John Stephens, Esq., of Bridgnorth, in consideration of the sum of £2,100.⁶ Mr. Stephens was of the same family as The Rev. Michael Pye Stephens, whom some old inhabitants still remember, and of whom all, we imagine, have heard. Finally Mr. John Stephens sold the Manor to George Forester, Esq., and it was added to the Willey estate.

The Langleys were connected with the Lockwood and Cutts’ families, as appears from a letter received as these pages are going through the press. It states that Richard Lockwood married the daughter of James Reading, of Newington, County of Surrey; and that her eldest daughter Frances married Thomas Langley, of Broseley, in the County of Salop. Richard Lockwood had two other daughters, and a son Richard, who married Susannah the heiress of the Cutts’ family, and was High Sheriff of Northamptonshire, from whom the Rev. John W. Lockwood, rector of Kingham, Chipping Norton, is the lineal descendant. In the will either of the above Richard, or his son Richard, of Dews Hall, in the County of Essex, mention is made of property at Broseley. It would appear that Thomas Langley died without children, and that he left his property to his Wife’s nephew, who was a member in different Parliaments for London, Worcester and Wilton.

In an index to Pedigrees and Arms contained in the Heralds Visitation in the British Museum by R. Sims, in reference to Harleim Manuscripts, mention is made of Langley of Broseley, and [66] Langley of Shrewsbury, in 1396. The Arms of the Langleys are stated by Owen and Blakeway, in their History of Shrewsbury, to be as follows:—

Arms of LANGLEY. — See List of Bailiffs, ann. 1605.

Crest. — On a garb lying fesseways O. a dove, rising, O. beaked and legged G.

Motto. — BEAR AND FORBEAR.

The last of the Langleys in this neighbourhood that we know of was a Mr. Langley who lived at a house on the Sutton side of the river at Swinney.

ROWTON: EARLY COAL MINING, &c.

Adjoining the Manor of Broseley, but not included in it, although at the southern extremity of the parish, was the ancient estate of Rowton. An old family of the name of Old resided here — the name occurs in the register of the Wenlock Corporation 26th of Elizabeth, (1593), page 303, where Ricus Olde, as the name is there given, appears in the list of Bailiffs. On page 305, 306, 307, and 308 the name again occurs, in connection with those of Richard Willocks and Thomas Lacon, who join in signing the accounts of Thomas Lawley of Spoonhill. The following year, 37th Elizabeth, (1594), page 312, Thomas Olde is described as Baily, and his accounts are signed by Thomas Holland, Bailiff. A gap appears soon after in the register, no minutes of the election of Bailiffs being entered from the year 1589 to 1596; but in the 9th of James, (1610), the name of [67] Richard Olde again occurs as Bailiff; and in the 16th of the same reign, (1617) we find Ricus Olde, gent., Bailiff.

The Olds held Rowton; Richard Old, son of John, held 138 acres and Rowton Hall; and Samuel Old, by purchase, had the Heath Riddings, near the Amies, Rowton Green, and other property, altogether a little over 50 acres. Rowton is mentioned in connection with the Broseley

manor and as being in the parish and Constablewick of Broseley, but not as Priory lands. The names of a number of persons are mentioned in the deeds and documents connected therewith, many being recognizable as those of well known Shropshire families – as Sprott, Stephens, Baldwin, Langley, Cox, Gough, Evans, Addenbrooke, Pearce, Manning, Beard, in addition to which we meet with those of Huxley, Sir Edward Littleton, father and son, Francis Littleton, Cutts, Edwards, and others. They occur in records which serve to throw a light upon the mining enterprises of that period. The estate lay at the southern extremity of the Broseley Coal-field, where the lower coals only occur, and these very near the surface. Little is known of these early coal-workings, as plantations of larch, fir, and birch, with other trees, grow upon the spoil banks on the high ground near Rowton; whilst at Gitchfield, near the Severn, to which the works extended, a thick turf covers the ground where levels were driven and pits were sunk, and tramroads connected them with the wharves beside the river.

[68] Still less is known of Gitchfield house, which stood on this side of the estate. It had been burnt down but had been rebuilt on the same ancient site, that is near the ford of that name, where in former times the monks of Buildwas had a fishing station, when fish were more plentiful than now; in addition to which it was notable as the place where many years ago, when the nearest bridges were those of Buildwas and Bridgnorth, people crossed the river. The pasture lands around were called Gitchfield meadows and others adjoining, a little higher up, were called Withiesfield meadows, probably from the old Saxon word *with*, as the osiers or willows which grow profusely along the Severn about here are called. For the etymology of the word Mr. Hartshorne quotes the following:-

“A *withthe* was heore stole, certes,
With on othir thy weoven y-gurte.

KYNG ALISAUNDER, v. 4714.

“Hang’d on a *writhen wythe* since Martin’s eve.

HALL’S *Satires*, vol. iv. s. 4.”

[69] Prior to the commencement of mining operations on a large scale, a dispute seems to have arisen as to the boundary and proprietorship of a portion of these lands. The disputants were, the owner of the freehold of Rowton, and Francis Old, who in December, 1620, bought of William Porter “three closes of arrable and meadow ground, commonly known by the name of Withingsfield or Withiesfield, containing by estimation 32 acres and 1 rood, as well as the Heath Ridding and Arnolds fields, and others known as Rowton Green,” as alleged for the defendant. An “ancient survey” of Broseley was produced and also the title deeds of the estate on the one side to shew the existence of land said to be included in the purchase. On the other side, the accuracy of the survey was questioned, and it was contended that it was doubtful whether such land had existed at all, or if so whether it had not been undermined and carried away by the treacherous Severn. The Law Courts had been appealed to, but they had failed in settling the dispute, and it was next carried to the Court of Chancery, which sent down a Commission to collect evidence and to arbitrate. This also failed in effecting a satisfactory and an equitable settlement. A second Commission was next appointed; and the following is –

“A Summary Acct. of testimonies given in by several witnesses examined upon oath before Edwin Skimsher, Esq., of Aqualate, and Richard Leighton, Esq., April 18, 1667, at ye house of William Rutter in ye Parish of Barrow in ye county of Salop.

1 Mr. John Langley of ye Tuckis aged 86 years, deposed he did know and well remembered Gitchfeild house and meddow before ye time of ye purchase by Mr. Old of Mr. Porter, yt it was at that time, and hath bin ever since generally called and commonly known by ye name of Gitchfeild house and Gitchfeild meddow and yt ye said house and meddow were generally reputed to belong to ye ancient free holt of Rowton, and yt hee himself did ever take and esteem ym. so to be: yt there was an ancient house before ye time of ye purchase standing in ye same place, where Gitchfeild house (lately rebuilt) doth now stand; yt ye pastures thereto adjoining towards Haddon’s tenement were

[70]

ever anciently called Withifeilds, and that they were purchased by Mr. Old of Mr. Porter. Yt some part of ye said Withiesfeild lying next to Gitchfeild was meddow ground and anciently was mowed; he complained to Mr. Powell yt in his former depositions, given in an oath at a Commission out of Chancery, several passages were inserted very much differing from wt.expressed and did really mean, and when Mr. Powell answered, yt his depositions were read over to him and wt. he found faulty was corrected his reply was yt they had bin indeed severall times read over to him, and on his complaint severall times, and in severall places corrected, yet yt ye last all was not perfectly altered wch. he found fault with. And farther told Mr. Powell yt Mr. Gattaker, one of ye Commissioners, was so much dissatisfied as to say yt he had rath. ditch or thrash yn. sit on a Commission in wch. such Clerks were employed.

- 2 Mr. John Langley of Swinbatch aged 66 or 67, born at Swinney, ye farm next adjoining to Gitchfeild said yt he could remember Gitchfeild house and meddow called by that name and hath heard it anciently reputed to be part of Rowton free holt, and there was anciently a wain-way (wch. yet remains visible) through the wilds to Rowton house, yt the lands next to Gitchfeild by Severn side upwards were ever known by the name
- 3 of Withiesfeild.” Mr. John Langley of the Amies formerly examined by a Commission out of Chancery on the part of the defendant);
- 4 Mr. Samuel Langley of Broseley, eldest son of Mr. John Langley of the Amies, and Mr. [71]
- 5 Lawrence Langley, second son of the same, gave evidence that Gitchfield and Withiesfield were taxed together in the same “lewns.”
- 6 John Jobber had known these places called by these names not only by boatmen but by other inhabitants, and that they were in the freehold of Rowton; he remembered an an ancient hedge separating a little enclosure taken out of Gitchfield meadow, but which was now laid in common with it by taking
- 7 up the said hedge. John Haddon gave similar evidence, and added that “he remembered Mr. Michael Old refusing to pay for a train-soldier and being constrained to pay by Major Fowler, who caused him to be put in prison at Shrewsbury for refusing. This was for Gitchfield house, which was afterwards burnt down, and rebuilt with timber fallen in the freehold of Rowton.”
- 8&9 John Preen, 85, Joan Cox, aged 90, and
- 10 Thomas Owen, “born at Swinney mill, over
- 11 against Gitchfield,” John Eaves, Richard
- 12&13 Owen, and Samuel Owen gave evidence that Gitchfield house and meadow were always so called within their recollection, and that

- 14 Withiesfield was called Withiesfield.
 15 Lawrence Palmer, David Crow, and Richard
 16 Pearce, each aged about 60, and living in the
 neighbourhood, gave similar evidence.
 17 Thomas Lee, aged 86, formerly servant to Mr.
 Richard Olde, said, near 60 years ago. Gitchfield
 was called Withiesfield, and since that time it had
 oftener been called Withiesfield,* and that the
 hedges were the same as
 18 anciently. Thomas Haddon, near 60, said Gitchfield
 house and meadow had been and were still oftener
 called Withiesfield both by bargemen and others
 than by any other name.
 19 Sarah Haddon, wife of last witness, differed from
 her husband by saying that where Gitchfield was
 called Withiesfield once it would be called
 Gitchfield an hundred times.
 20 Francis Roberts, alias Belcham, and Edward
 21 Cox, also gave evidence, the latter to the effect that
 Gitchfield and Withiesfield were assessed together.

[72]

(The latter evidence, tending to prove that the two were one holding, was met by counsel for the defendant with the remark that this was done solely for the convenience of the tax-collector.)

[73] This suit appears not to have terminated in March, 1684, as we have under this date "A new and exact Surveigh of Rowton farm in the parish of Broseley, the Antient Freehold Estate belonging to Mr. Richard Old, son of John Old deceased, and the late purchased land belonging to Mr. Samuel Old, Son of Mr. Michael Old deceased; prepared by Wm. Cartwright, acknowledged by George Gatacre Esq. and signed Hen. Jobber and R. Manning, 14th March, 1685." We find also an agreement entered into in the third year of James the Second, (1687), between Richard Old, Batchelor of Divinity, and Richard Manning, relative to the property, at that time in the possession of William Rutter, subject it is stated to the suit then pending in Chancery. In 1692 Richard Old was deceased; and dying without issue he devised to his brother John Old, his Sister Mary Addenbrooke, and Jane Old, all his freehold and copyhold estates, as shewn by his will, proved at Doctors Commons, in Dec. of that year. Jane Old afterwards married Richard Edwards, who for £400 obtained the share held by Nicholas Addenbrooke, also that held by John Old for another £400. This was in 1701. In 1729, 1735, 1741, 1742, 1756. 1757 and 1760, other agreements, bonds, and bargains of one kind or another were entered into with regard to the property, the getting of the mines, the value of which had come to be apparent, their conveyance to the Severn for exportation &c. The persons who conducted these operations, and who were partners or shareholders in the works, were members chiefly, at first, of the Old family. Michael Addinbrooke of Chesterton, and Richard Edwards, who married daughters of Richard Old, who purchased the Gitchfield part or portion from William Porter, Robert Evans, Richard Pearce, and Michael Stephens, of the Amies, united together to develop the mineral resources of the property.

[74] It appears to have been agreed between the parties, Manning and Taylor, that there should be a right of road to the Severn from the Rowton works and from the Gitchfield footrid, or level. In 1702 an agreement was made to sink pits, drive levels, lay down way-boards, make railroads, and convey coal, ironstone, and limestone, from Rowton, by their servants and workmen, to

* "Note yt three witnesses only were sworn who gave any material evidence for ye defendant. Thomas Haddon Thomas Lee, Francis Roberts alias Belcham. The last of these is now and was at ye time wn. he was examined on oath before ye Commissioners excommunicated.

Concerning Thomas Lee, Mr. J. Langley of Swinbatch and his wife are ready to depose on oath yt about seven or eight days before he appeared at the last Commission he did say to them and repeated several times upon their quest ioning him about it yt he never heard Gitchfield house and meadow called by any other name, and he believed that it was called Gitchfield house and meadow before he was born. John Addenbrook, Gent., and Edw. Russell are ready to depose much to the same effect concerning Thomas Haddon."

Gitchfield meadow, to trows and barges on the Severn, paying in addition to the Royalty to the owners, 3d. for every usual ton or waggon of coal or iron-stone; also to carry from the Severn, hay, corn, wood, &c., for the use of the works. There was also an agreement entered into in the fifth year of the reign of Queen Ann, 1707, between Thomas Sprott of the Marsh, in the parish of Barrow, and Nicholas Harrison of Broseley, master collier, and Michael Stephens of Broseley, with regard to shares in the Rowton works, for winding water, and for keeping the rails for the conveyance of coals in repair. "And it is further agreed between the said parties that neither the said Thomas Sprott, Nicholas Harrison, nor Michael Stephens, nor either of them or either of their heirs, Executors, or Adm'ors, shall make or sink any pitt, for the getting of Rowton Coales in any part whatsoever, for his or their owne interest or benefitt, without the consent of the other of the parties in writing under their hands and seals, first had and obtained."

The parties to this agreement were clearly business like men, one, Mr. Sprott, was ancestor of the present respectable solicitors and bankers of that name; another, Mr. Stephens of the Amies, an attorney. It commences by stating that, "whereas Nicholas Addinbrooke did grant to Samuel ^[75] Bowdler, Gent., and Nicholas Harrison, all his moiety or one half of the coals and ironstone (except heading coals) that may be gotten in out or under the said lands belonging to himself at 6d. per ton, soon after which the said Samuel Bowdler dyed by virtue of whose death his moiety ceased and came to Thomas Sprott, as a party to these presents, and executor of the said Samuel Bowdler, And whereas Richard Edwards by articles and his hand and seal duly executed hath leased and sett his share or one half of the said coal and ironstone in or under all or every said land called Rowton unto the said Michael Stephens, &c., reserving a fixed sum in the name of royalty, the said Thomas Sprott and Nicholas Harrison come to an agreement with Michael Stephens for getting coals in a certain place adjoining Rowton called Tar Batch Dingle, and the use of the rails from the said pits to the river Severn, as the same are now laid by Michael Stephens, paying him 2d. per ton, out of their moiety of proffitts."

Disagreements arose out of these agreements, and one dispute between the parties culminated February 12th, in the third year of King James, in a civil suit at Shrewsbury. Another trial occurred there in the third year of the reign of Charles II.; finally the case was removed to the Court of Chancery. Lancelot Taylor, one of the parties connected with the works being dead, Lord Chancellor Cowper is petitioned by the widow for a settlement of matters in dispute complaining of encroachments made by Michael Stephens and Michael Harrison, (Master ^[76] Collier), and of the refusal of Richard Manning to pay his share of the cost of the works, which it is said was £1,000 and upwards. The petitioner adds that Lancelot Tayler, Attorney at Law, Edward Cox and John Pearce, both of Broseley, being persons of Judgment had joined, but were since dead. The petition is dated 7th of July, 1718, and is addressed to the right Honourable Thomas Ford Parker Baron of Macclesfield, Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain.

The court was also petitioned by Richard Manning that, contrary to agreement "Nicholas Addenbrooke, and Richard Edwards, without your orators privity or conjoint did make a fraudulent and clandestine agreement with one Michael Stephens, Gent., who had before that time sunk one or more pits in the lands of one Mr. Bromley and one Mr. Langley, for getting coals in their lands, that the said Stephens should have the said liberty to gett the said coles in Rowton farm, which said liberty was before granted to your orator by agreement." The petitioner further sets forth that Michael Stephens had by means of Langley's pit sunk in Bromley's ground got several thousand tons of coal under Rowton farm, which the orator might have gotten, and had carried the said coals to the Severn through Bromley's lands, instead of through the orator's lands, according to agreement, "and by geting the fflint coal, it had shaken, broken, or loosened another vein of coals which lyeth above the said flint coals, commonly called the clodd middle, or soft coles, being about two yards thick, so that it can never be hereafter gotten with profit." ^[77] Disagreements between the parties multiplied, mutual mistrusts increased and crushed the life out of the undertaking.

Two of the shafts referred to in the above documents are still known as the Langley pits; they were cleansed by a man named Griffiths in 1825, with a view of being again worked by Messrs. Thomas Rose of Swinney and J. Onions of Broseley, but they found the water too much for them. They then attempted to drive a level from Gitchfield up to the pits with a view of draining the mines, but for some reason it was not completed. A stream of water highly charged with ochre still discharges itself from the tunnel into the Severn.

It will be seen from the reference to railroads that this improved means of conveyance came early into use here. From a specimen preserved at the Old Caughley Works, and brought away when they were taken down by an old man named Joseph Morgan, who some years ago

presented it to us, these rails appear to have been flat pieces of iron pegged down with square wooden pegs to long pieces of timber, sawn and squared, and so arranged that the flanged wheels of the ginney-carriages could run on the inner side.

[78] The Broseley, Rowton, and Gitchfield estates and collieries seem to have found work for the Court of Chancery for a considerable number of years, and the number of deeds and writings produced at the several hearings amounted altogether to forty. Several persons had at different times advanced money on the estate, and had conveyances made to them, the two in favour of whom the decision was given by Counsel with regard to Rowton being Thomas Ball and John Cleaver.

It was shewn by an abstract of title, now before us, that all the encumbrances were paid excepting the £1200 advanced on mortgage, by these gentlemen, and £100 left by Richard Edwards, and payable out of the Rowton estate, to the Poor of the parish of Broseley.

In speaking of the Broseley manor, on page 65, we have said that it passed by deed to John Stephens; we should have said that it descended to that gentleman who, at the date there mentioned, the 13th of June 1795, sold it in consideration of £2,100 to George Forester, Esq., of Willey. We presume that the Squire of Willey made a good bargain, as a valuation made the same year shewed the manor to be worth £2,900, including the minerals.

[79] The following is an abstract of the deed, which is too long for quotation in full. The tenants whose names we give built on waste or common lands, and payed yearly acknowledgements, or on copyhold property held in perpetuity, renewable at death, or for a term of years; they or their ancestors in most cases having erected the premises and brought into cultivation the lands and gardens they occupied or underlet; hence the odd positions of some of the houses which, excepting in the principal street, are in the oddest and queerest situations with regard to each other imaginable. The names themselves of some of the places are sufficient indications of the former state of the surface: as Fearnay Bank, the Common, near Clench Acre, the Waste, the Rough Lane, the Wood, Woodlands, Copy House, &c. The Quarry we have already explained; Folly-house is said by tradition to be a name given in consequence of a wealthy London tradesman coming and building a large house in the position where we now find it, but to which then there was no road; the present road past it to Coalport Bridge having been subsequently made. The deed is dated the 35th year of the reign of George the Third, (1795), and, leaving out repetitions, commences thus:—

“The said John Stephens in consideration of the sum of £50 of lawful money of Great Britain to him in hand well and truly paid by the said George Forester at or immediately before the ensealing and delivery of these presents the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, And of the further sum of £20,50 of like lawful money of Great Britain to be paid or secured to be paid by the said George Forester to the said John Stephens at the time and in manner herein after mentioned, &c., (except a certain annuity or yearly sum of £25 due and payable to Charlotte Adams, wife of William Adams of Broseley in the county of Salop, collier, now aged sixty years and Elizabeth Purcell of Buildwas, widow, now aged sixty years, during their natural lives), to the manor, messuages, lands and tenements, &c., herein after mentioned. All that manor or reputed manor of Broseley otherwise Burwardesley, with the court and perquisites of court, rents, heriots, rights, members, waste lands, &c., whatsoever thereto belonging.”

[80] Then commences an enumeration of the various farms, messuages, and other portions of the estate, with tenures, and terms of years for which leases have been granted and the sums paid yearly or on renewal. Among the former are the Stocking and Amies farms; then come a number of tenements, one occupied by Mrs. Aston, near Mr. Rushton’s house, another in the occupation of Francis Barber, another near the Market Hall in the occupation of Mary Jones. Also all that piece or parcel of land situate near Benthall brook in the occupation of Messrs. Morris and Onions, a messuage in the occupation of Martha Wylde, ditto in the occupation of Thomas Evans, with a piece of waste land adjoining the house of Graccris Hardacre, a house in Broseley Wood in the occupation of – Corbet or undertenants, ditto ditto Charles Jones, of William Lee, Charles Jonas, Thomas Lloyd, Robert Love, Thomas Lister, Richard Russell, Zachaeus Wilkes, Thomas Jonas, and three other tenements near the Delph, and one in Speed’s Lane, the King’s Head public house and tenements adjoining in the holding of Samuel Bill, a public house, malt house, &c. situate in Broseley Wood, in the holding of George Bill, house &c. ditto ditto of William Bryan, ditto William Bailey; one at Fearnay Bank in the holding of Thomas Legg, one in the holding of George Patten. We then get the following names of persons as holders or occupiers of tenements, gardens, lands, &c. Sarah Rathbon, William Lister, George Wilde, Josiah Patten, Andrew

Maccalaster, James Griffiths, Elias Prestwich, Adrian Carver, Abraham Wyke, Richard Perry, Thomas Smith, Sarah Rushton, Samuel Legg, Charles Southern, (Rough Lane) Thomas Aston, (near Delph), Francis Bradley, John Cartwright, (B.W.) William Gammon, (B.W.) Edward Hartshorne, Robert Hartshorne, Thomas Jones, William Povey, Joseph Pugh, Joseph Pinner, Zachaeus Wilkes, Richard Russell, James Page, – Tipton, John Aston, Francis Armstrong, John Hill, William Hartshorne, Mary Hare, Ann Jones, William Jones, Joice Lloyd, Francis Lloyd, Thomas Lister, John Lister, Mary Nevett, Thomas Poole, Sarah Rushton, Eleanor Randle, Aaron Simpson, Edward Tenant, John Tenant, William Wheeler, Ann Wells, John Yardley, William Leadbetter, Edward Lloyd, Francis Barber, (butcher). “And also all and every the mines of coal, limestone, and ironstone, and all other mines and minerals which now are or shall hereafter be found in or under the lands and premises hereby agreed to be sold as aforesaid, and also all mines and minerals, rocks and quarries of stone, limestone, and ironstone whatsoever belonging to the said John Stephens as Lord of the Manor, excepting such mines as are under the lands and premises of the said John Stephens and which shall remain his property after the execution of this conveyance.” [81]

The deed concludes with the mention of the sum above stated as the purchase money, namely £2,100, and is signed John Stephens and George Forester, with their respective seals attached, that of the first having a full length figure resting upon an anchor, and the second a Talbot, with the initials G. F. on a shield; it is witnessed by Thomas Mytton and John Pritchard. Esqurs. It will be seen from a clause in the above deed that the Lord of the Manor has the right of getting the mines from under any of the buildings within the said manor, excepting those reserved by Mr. Stephens.

OLD MANSIONS, OLD HALLS, AND OLD COTTAGES.

“ I’m an old man,
And love the good old ways.”

THE OLD MANOR HOUSE OF BROSELEY

Southey in one of his genial pictures represents a young squire who had been modernising the paternal mansion by straightening the walks and cutting down trees, in conversation with an old stone-breaker on the highway respecting such changes, who is made to say:–

“If my poor lady could rise up–
God rest her soul ! – ‘twould grieve her to behold
What wicked work is here.

* * * * *

Ay, master! fine old trees.
Lord bless us! I have heard my father say
His grandfather could just remember back,
When they were planted there. It was my task
To keep them trimmed, and ‘t was a pleasure to me.
My poor old lady many a time would come
And tell me where to clip, for she had played
In childhood under them, and ‘t was her pride
To keep them in their beauty.

* * * * *

I could as soon
Have plowed my father’s grave as out them down.”

We confess to a loving regard for old mansions and old houses of all sorts; not simply because they are old, but because of the old time gatherings there usually are around them. Often beautiful in themselves, they as often call up pleasing associations. Some however have been so modernised as to leave little of what they were originally; portions only of others remain; whilst a few have disappeared entirely. A part only of the Amies, where the feudal lords of Burwardesley lived remains, and that will no doubt be modernised shortly out of existence. It must have been an old mansion when the first Earl of Leicester gave it to the Langleys, who no doubt kept up the usual hospitality of old English gentlemen, if they did not live as sumptuously as the noble donor.

“It is an ancient house.
Four hundred years ago
Men dug its basements deep,

[82]

And roof'd it from the wind;
 And held within its walls
 The joyous marriage feast,
 The christening and the dance

[83]

Charles Mackay.

The hearty owners of such mansions in Elizabeth's days have been well portrayed in the old song, as popular then as now:—

“An old song made by an aged old pate,
 Of an old worshipful gentleman, who had a greate estate,
 That kept a brave old house at a bountiful rate,
 And an old porter to relieve the poor at his gate;
 Like an old courtier of the queen's,
 And the queen's old courtier.”

Addison too in his *Sir Roger de Coverley* has given us a good description of the old English gentleman, and the usages and customs of what may be called the Augustan age of the country.

As we have said, very little of this old mansion remains, except the kitchen portion of it, and that is yellow with age. Its windows were old diamond-pane lattices, its rooms were wainscoted to the ceiling, and enough remains of the staircase to show that it was a magnificent structure. It had buttress-like chimneys, in character with its many gables and side-walls, which appear to have been lime-washed, and to have formed panels, as it were, between the strong black wood frames.

[84] **SWINBATCH** the former residence of Mr. John Langley, which in the copy of the old rent roll, page 61, is given as Sarnbach, and which within our recollection had some fine Elizabethan windows, and exhibited other traces of antiquity, has by its conversion into cottages and the changes it has undergone been completely modernised. On the origin of the name itself we can throw little light. Of Sweney, Sweny, or Swinney, as it is variously spelt, Mr. Hartshorne says:—
 “It has a Celtic origin, and signifies an enclosure for fattening pigs. The terminating syllable batch, in the two words Tarbatch and Swinbatch, is more difficult of explanation, though it is a common Salopian term, as *batch* of bread; and ‘Hers gwon to tak the batch to be gron.’ Mr. Hartshorne also quotes *Troilus* and *Cressida* in the line

Thou core of envy, thou *crusty batch* of nature.

ROWTON HALL, the home of the Olds and other old Shropshire families remains. There are traces about it of earlier buildings. Its great bell, which formerly summoned harvest-men, plough drivers, shepherds, carters, swineherds, and labourers generally on the estate to their meals, is still in its place. There too yet stands the enormous dove-cote, capable of giving shelter to an inconceivable number of pigeons.

[85] “**THE OLD HALL**” by the Severn, which we remember when a child, and which excited our curiosity, is gone entirely, and no trace of it remains. At the time we remember it it was a drowsy-looking building, nodding to its fall; still it had a bulkiness and an antiquity of style which served to keep up its importance. Timber must have been cheap and plentiful when it was built, for it entered largely into its construction, and held firmly together the thin red bricks that were made, no doubt, of the clays now so extensively used close by. The rooms were wainscoted and beautifully panelled to the ceiling. The old man, Lacon Beard, who occupied it, and who was as ancient looking as the house itself, was constantly in litigation, trying to establish what he called his rights. Many of the rooms were unoccupied; two large rooms were let to the Wesleyans, one for Sunday and the other for weekday services. It stood within twenty yards of the Severn at Coleford, nearly opposite to some fine half-timbered houses on the opposite bank of the Severn, in one of which a learned Sergeant-at-Law for some time lived; not one stone of the old hall now remains.

“**THE DOG AND DUCK**.” Within a hundred yards or a little more, but still closer to the Severn, stands a fine old house nodding in the direction of the river, now a public house, but originally built, we should imagine, as a private residence by the Crumptions, whose initials A. M. C., (Adam and Margaret Crumpton), with the date 1654, are carved in front in wood panels, under two of the bedroom windows. Probably this Adam Crumpton was the lessee, from the lords of the manor on either side, of the ferry boat close by, as it is still called Adam's boat; the last of the Crumptions, whose name was William, and who had the ferry, died here some few years ago.

THE TUCKIES. This old mansion, to which we have previously referred as the residence of the Langleys, is the exact model of one on the opposite side of the river, known as the Hay, excepting that the latter has its front facing the south instead of the east, and must have been built about the same time. It is in the usual Elizabethan form, but there must have been a house here at a much earlier period, as indicated by some portions of the building, which are evidently much older than the main structure, and which appear to have been worked into it by the builders. This is clearly observable in the upper or northern wing. In making some recent repairs a brown paper [86] parcel was found addressed to the Earl Dundonald, who resided here, as did his son for a short time, young Cochrane, the last and most daring of our "Old Sea Kings." Of the experimenting earl and his inventions we shall have to speak under the head of the Calcutts. Till within the last few years it had a balcony running along in front, from wing to wing; this was erected by William Reynolds, the proprietor of the Madeley Wood works, and the inventor of the inclined plane opposite to the Tuckies, who resided here for some time prior to 1803. In putting up the balcony he gave strict injunctions to the workmen not to injure the nests of the martins that clustered beneath the roof, declaring that he would shoot the man who disobeyed him. They all obeyed him but one man, and he – . "What, you don't mean to say he was going to carry out his threat?" said we. "But he was," said our informant, "and did." "What shoot him?" "Yes; shoot him, sir – shot him with a pop-gun!" He was a Quaker, and funny things are said of him in refusing to pay church-rates and Easter Offerings, shewing he had a warm and genial nature with a rich vein of humour running through all. He allowed a house and garden rent-free to Sniggy Oakes as he was called, on condition that he should ferry him and his family across the river whenever they required it. One evening Sniggy, knowing that Mr. Reynolds was out on the opposite side of the river, went to bed, which he found more comfortable than sitting up on a cold wet night, and was asleep or feigned to be asleep when Mr. Reynolds came to the landing [87] opposite his house and called "Boat." Receiving no reply he called Oakes, and Sniggy, and all the other aliases by which Sniggy was known. Still receiving no answer, he made up his mind to go round by Coalport bridge; on coming to Sniggy's snug domicile he smashed every pane in the windows with his stout stick, shouting "boat, boat," at every blow, till Sniggy roared again and promised better things another time. Next morning Mr. Reynolds sent a glazier to repair the windows.

Like Earl Dundonald, Mr. Reynolds was a good chemist as well as an ingenious mechanic and made several discoveries, one of which, that of the conversion of iron into steel he patented; he also invented a locomotive to travel on the highway, the cylinder and boiler of which are still preserved. He died at the Tuckies in 1803, and was followed to the grave by a vast number of his neighbours, the poorer portion of whom grieved for him as for a father, for he kept open-house for them in times of distress.

The Tuckies estate was formerly the property of the Bryans who worked the mines, and who in an evil hour allowed themselves to drift into litigation, in the 5th year of King George IV.; in which Francis Blithe Harries was plaintiff. It was alleged amongst other things that Thomas Bryan, then in possession of the property, agreed with Thomas Lister for a lease of Broomy Croft and other pieces of land adjoining Corbatch Dingle and forming part of the Tuckies estate, reserving to himself the mines, and powers of getting them, with certain rights of road &c. That the said Thomas Lister in 1813 agreed to sell to the complainant his rights under the said lease for [88] the consideration of £400, that the complainant entered into possession, paid the reserved rent, and continued to do so till 1821, when Thomas Bryan died, leaving the property to his wife and children, share and share alike, and to their children; also that on the death of one, named Alcock, Mr. Harries having received no notice for a renewed lease in accordance with the terms of the agreement, although the death had taken place six months before, and the former lease having been forfeited, he now prayed the Court of Chancery to restrain the defendants from any other conveyance or disposition of the premises; and Mr. Cooper, Counsel for the complainant, and Mr. Roupell for the defendant having been heard, the court granted an injunction, restraining the defendants under a penalty of £1000. The estate, which was heavily mortgaged, was sold to Mr. Taylor, who established brick works here, and who finally sold it to the late Lord Forester. The mining portion of this property was never very valuable, owing to the absence of some of the measures, the close neighbourhood of faults, and the presence of water. There are however some seven yards of brick and tile clays, which the Messrs. Maw are at the present time of writing preparing to turn to account; having purchased a portion of the property for the purpose of erecting large works for their celebrated fine art productions.

[89] **THE WOODHOUSE.** On the hill above the Tuckies is another old house, as its name implies, belonging to Mr. Harries, of Cruckton. It was the residence, as we have seen, of one of the Langleys. It was also the residence of one of the Blithes, whose brother, Francis Turner Blithe, built in 1759 the church on the hill, called Jackfield church, a handsome brick structure, but now in a shocking dilapidated condition. He died in 1770; and on the marble tablet erected to his memory, and removed to the Pritchard memorial church at Jackfield, he is described as of Brook Hall. The name of Blithe is on the bell of the former church, which was removed some time ago to the one in the valley, but upon a remonstrance made to the bishop by the late Mr. Edward Brown, was taken back by an order from him. It was from the Blithes that the Harrieses derived this and other portions of their property in its neighbourhood. The two families, the Blithes and Harrieses, were related through Edw. Harries, of Cruckton, M.A., who in 1771 married Lucia, daughter of Francis Turner Blithe, Esq. They had two sons, Thomas Harries, and Francis Blithe Harries, of Benthall hall, whose son Francis died at Cruckton hail, aged 71, in 1875.

Edward Harries, M.A. was one of the promoters of and subscribers to the construction of the iron bridge across the Severn, the western end of which was upon his property. Francis Blithe Harries of Benthall Hall was a well known sportsman; his greyhounds were kept by his tenants, who shared in the sport; he had also at one time, if we remember rightly, a pack of harriers, whose music was welcomed by brother sportsmen of the neighbourhood.

[90]

THE NATURAL WONDERS OF BROSELEY:

TARBATCH DINGLE, AND OTHER OIL SPRINGS.

At a period when people were content with a cheap and simple *materia medica*, and roots and plants and water with other natural productions were the chief medicaments, and each property of the earth was supposed to be an emanation from some guiding star, and men –

“reasoned high
Of providence, fore-knowledge, will and fate;
Fixed fate, free will, fore-knowledge, absolute,
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost,”

undue estimates of things really good in themselves were often formed particularly if attended by unusual circumstances.

It will be seen that in the agreement between Messrs. Stephens, Sprott, and Harrison, that Tarbatch Dingle is mentioned as one of the places chosen for sinking for coal, and this may be a fitting place to notice the springs of mineral tar which gave a name to the dingle, and which are not uncommon in the neighbourhood. The wells of this dingle were reputed formerly to have medicinal properties, which led many to make long pilgrimages in order to test their efficacy. Old dames and village sages, assuming the wisdom of Hippocrates as to their qualities, with a faith derived from generations past, grew eloquent as to their merits in cases of weak eyes, and weak children, who had to be dipped the traditional nine times to secure the favour of the sprites who haunted and blessed them. The tar itself, which oozed out of the rock and formed a thin skin on the surface of the water, had special merits of its own, and was collected both here and at the Tar-tunnel at Coalport for exportation, for medicinal and other purposes. Druggists and gentlemen of the medical profession sent for it from great distances, and old writers attributed to it extraordinary curative properties. Speaking of one of these springs at *Pitchford*, a writer in 1660 says:– “In a private man’s yard there is a well whereon floweth a thick skum of liquid bitumen, which, being cleared and taken off one day, will have the like again on the morrow. Try whether this bitumen be good for falling sickness, and have a powerful property to draw and close up wounds, as that in Judea is known to have.” The writer further compares the two springs; whilst another of the same period says:– “There is a spring at Pitch-ford which hath an oily unctuous matter swimming on the water. I know not whether the sanative virtue thereof hath been tried; but am sure that, if it be bitumen, it is good to comfort the nerves, supple the joynts, dry up rheumes, and dry up palsies and contractions.” This tar may be seen at any time on the surface of the water on the canal at Coalport, and a century before the discovery of oil-wells in Canada, was collected and exported for several years, hogs-heads at a time, to various parts of Europe. A Canadian gentleman named Holmes, who visited these springs, and who represented an Oil manufacturing company in this country, entertained sanguine hopes of being able to turn them to account as a commercial speculation, for which purpose he endeavoured to obtain a lease from

[92]

the late Lord Forester, with a view of sinking shafts, laying down machinery, and establishing

works here, and also between the Amies and Broseley Church, where he quarried some of the stone.

THE BURNING WELL OF JACKFIELD.

“The Modern Traveller,” (published in 1779) professing to describe only what the writer witnessed, gives an account of this natural phenomenon, which excited so much wonder at the time, and has led to so many enquiries concerning it even to the present day. There are, however, earlier and more elaborate descriptions extant, as, for instance, one in the *Gentleman’s Magazine*, 1775, under the head of an “Inflammable Well at Broseley.” The writer says:— “About forty years ago a burning well was discovered not far from thence. It was situate about sixty yards from the river Severn, in the parish of Broseley, at the foot of a gentle, but rising hill, encompassed on every side with coal-works, though none very near it. This remarkable curiosity first made its appearance in the year 1711, being discovered by a poor man living near the place, who being alarmed with an uncommon noise in the night, arose and went to the place from whence it proceeded with a lantern and spade. Upon digging a little the water gushed out with violence, and to the man’s surprise took fire at the candle. In order to reap some benefit from the discovery he inclosed it with a praun and dow leaving a hole to collect the flame, by which he might light and extinguish at his pleasure, and made considerable profit from the company resorting to see it. It continued for some years, but the store of inflammable matter being exhausted the fire grew [93] weaker, and would burn no more. In 1747 the same old man, by a like notice as before, once more gave the struggling vapours vent at a place about ten yards from the old spot, and numbers of strangers flocked to see the sight. The well, on application of a candle, immediately took fire, and flamed like spirits of wine to the height of eighteen or twenty inches. The heat was so intense as to boil a common tea kettle in about nine minutes. Mutton steaks and slices of bacon were broiled very soon, and with an excellent flavour. The flame was emitted with a rumbling noise and alternate gulpings of water which, though boiling like a pot, always remained cold, and the ebullition still kept it muddy. It burnt for about four years, when a gentleman determined to sink a coal-pit near it. In doing so the workmen were greatly annoyed by wild fire, and when they had sunk to the depth of 88 yards and begun to get coals, a subterraneous reservoir of brine suddenly burst in the work and filled it to the level of 18 yards. It proved to be a stagnant lake, not a brine spring, although an egg would swim high in it. The pit was drained, but the smell of sulphur being so strong in it, it was judged proper to fire it, which caused so terrible an explosion as alarmed all the neighbourhood as if it had been an earthquake. It shook their windows, pewter, and even the casks in the cellar. This seemed the dying groan of the burning well, for since that time it has entirely ceased to burn.”

The mention of wild fire explains this natural phenomenon, which was evidently the carburetted hydrogen gas with the effects of which workers in the deep mines of the present day [94] are only too familiar. The existence of water charged with salt is also common to the mines of the present time. There is a tradition that formerly, when there was a heavy tax upon salt, that it was manufactured at what is still called the Salt House, a little lower down, and we have heard old people say that they remember the pans and troughs remaining. Whether this was so, or whether the place derived its name from storing of salt brought up the river by barges, we are not prepared to say; at present the water from the mines on this side the river, except with regard to the deeper coals, is drained by the old water-engine of the Lloyds, which works day and night to prevent it accumulating in the Madeley Wood Company’s pits.

THE COAL AND IRON INDUSTRIES OF BROSELEY.

In the notices of the three estates given it will be seen that references have been made to mines, but from present appearances few of the present generation, casual passers by, would imagine the extent to which mining and manufacturing operations were carried forward three quarters of a century since. Here and there, in Broseley, Jackfield, and at other places, some grimy ruin bespeaks the character of its original erection. An isolated stack looks gloomily conscious of its uselessness; an old pit-cabin, or engine-house, is converted into some human habitation. More frequently mouldering ruins and moss-grown slag, or, it may be, rusty limbs and dislocated joints of machinery, point out the spot of former activity and industrial enterprise. Fragments of massive masonry, wild-looking gables, and, what, appear in the distance, [95] castellated towers, give a desolate aspect to a scene formerly one of life and energy. Often grass land or cultivated fields occupy the place of forge and mill and blazing blast furnace. Garden plots and cottages, game covers and ornamental park grounds, have been extended over spots

which human effort, stimulated by love of wealth, had long since exhausted. Old pit-banks, thrown up by subterranean excavations, have had their angles lowered, and vegetation, year after year, has bequeathed so much of its remains that archaeologists may well mistake their general outline for some Celtic or other early British barrow. So completely metamorphosed is the surface that oak, ash and other trees have grown, flourished and decayed, on what were heaps of barren scoria. Cottages have been built on abandoned works, on shafts long since forgotten; the inmates indeed have sometimes found portions of the floor giving way; in one place a cottage hearth disappeared whilst the inmates were sitting around it. So completely honeycombed is the underground that “creeps” and subsidences of various kinds are a constant occurrence, and their impressions are seen in fields and cottage walls, the latter of which have been cracked and in many instances have fallen from the violence of their effects.

[96] The character of the population has changed, in consequence of the exhaustion of the coal field, which has driven numbers, who cast many lingering looks behind, from their birth place and the scenes of their childhood to seek employment in South Staffordshire, South Wales, and other mining districts. It was painful to witness the departure of so many men of bone and muscle, with their families and their household gods (*sic*) but their bettered circumstances soon reconciled them to the change.

The outcrop of coals along the valley sides tempted early explorers, who drove levels, sunk shafts, and made extravagant use of the mineral wealth at their command, pits having frequently to be reopened to get coals these early miners had left behind. In many instances old works have been reopened at considerable cost, and men would be set to work with every apparent prospect of success upon seams that would speedily disappear, and “the gob of the old men” would appear instead. Many curious tales are told by the explorers of articles found in such old works. In an old work at the Tuckies, for instance, the men came upon wooden rails, wooden shovels, wicker baskets or carriages with wood wheels, and curious pick-axes; whilst at the Yew Tree Pit in the Calcutt field the men came upon old works and articles of a similar kind, understood to belong to a period some centuries removed from the present. In one instance the old shaft was square and formed by upright poles at right angles with each other; this was considered to be very primitive, and the more so as the candles which had been left sticking with clay to the face of the work had wicks of rushes. In an old work in the Deer Leap wooden shovels and wheels of wood flanged and cut out of the solid block, apparently designed to bear heavy weights, together with an iron axletree with some brass sockets, having the initials P.B., were found some time ago, and are now in the possession of T. H. Thursfield, Esq., of Barrow.

[97] During the Civil War, coals were exported to that extent that the Parliamentarians planted a Garrison here in 1645 to prevent the exportation of coal down the Severn to Worcester and other places. Thomas Fuller, two centuries ago, speaks of what he calls river or fresh water coals being dug out in such quantities as to be readily ported by boats, by means of the Severn, into other shires.

The first assessment of coal works that we find a record of in connection with the parish is in 1715, when Thomas Crompton was assessed for a “footridge £30, and for a footridge at Gitchfield £20.” In the same year Mr. George Buckley’s Coal Works, Calcutts, were assessed £20; and two pits of Mr. Stoneyard Parrots, in Lacon’s land, £14⁷. These are succeeded by the following: one pit in Mr. Uxley’s land, belonging to Mr. Samuel Smith £7; the churchyard meadow pit £5; Mr. Nowell Edwards for three pits in Mr. Welds land £12; for a pit in Codbrook belonging to Mr. Nowell Edwards, Thos. Bedow and Robert Evans £4; Thos. Scotthman’s pit – void; Wm. Holmes for two pits in Mr. Bromley’s land £4; Grappill pit – void; Mr. Stephens for a pit in Mr. Langley’s land at Swinbatch £5; Saml. Evans for a pit in Mr. Uxley’s land £2; Danl. Powell for a pit in Mr. Crompton’s land £2; Frans. How for a pit in Mr. Crompton’s land £2; Mr. Thomas Harrison for a pit in Nash’s ground £2; John Buckley for his pit in Mr. Purcell’s land £2.

[98] 1721. Mr. Parrot had two pits at Calcutts £20; Robert Edwards’s pit in Wild’s land £5; Edward Cox for pit in Deacon’s yard £3; Wm. Holmes for pits £2; Mill pit £8; Thomas Harrison for pits in Boden’s land £3; Thomas How for pit £8.

1726. The Deep pit in Madl. Crompton’s land £8; Thomas – Crayfuld’s pit £2; Synershill pits £3.

1727. Two pits in Mr. Bromley’s land £16; Richard Weaver for pit in Nickley Croft £5; for a pit in Mr. Edwards’s land £7.

1728. A pit in John Crompton’s yard £7.

1730. The town pit £2; Lloyd’s pit £3.

No pits were assessed after the last date, 1730, separately, but in connection with the iron works which now began to be established; and this circumstance will account for the few pits mentioned subsequent to the assessment of 1715

IRON MAKING IN BROSELEY,

THE NUMBER OF BLAST FURNACES, THE AMOUNT OF IRON PRODUCED,
AND INTERESTING FACTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE WORKS.

We have little definite information with regard to iron making in Broseley in its earliest stages that it was carried on in the immediate neighbourhood at an early period is quite evident. Among the assets, for instance, of the Wenlock Priory in 1541 a mine of ironstone is mentioned as being formed for £2 6s. 1d.; and an Ierne Smythe," in Shirlot at £12 8s.; also another forge as producing £2 13s. per annum. At the Smithies near Shirlot iron making appears to have been carried on for very many years past. F. H. Hartshorne, Esq. has a singular iron plate of rude manufacture which he obtained from a man on Shirlot, who said that it came from under an old house built of stone. It may have served as an hearth-stone; it has a very primitive looking border and the letters I. R. on each side, with the figures 1080 in the centre, thus [99]

I. R.

I. R.

1080.*

The forests no doubt supplied the first fuel used for iron making, and long strings of pack horses were employed to convey charcoal and ironstone to the works. The spot usually selected was the bank of some powerful stream where a water wheel could be erected to supply the requisite force to work the leathern bellows which then produced the blast required. Even the steam engine when first introduced into this neighbourhood was put to perform the undignified task of pumping the water back that it may be used a second time by the great wheel.

The origin of the ironworks was in most cases contemporaneous with or subsequent to the introduction of coal for smelting purposes. One or two of these works by the nature of their position had advantages the others did not possess. Through the old works at Benthall, since converted into the tessellated tile works of the Messrs. Maw, there ran, as now, a powerful stream which, by means of a water wheel, that, remained there till within a few years ago, supplied the mechanical force required; and this was the case at the Calcutts and at Willey. For some time after the introduction of the improved steam engine its motion was confined to what is called the up-and-down action, and the rotatory discovery did not take place, we imagine, much prior to 1780. The great capabilities of the iron Frankenstein were not at once perceived; still, the old motion with the "horse-head beam" was suited to the blowing of leathern bellows as well as the pumping of water. "Blowing tubs," as they, were called, were as much superior to the old fashioned bellows as was the steam-engine to the water wheel; and these improved means of producing blast began to be adopted, we imagine, about the same time, that is, about 1760.⁸ The passage from one to the other was marked by the introduction of a number of inventions, each paraded by its author with wonderful show and pretension; the best however was but a poor apology for the blowing-cylinder. Sir Hans Sloane in 1738 read a paper before the Royal Society upon a new method of producing blast; and Dud Dudley, applying for his last patent, set forth that he could produce seven tons of iron by coke weekly with an improved furnace, and bellows which one man could work for an hour without being much tired. [100]

Both at the Smithies and at Willey, which appear to be the oldest works in the district, leathern bellows were in use, worked by water wheels, and men to tread them; that is, a man would put his foot upon the raised bellows and press them down to increase the force of the blast. There was one furnace at the Smithies, called the Willey old furnace and two near the old Lodge, called the Willey New furnaces, but which were afterwards known as the Broseley furnaces⁹, and which were assessed as being in the parish. Whether a windmill was used or not as well as a water wheel we cannot tell, but in the assessment in the parish books mention is made in 1761 of the Deans mill and of a windmill¹⁰ in connection with Willey furnace Co. pro Codbrook. The Company here alluded to was one of Liverpool gentlemen, who carried on the works, and had spent a large capital, for which they got but a poor return. [101]

* This figure should be 1018 but whether they represent a data or a number of the plate cast is uncertain

JOHN WILKINSON TAKES TO THE WILLEY WORKS.

John Wilkinson, "the father of the English iron trade," as he afterwards came to be called, then a young man, having served some time in an Ironmongers shop in Liverpool, and had some experience with his father at Bersham, was selected by the company to undertake the management of their works. The returns for capital were not very much improved, and Wilkinson was finally asked by the company to take the works off their hands. This, it was said, Wilkinson was nothing loth to do; indeed, it was added, that he had worked with that end in view, by making and laying down heavy plates as a flooring which he intended to take up in case such an event should happen.

[102] When Isaac Wilkinson, the father of John and William, died, the two brothers quarrelled over the Bersham works, each alternately sending bodies of men with sledge hammers and crow bars to smash up the machinery. William went to France, where he was the first to introduce the use of coal for iron smelting; and John succeeded to the works which, together with those his father had at Bradley, near Bilston, he continued to carry on together with those at Broseley.

Wilkinson had not yet begun to use coal at Willey. His works were in the centre of a well-wooded country, and charcoal was cheap. He still used leathern bellows, worked by a waterwheel, and, when water failed, by horses, and a man employed to step upon the top to add his weight to press them down. In a letter in our possession, written in 1786 to one of his very able foremen, speaking of Willey, he says:— "The last bellows we had, which are now down, were attended with amazing friction. Some plan on the form of blowing finerys or chaferys, would do infinitely better for the purpose, and would work with effect when the old bellows would not stir. I think the wheel used in stamping, called the Doctors – and now I suppose put to turning – would do better than the great furnace wheel.¹¹"

Wilkinson however was not the man to remain content with the uncertainties of water or wind when he found that Watt had given him the very power capable of the nicest, and, at the same time, of the most stupendous operations, a power capable of making his bellows breathe like a zephyr, or blow a blast greater than that of rude Boreas himself; in fact, that he had got the very thing he required for his purpose, for the steam-cylinder suggested to him the plan of producing blast now in use.

[103] Wilkinson had in fact rendered most essential service to Watt, when he was struggling with the difficulties which prevented the completion of his invention, owing to a want of cylinders bored with greater precision than was possible with the tools previously in use. Their irregularities bothered him and frustrated his highest efforts and he was on the look-out for a man who could bore them upon a new principle. The Broseley Ironmaster was the man to overcome an obstacle such as this; the two met at Wilkinson's Bradley Works to talk over the matter; and the former soon produced the new boring machine, the merits of which far excelled all previous appliances. The instrument used previously followed in its progress the inequalities given to the metal by the mould; it guaranteed a circle, but not a straight line; whilst Wilkinson by fixing his cylinder and his borer secured both; so that when Watt returned to Birmingham in 1775, after battling for an extension of time for his patent, he found that a new 18-inch cylinder had been cast by John Wilkinson. This cylinder was substituted for the tin one brought from Kinneil, and other improvements having been introduced, the model engine was set to work with satisfactory results. Watt and his partner were now in good spirits; being not less elated by the performances of the model than by the passing of the Act; and arrangements were set on foot for carrying on the manufacture of engines upon an extensive scale. Watt found in Wilkinson "the great iron-founder," as he was now called, the very man he required; he applied to him for "a cylinder bored to truth;" and it is not a little interesting to know that.

THE FIRST ENGINE MADE BY WATT AND BOULTON AT SOHO

[104] Was one ordered by Wilkinson for his Broseley Ironworks, and that Watt himself came down here to superintend, its erection. Mr. Smiles, in his "Lives of Boulton and Watt," verifies this by saying: "The first engine made at Soho was one ordered by John Wilkinson to blow the bellows of his ironworks at Broseley. Great interest was, of course, felt in the success of this engine. Watt took great pains with the drawings; the workmen did their best to execute the several parts accurately, for it was understood many orders depended upon whether it worked satisfactorily or not. Wilkinson's iron-manufacturing neighbours, who were contemplating the erection of Newcomen engines, suspended their operations until they had an opportunity of seeing what Boulton and Watt's engine could do; and all looked for ward to its completion with the most eager

interest. When all was ready at Soho, the materials were packed up and sent to Broseley, Watt accompanying them to superintend the erection. He had as yet no assistant to whom he could intrust such a piece of work, on which so much depended. The engine was erected and ready for use about the beginning of 1776. As it approached completion Watt became increasingly anxious to make a trial of its powers. But Boulton wrote to him not to hurry – not to let the engine make a stroke until every hindrance to its successful action had been removed; ‘and then,’ said he, ‘in the name of God, fall to and do your best.’ The result of the extreme care taken with the construction and erection of the engine was entirely satisfactory. It worked to the admiration of all who saw it, and the fame of Boulton and Watt became great throughout the midland counties.”

While Watt was at Broseley Boulton was pushing on the new buildings at Soho; and keeping [105] his partner fully advised of all that was going on. ‘Pray tell Mr. Wilkinson,’ Boulton said, ‘to get a dozen cylinders cast and bored, from 12 to 50 inches diameter, and as many condensers of suitable sizes. The latter must be sent here, as we will keep them ready fitted up, and then an engine can be turned out of hand in two or three weeks. I have fixed my mind upon making from twelve to fifteen reciprocating and fifty rotary engines per annum. I assure you that of all the toys and trinkets which we manufacture at Soho, none shall take the place of fire-engines in respect of my attention.’

Wilkinson, as Watt in writing to Boulton described it, went “to work in the forge way,” he was not content, however, with old appliances, but sent to Watt for a “tilt-hammer,” which the latter described as “an engine to raise a stamp of 15 cwts., 30 or 40 times a minute;” adding “many of these battering rams will be wanted if they answer.” It answered beyond expectation.

He also “went into the gun way.” In the year 1786, we find instructions in one of his letters for thirty two-pounders, for swivels, for howitzers, mortars, and shells. He says: “we made some good strong iron at Willey, from scraps re-melted, that would have made guns or anything requiring strength. I thought then that the same metal might be made at Bersham. But from trials at Low and High Burthens, I never could learn that anything better than a tender pig could be procured – the price of which was high – unless it could be cast into some articles from the furnace. From what I recollect of the trial in re-melting for *pig only*, I am confident the metal [106] would not do for guns. For shot or shell it is the best metal made when melted in these small blasts.”

The letter further contains directions for 100 four-pounders, four feet long, and for a number of three-pounders $3\frac{3}{4}$ “Aim,” he says to his foreman, “at the perfections required by the Board; they will, and do, relax from the great exactings stated; but at any rate they will go down with the East India Company, whose sizes are 8-inch.”

Guns were sent off to the South for the purpose of being smuggled into France, and a number of cast pipes, under the name of water piping, were got up for the purpose of supplying the French with gun metal. These were taken down Tarbatch Dingle, by means of the tramway we have described, to the banks of the Severn, where all the apparatus for a powder mill was stored, to be conveyed away from thence for shipping. They were taken by barges to the Bristol Channel, and smuggled on board French vessels. Some of the pipes were bona fide transactions, for the Paris Water Works; but others were not, and on this becoming known Wilkinson’s pipe-making was stopped by the Government; and a number of these castings remained for years at the warehouse at the bottom of Tarbatch Dingle. It was the difficulty of getting barges of the ordinary kind built fast enough to carry his castings that led Wilkinson to construct the

FIRST IRON VESSEL:

[107]

The Trial.

Compared with the armed leviathans of the same metal now upon the ocean she was, it is true, a Severn minnow, a mere stickleback contrasted with a whale, but she was a notable innovation in that day, and created a wonderful sensation among barge builders and barge owners, and indeed through the kingdom generally. The barge builders had a sort of monopoly, and thought Wilkinson could not do without them; and when he said “I will make an iron barge,” they laughed at him. Wilkinson, however, set an ingenious smith, whose name was John Jones, but who went by the name of “John O’Lincoln” to work; and during the spring and summer of 1787 John’s hammer and tongs were plied in rivetting and fastening plate after plate of Wilkinson’s best iron, whilst many a joke was cracked by passers by, who denounced the innovation in terms embellished by rounds of oaths. Early and late John’s hammer was heard – rat-at-tat-tat, rat-at-

tat-tat, till the woods echoed back the busy sounds. It was a quiet rural spot; and its solitude had favoured, as we have said, the exportation of good gun iron to the French.

[108] The autumn of 1787 arrived, and a great crowd came down to witness the launch. The woods wore their autumnal foliage, the sun sent down approving smiles, and the Apley rookery, disturbed by incursive visitors, furnished a hovering cloud of sable spectators. The plodding ploughman left his task, the artisan his shop, the pedlar his pack, and yeomen from vale and upland came pouring down to witness the launch. “Will she swim?” “Will she work and prove manageable on the water?” and “Who will he get to work her?” were questions that served to occupy the time. Never did son of Vulcan look more proud than John O’Lincoln; if his descent direct from the patron god had been made out and patented he could not have felt more so. A discharge of 32-pounders told that all was ready; and before the white curling smoke had well died away, the “Trial” descended the way-pieces into the river with a splash. It carried 30 tons, and Edward Palmer, who lived near the “Wood bridge,” as Coalport Bridge was then called, was her captain.

The following is Wilkinson’s account of the event in a letter to Mr. Stockdale:

“Broseley, 17th July, 1787.

“Yesterday week my iron boat was launched; it answers all my expectations, and has convinced the unbelievers who were 999 in 1,000. It will be a nine days wonder and then be like Columbus’s egg.”

Wilkinson went on building other barges. In a letter, dated “Bradley Ironworks, 20th October, 1787,” he says:—

“There have been two iron vessels launched in my service since 1st September, one is a canal-boat for this navigation – the other a barge of 40 tons for the river Severn. The last was floated on Monday, and is I expect now at Stourport with a lading of bar iron. My clerk at Broseley advises me that she swims remarkably light, and exceeds even my own expectations.”

[109] The *Universal Magazine* for that year, vol. 83, p. 276, says:— “ November the 8th, an iron vessel, built by John Wilkinson, Esq., was lately launched at Willey Wharf. She is perfectly tight, moves very easily on the water, and draws about eight inches with every accompaniment on board.”

In 1810 John Onions and Son, of Broseley, built a lighter, of about 50 tons, called the “Victory,” which was designed for the Severn trade; and also one at their works at Brierley, which was sent to London, in parts, and which was, we believe, the first iron vessel on the Thames. In 1811 they built several which traded extensively between Brierley and London, and between Broseley and Stourport.

[110] Wilkinson by this time had become a wealthy man, so much so, that Telford, in speaking of his appointment by the share-holders of the Ellesmere canal, says, “I had the decided support of the great John Wilkinson, king of the ironmasters, himself a host. I travelled in his carriage to the meeting, and found him much disposed to be friendly.” In 1781, too, when Watt and Boulton were struggling with pecuniary difficulties which threatened their position, the former suggested that Wilkinson should be invited to join them as a partner and relieve them of their difficulties; “for rather than founder at sea,” he said, “we had better run ashore.” It was during that year that Boulton and Watt invented a model steam rolling mill, with two cylinders and two beams, which astonished all the ironmasters, and Wilkinson at once ordered one to be made on a large scale for his Bradley ironworks¹². He had already ordered a powerful engine, in which Boulton proposed to employ the double cylinder, with double crank, and a pair of fly-wheels for his Bradley works.

He had extensive shares in various lead and copper mines in Wales and Cornwall; and coined his own copper and silver tokens. The copper coins have on the obverse an excellent likeness of him, and on the reverse a forge, steam-hammer, and a workman, and by the side of a pier-head a ship lying, supposed to be the *iron ship*. Some of these coins, however, have on the reverse a ship in full sail. Around the edge of the coins are the words, “Bersham, Bradley, Willey, Snedshill, &c.”

Mr. Wilkinson lived in the house where Mr. Shorting now lives¹³, and the houses next the street adjoining were his offices; the window shutters are lined with sheet iron as they were in the time of Wilkinson, who took this precaution to render them secure against thieves, in consequence of the place having been broken open and a robbery effected some time before. It is said that in consequence of a doubt having existed, among the workmen as to their master’s

solvency on the occasion of the robbery, that he paid them all that week in his own copper tokens.

GRAND BANQUET TO WILKINSON AT THE HOTEL DE VILLE.

Wilkinson taught the French the art of boring cannon from the solid. He had cast at Willey and elsewhere the whole of the tubes, pipes, cylinders, and ironwork required for the great Paris Water Works, the most formidable undertaking of the kind in that day. He also erected the first steam engine in France, in connection with the Paris Water Works, on the completion of which the French *Savants* gave him a grand banquet. We have his letter describing with great gusto the event, in which he remarked that the lively demonstrations of the French on seeing the engine at work for the first time completely overpowered him. [111]

WILKINSON INVENTED HOT BLAST.¹⁴

Wilkinson anticipated by many years the introduction of hot blast for furnaces, a fact which came out some short time since in a trial with the patentee of the improvement. The full merits of the discovery have only of late been appreciated. It has made available a class of ores before impossible to smelt. It has augmented, vastly, the production of pig iron, and effected a great saving of fuel.

WILKINSON'S IRON MEN.

Wilkinson constructed the first coal cutting machines, or what were called his "iron men," for cutting the deeper coals, then just coming into use. It is said that they answered the purpose for which they were designed, and were introduced at Bradley and Broseley, but the colliers refused to "set the trees" saying, "If Wilkinson's iron men did the one they must do the other."

THE FIRST IRON BRIDGE.

Wilkinson had a prophetic appreciation of the uses to which iron would be applied, and he himself applied it to many new and novel purposes. He made an iron barge, and he had made an iron pulpit; he made iron bellows to blow his furnace, and iron men to get his coal; and was in the habit of saying that the time would come when houses would be built of iron, and the sea would be navigated by ships made of iron. [112]

Wilkinson believed in iron thoroughly. He never wrote a letter in which he did not mention "iron," and when it was proposed to put a bridge across the Severn, to connect the Madeley and Broseley banks of the river, Wilkinson supported the views of Mr. Darby, as to the use of his favourite metal, but it was pronounced preposterous, and Wilkinson was declared to be "iron-mad." But as Wilkinson insisted upon iron, and was a large shareholder, his suggestion was not to be ignored, and the architect had to reconsider his plan, and adopt the suggestion.

Wilkinson was wont to say "More is done by scheming than by working," and, it is said, when a scheming fit came over him he lay in bed with an iron ball in his hand over a copper basin, so that if he caught an idea and went to sleep before he had worked it out the fall of the ball recalled him to himself. Indeed it is said that he tried at one time to do altogether without sleep, and that after three days and nights' experiment he was near falling into the liquid iron, and would have done so but that a man rushed forward and saved him.

WILKINSON'S DEATH AND BURIAL, LITIGATION RESPECTING HIS WILL, &c.

Wilkinson had two coffins made for himself, with screws and spanner, which he kept in his greenhouse; one he was accustomed to offer to his visitors, the other he kept for himself, but he grew too big for it. He also wrote his own epitaph, as follows:— [113]

Delivered from Persecution of Malace and Envy,
Here Rests
* * * * *
Iron Master,
In certain hope of a better State and Heavenly Mansion,
as promulgated by Jesus Christ, in whose Gospel
he was a firm believer.
His life
was spent in action for the benefit of man, and he trusts

in some degree to the Glory of God, as his different works that remain in various parts of the kingdom are testimonies, of increasing labour, until death released him, the – day of–, 18–, at the advanced age of –.

[114] This inscription was slightly altered by his friends at his decease, which took place on the 4th of July, 1808, (aged 80). He left instructions in his will that he was to be buried without pomp or ceremony of any kind, in the garden of his mansion, the nearest to which he might happen to die; and his death happening at Bradley he was taken in a hearse with four horses to Castle Head in Cumberland. The weight of the leaden shell, together with the body and the hearse, was so great that the wheels sank into the sands from which the estate had been recovered; so that it required a number of men to extricate both horses and hearse from the quicksands. On arriving at its destination the thickness of the wood and lead coffins was found to be too great for the iron one, and the body had to be deposited in an adjoining walk until another iron coffin could be cast. When this had been done and the body had been placed in the new coffin unlooked for obstacles occurred from the presence of rock near the surface of the ground, which prevented it being placed completely out of sight. The body was consequently disinterred, colliers were sent for to blast the rock; and the obstacle having been removed, the body was a third time lowered into the grave, and a pyramidal mausoleum, of course of iron, weighing twenty tons, was placed over the "Great Ironmaster;" and it might be thought that this would have been sufficient to have kept him down, but the tradition is that it did not do so, and that he was accustomed to revisit the scenes of his former labours. Moreover some twenty years after his death, upon the sale of the estate the mausoleum which was opposite to the drawing room windows, being considered unsightly, the body was a fourth time disinterred and carried by night in the heavy coffins of lead, wood, and iron up a steep hill and finally deposited beneath the pew of the Castle Head estate in the little chapel of Lindall.

[115] Wilkinson died immensely rich, the machinery at his different works alone being estimated at £120,000, the whole of which was lost in seven years litigation. It appears that Wilkinson left his mention, furniture, plate &c. at Castle Head, together with £500 per annum to Ann Lewis who lived with him and, after providing for trustees &c., the remainder of his property and estates to his executors for twenty-one years, for the benefit of three children born to him by the above, his wife having died a short time before. In the event of the death of these children, the whole was to go to a nephew, Thomas Jones Wilkinson; and the latter, taking advantage of the fact that these children were not born in wedlock, notwithstanding the clearly expressed wishes of the deceased, instituted proceedings to get possession of the whole. He gained every trial in the various law courts, but failed in equity, when it came before Lord Eldon in the Court of Chancery. The nephew afterwards carried the case to the House of Lords.

Wilkinson's workmen had a song somewhat characteristic of the man and the times. We quote five of the verses –

"But before I proceed with my lingo,
You shall all drink my toast in a bumper of stingo;
Fill up, and without any further parade,
JOHN WILKINSON, boys, the supporter of trade.

Derry Down, down, down, Derry down.

May all his endeavours be crown'd with success,
And his works ever growing posterity bless;
May his comforts increase with the length of his days,
And his fame shine as bright as his furnace's blaze.

That the wood of old England would fail did appear,
And though iron was scarce because charcoal was dear;
By puddling and stamping he cured that evil,
So the Swedes and the Russians may go to the devil.

Our thundering cannon too frequently burst,
A mischief so great he prevented the first;
And now it is well known they never miscarry,
But drive all our foes with a blast of Old Harry.

Then let each jolly fellow take hold of his glass,
And drink to the health of his friend and his lass;

May we always have plenty of stingo and pence,
And Wilkinson's fame blaze a thousand years hence."

OTHER INVENTORS AND IRONWORKERS OF BROSELEY AND NEIGHBOURHOOD.

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One of the most important discoveries which led to the improvement and expansion of the iron trade in the latter part of the last century, was that of converting crude into malleable iron, the credit of which has usually been accorded to Henry Cort, but which was brought about in reality by inventions made and patented by the brothers Cranege, and Peter Onions, some years before. We have it upon the authority of a gentleman believing himself to be of the same family, that the two brothers, who in 1766 adopted the reverberatory or air furnace, in which they placed the pig iron, and with raw coal and without blast converted it into malleable iron, which was taken from the furnace to the forge hammer, and drawn into bars – a process which was patented by William Reynolds of Coalbrookdale in their names – were Broseley men Peter Onions, who in 1783 carried the process a stage further, lived at what is now "the Old Crown," Broseley, where he carried on the business of a clock and watch-maker in a workshop still to be seen. Mr. Onions removed to Merthyr Tydvill, and his patent is dated A.D. 1783, May 7, and is as follows:– "Onions, Peter. – Working and refining cast or pig iron, and converting the same from a fluid state into wrought or bar iron.

"Two furnaces are used, a common smelting furnace and another furnace of stone and brick, bound with ironwork and well annealed, into which the fluid iron or metal is received from the smelting furnace. A quantity or stream of cold water is run or put into the cistern or trough under the ash-grate. The furnace is then charged with fuel and closed up, and the doors luted with sand. The blast is then admitted below the grate, and when the furnace is sufficiently heated the liquid iron metal is taken from the smelting furnace in ladles, and introduced through an aperture, which is then closed. The blast and fire are then used until the metal becomes less fluid and thickens into a kind of paste, which the workman by opening the door turns and stirs with a bar or other iron instrument, and then closes the aperture again, and must apply the blast and fire until there is a ferment in the metal." If no ferment ensues, a blast of cold air is to be blown upon the metal from an extra pipe. As the workman stirs the metal the scoria will separate, and the particles of iron will adhere, these the workman must collect or gather into a mass or lump."

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This invention was adopted by Richard Crawshay, the founder of the famous firm of that name; and who afterwards adopted Cort's processes. Peter Onions appeared to have received but little benefit from his discovery, for we find Gilbert Gilpin in a gossiping kind of letter dated April 12, 1798, and addressed to William Wilkinson, saying: "I saw at Dowlais old Peter Onions, who looks very well in his 80th year, and is following his clock and watch-making business as usual. I saw Tom Guest also at Merthyr." This "Tom Guest" was Thomas Guest, brother of John Guest, who went from Broseley, and founded that magnificent work which brought his son, the late Sir John Guest, in an income of £80,000 a year. (We shall again refer to the Guest family.)

EARL DUNDONALD'S STEW-COAL OVENS AT THE CALCUTTS.

The introduction of coal as a substitute for charcoal in the manufacture of iron formed a distinct era by cheapening the process. In the first instance great difficulty was experienced in using it so as to produce the same effect. Coal was used in its raw state, but for various reasons did not answer the purpose intended, and it was then subjected to the same process as wood in converting it into charcoal; by arranging it in a circle upon an open hearth in the open air, then covering it with clay and cinders, and setting fire to it, allowing the access of sufficient air for combustion to go on gradually. Still the process was somewhat wasteful and costly; and in speaking of the Calcutts, mention should first be made of Earl Dundonald's scheme for cheapening coke, and producing coal tar. In speaking of this, and the improvements initiated by George and Thomas Cranage, and brought to completion by Henry Cort, Lord Sheffield in 1786, said "if Mr. Cort's ingenious improvements in the art of making and working iron, the steam engine by Boulton and Watt, and Lord Dundonald's discovery of making coke at half the present price, should all succeed, it is not certainly too much to say that the result will be more advantageous to Great Britain than the possession of the thirteen colonies; for it will give the complete command of the iron trade to this country, with its vast advantages to navigation. The noble Earl erected a row of large ovens, which were called "stew - coal ovens," from the process to which the coal was subjected for the purpose of driving off the gas, and distilling the tar, about four pounds of which were obtained from every hundred weight of coal. From this tar volatile oils again were extracted, and varnishes, valuable for the purposes of Japanning. The process consisted in conveying from the ovens above mentioned the liberated gases, by means of flues, into a capacious funnel built of brick, supported by arches, and covered with lead, formed into

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numerous gutters for the conveyance of water, the chill of which was required to condense the tar. This, falling to the bottom, was conveyed by pipes into a receiver, from thence pumped into a large boiler, and then brought by heat to a proper consistency of tar or pitch, and the Severn afforded the means of convenient transit to the dockyards for the use of the navy, or for other purposes. The gas thus driven off and collected was nothing more than that which science has since taught us to turn to account, in lighting up our rooms and streets. It often used to take fire and explode, blowing up the solid masonry around.

We may add that the late Earl Dundonald, whose services entitled him to that respect and distinction willingly awarded by the people of this country to talent, genius and noble daring, but which in official quarters was for a long time denied him, was at the time we refer to, a stripling, gleaning from his venerable father that knowledge of chemistry which enabled him to propound his plan to the Government for the destruction of the Russian stronghold.

[120] At the Calcutts there were two furnaces: one making twenty and the other fifteen tons per week of what was called "gun iron," which was used chiefly in the manufacture of guns, mortars, shot, and shell for government contracts. A thirty-six single-power engine worked the two furnaces, and a twenty-four single-power in 1803 was in course of erection a short distance – from the others, to blow a third. These works were carried on at one time by a Mr. George Matthews, an intimate friend of George Forester, Esq., of Willey, and of Edward Blakeway, Esq., of Broseley, who died about the same time; at least so we were informed by the late Mr. Thomas Onions, who was a painstaking collector of incidents in connection with the iron trade of this county; but at what period he carried them on we are not able to say. "The Commercial and Agricultural Magazine" for December, 1799, speaking of the first Alexander Brodie, who was then living says that, "in 1786 Mr. Brodie purchased the Calcut mines, stock, houses, &c., near Broseley: from which government receives large supplies of cannon, and the country in general, iron of the best quality. Mr. Brodie may justly boast of possessing one of the most complete boring machines for cannon in Europe." The account then proceeds to give the following particulars respecting that gentleman's very successful career.

"Alexander Brodie, Esq., Iron master at Broseley, Shropshire, was born the 27th of February, 1733, Old Style, at the Rigs of Traquaire Minshmore, in the parish of Traquaire, Tweedale.

"In 1751, at the age of eighteen, he left Scotland for England, furnished with letters of recommendation by Lady Coniers, mother-in-law to Lord Traquaire. Mr. Brodie visited Huntingdonshire, where, excepting a few months which he passed in London, he remained upwards of three years.

"In 1755, Mr. Alderman Alexander, ironmonger and whitesmith, employed Mr. Brodie, on his return from Huntingdonshire. He remained in his employment two years. From 1757 to 1758 Mr. Brodie was employed by Mr. Brodbent, in making engines to extinguish fire. In 1758, he was employed in Huntingdonshire where he made several excellent engines.

[121] "In 1759, he returned to London, and became a master blacksmith, in Bear-yard, Lincoln's-inn-fields; where he distinguished himself as a cramp-maker to chair and cabinet makers. In 1760, he removed into Old Boswell-court, Clements-inn.

"In 1760, he married Miss Mary Howard, daughter to Mr. Richard Howard, of Chiswick, Middlesex, by whom he had two children; both died in infancy. Mrs. Brodie died in 1777. Mr. B. remains a widower."

[122] The writer then describes an ingenious invention made by Mr. Brodie, in 1764, of a registered stove, which he patented; also a registered stove which he erected in 1779, in the state-room at Windsor, where her Majesty's needle-work was kept; on which occasion Mr. Brodie presented a model of a ship's hearth, which Sir Alexander Hamilton had ordered for the Lascelles, East-Indianman. Mr. Brodie afterwards received an order for two: one for the Fortitude, of 74 guns, and the Minerva, of 38 guns. The writer goes on to point out the superiority of Mr. Brodie's ship's hearth to those in general use, and an important substitution effected by him of iron-boilers for copper ones, on board the Minerva. It appears also from this writer, that Mr. Brodie had a share in an iron-foundry at Manchester; and that having a strong predilection for his native soil, he established in 1792, an extensive woollen manufactory, in Inverleith. At Peebles, the writer says, Mr. Brodie purchased an estate, which he called Temple Bar, and Long-Side: and which was called Smythfield; which occasioned him jocularly to boast that he could walk from Temple-Bar to Smythfield on his own ground. Mr. Brodie also made a purchase in 1798, of a house and estate at Upper Tutton, in the Parish of Strotton; which enabled him to retire to the country from business occasionally. The writer concludes by saying – "The extraordinary successes of Mr. Brodie are not greater than his integrity. He is distinguished for charitable donations. He is worth £100,000 sterling."

It is said that he died worth much more than the sum just stated, and that he left, along other legacies, to thirteen nephews and nieces, including Mr. Cochrane, who managed the works for him, the sum of £15,000 each.

He was succeeded by his nephew, Alexander Brodie the second, who married Miss Griffiths, of Broseley, and lived at Rock House, where Mr. Exley, jun. now resides. He died in 1830, and was buried at Jackfield Church, where a white marble tablet was erected to his memory. It has since been removed to the Pritchard Memorial church.

WILLIAM HAZLEDINE.

The late Mr. William Haziedine, of Shrewsbury, who succeeded the second Alexander Brodie in the Calcutt works, afforded another instance of a wealthy ironmaster who had risen from the ranks of labour by perseverance, industry, and native talent. The Menai Suspension-bridge, constructed by him under the superintendence of Telford, is a monument of ingenuity and skill in its construction, and a standing memorial of his genius. He also was the contractor for the Pontycysylte and Chirk Aqueducts, and other important works. When a youth he carried his dinner to his work in a wallet; at a riper age he drove his carriage; and at his death left considerable wealth behind him.

On an occasion of public excitement – we believe a contested election in Shrewsbury – [123] someone called out that he knew Mr. Haziedine when he went to work with his dinner in his wallet. Mr. Hazledine coolly replied that *he* remembered carrying his wallet when he had *no* dinner to put into it!

During old Mr. Brodie's time the Prince of Orange visited the works, made an inspection of the castings, and expressed his high satisfaction of the tests applied to the 18 and 32 pounders – some of which were fired in honour of his visit. He managed however to offend some of the servants of the Government by refusing them the usual fees; the consequence was he had a number of guns returned which it is said were plugged; these were sold to Messrs. Walker of Rotheram, and found their way to India, where they were captured and recognised by some old Calcutt workmen both in the Burmese and Sikh wars. There is an old engraving of these works extant, looking up the river. The boring mill stood below the railway crossing, where a foundry has recently been started; and the turning and fitting shops were in the hollow, by the brook, 30 or 40 feet below where Mr. John Doughty's brickwork stands. The last of the furnaces, of which there were four in old Mr. Brodie's time, was blown out at the Calcutts early in 1828. This property, which formerly belonged to Sir George, and afterwards to Sir J. Dean Paul, was purchased by James Foster, Esq., who is working the mines left.

The Barnett's Leasow two furnaces have so completely disappeared that scarcely a wreck remains behind, The Severn Valley Railway passes over where they stood. They were built, we [124] believe, by Messrs. Wright and Jesson, who carried them on, more than half a century ago. Mr. Thomas Birch being then manager. Afterwards they were carried on by Mr. Phillips, who had had much experience in South Wales and other places, and who brought up the make from thirty five to a *maximum* of eighty tons per week for the two furnaces. The metal was principally used at the forge at the Wren's Nest, near Apley.

James Foster, Esq., of Coton Hall, uncle to the present W. O. Foster, Esq., of Apley, afterwards took to these works and carried them on, with Mr. Benjamin Ball, of Broseley for manager. They were blown by a thirty-six double-power engine, of very superior construction.

The first of the two furnaces at Benthall was blown in in 1777 and the last was blown out in 1821. They made pigs for melting purposes, part of which were used at the iron foundry, carried on by the company; the rest were sold. An engine of thirty horse-power, with a single and open-topped cylinder, upon the atmospheric principle, was employed; it could only blow one furnace at a time. These works were carried on by Harries and Co.

BROSELEY or Coneybury furnaces have also disappeared. They stood near the Coneybury House, or Hall, as it is sometimes called in the parish records. They were carried on by Banks and Onions; and were blown by a thirty horse single-power engine, which only blew one furnace at a time, and that making from 30 to 35 tons per week.

The house at the Catch-gate, at the junction of the Ironbridge and Dingle roads, was the [125] original office of the works. The furnaces were blown in in 1787, and blown out in 1823.

GUEST'S Broseley furnace stood where the Broseley Tileries stand; it was built in 1806-7, but we are not sure as to the date at which it was blown out. It was built near the outcrop of the

mines, and close to a fault, by one of the Guests, we believe Thomas, who not long after left the exhausted coal field of Shropshire for the rich and, then, virgin coal field of South Wales. This Thomas Guest was brother to John Guest of Broseley, and father of Sir John Guest of the Dowlais works, who was created a baronet, and married the daughter of the Earl of Lindsey. His son, Sir Iver Guest, is a son-in-law to the present duke of Marlborough. The Guests still hold a meadow at the back of King Street, abutting on Speed's lane, leading from Barrett's Hill along the brook side. This meadow was offered to be purchased a few years since, but the family declined to part with it on account of its being the only property they had in the parish of Broseley.

[126] The anecdote of Lady Guest, wife of the late Sir John, the wealthy ironmaster of South Wales, told by Roebuck, in his "History of the Whigs," is probably familiar to the reader. Her ladyship, it is said, during one of her brilliant receptions, surrounded by high rank and peerless beauty, was informed that an anticipated messenger had arrived from Monmouth. "Ask him to come in said her ladyship; and booted and spurred, with the mud of the roads and the dust of the "coal-hole," as she facetiously termed the Welsh ironworks, the agent was ushered into the room, with a long tin case containing a statement of the accounts for the year. A bevy of beauties, with heads gleaming with diamonds, crowded round, wondering at the cabalistic features in red and black that appeared upon the document. Rapidly running through the figures under their respective heads, income and expenditure, and mentally calculating the profits, she repeated half aloud – "Three hundred thousand pounds, three hundred thousand pounds;" and in answer to inquiries astonished the eager group around her by informing them that the net profits from the "coal-hole," as the facetiously termed the works, for the year amounted to the princely sum just mentioned.

The *Athenaeum* for May 17, 1845, and May 24 of the same year, contains reviews of "The Mabinogion," part 6, with remarks complimentary as to the literary abilities of this highly talented lady, who is also the author of several other works.

BROSELEY COALFIELD.

[127] From what we have said of the early workings of the Broseley coal field and its speedy exhaustion it may be desirable to give a few facts from Mr. Prestwich's paper on the "Geology of Coalbrookdale," read before the Geological Society in 1836, and to add some general observations of our own on the same subject. Mr. Prestwich gives sections, page 478, (in the Transactions) of the Inet and Amies pits; and on page 481 of Hemans and the Yew Tree Pits, the latter being in the Calcutt field, where an increase of strata takes place, but still nothing either in number or importance when compared with the rich coal and ironstone bearing fields yet farther to the east. Thus, that important bed of ironstone known as the Pennystone, absent in the Rowton, Caughley, and Inet district, is four feet thick in the Hemans pit, and six feet in the Yew Tree Pit, whilst at Donington it is thirty feet in thickness.

THE INET SECTION.

No.		Yds	Ft	In
1.	Rock and clunch	14	0	0
2.	Coal	0	1	0
3.	Clunch	8	0	0
4.	Two feet coal	0	2	0
5.	Clunch	4	0	6
6.	Ganey coal	0	2	0
7.	Fire clay	4	0	0
8.	Top coal	0	2	0
9.	Clod	0	0	6
10.	Best Coal	0	2	8
11.	Fire clay	0	1	0
12.	Clod coal	0	2	0
13.	Rock	5	2	0
14.	Flint coal	1	9	0
		41	0	11

THE AIMES

No.		Yds	Ft	In
1.	Clays	6	0	0
2.	Clod	0	1	0
3.	Rock soft	0	1	6
4.	Clod	0	1	0

5.	Rock	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	6	
6.	Clod	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	1	2	
7.	Rock	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	1	6	[128]
8.	Clod	...	...	...	...	...	...	11	0	0	
9.	Dingle rock	...	...	...	...	...	...	9	2	8	
10.	Clod, with four small sulphur coals in same							27	1	6	
11.	Rock	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	6	
12.	Blue clod	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	2	0	
13.	Soft rock	...	...	...	...	...	...	9	1	6	
14.	Strong rock	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	2	0	
15.	Lime rock (Freshwater limestone)	...	...					1	1	0	
16.	Blue clod	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0	0	
17.	Red clod	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0	0	
18.	Sulphur coal rock	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	0	0	
19.	Sulphur coal roof	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	0	0	
20.	Sulphur coal	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	2	6	
21.	Sulphur coal Poundstone	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1	6	
22.	Brick and Tile clays	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	1	6	
23.	Ganev coal rock	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	0	0	
24.	Clod	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	0	0	
25.	Best coal rock	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	1	6	
26.	Best coal	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0	4	
27.	Middle coal	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0	0	
28.	Clod coal	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	1	8	
29.	Pricking	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	1	0	
30.	Clod coal Pennevstones							1	0	0	
31.	Black clod	0	2	3	
32.	Hard stone	1	0	0	
33.	Flint coal	1	0	0	
								<u>132</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	

HEMAN'S PIT, NEAR BROSELEY.

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No.		Yds	Ft	In	
1.	Soil and gravel	2 0 0
2.	Red and sandy rock	7 1 0
3.	Ironstone	0 0 3
4.	Blue clunch	1 1 3
5.	Sulphur coal	...	...	...	0 0 6
6.	Blue clunch interspersed with small ironstone	...	...	...	4 2 4
7.	Sulphur coal	...	...	...	0 0 4
8.	Breccia. Blue bind	...	...	...	5 2 6
9.	Mingled red, brown and white	...	...	...	2 1 0
10.	Strong blue clunch	...	...	...	5 2 6
11.	Rock	...	...	...	0 2 6
12.	Stone and coal pricking	...	...	...	0 1 6
13.	Blue clunch and rock	...	...	...	4 2 3
14.	Bright hard coal	...	...	...	0 0 9
15.	Clunch	...	...	...	2 2 6
16.	Clunch mixed with rock	...	...	...	4 0 6
17.	Bass and smut	...	...	...	0 1 0
18.	Clunch	...	...	...	1 1 0
19.	Coal	...	...	...	0 0 9
20.	Clunch	...	...	...	1 0 6
21.	Rock	...	...	...	1 2 6
22.	Clunch	...	...	...	5 1 6
23.	Red clay	...	...	...	1 0 6
24.	Clunch and rock mixed	...	...	...	2 1 0
25.	Rock brown and pitchy	...	...	...	2 2 0
26.	Limestone (makes brown lime)	...	...	...	1 0 4
27.	Brown rock	...	...	...	0 2 2
28.	Ironstone	...	...	...	1 0 3
29.	Red, white and yellow	...	...	...	1 2 0
30.	Blue rock and clunch	10 1 6
31.	Clunch	1 2 0
32.	Coal	0 0 4
33.	Pricking	0 0 9
34.	Coal	0 0 7
35.	Clod	0 0 9

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36	Sulphur Coal	0	1	7
37	Pricking	0	0	6
38	Coal	0	0	
39	White Rock	1	2	0
40	Py'd Rock	4	0	0
41	Rough pitchy Rock	...	...	...	...	13	0	0
42	Ironstone (Penneystone)	...	...	...	...	1	1	0
43	Red, blue and white	...	...	...	...	4	2	0
44	Smut and coal	...	...	...	...	0	0	2
45	Clunch	...	...	...	...	2	0	0
46	Rock full of fractures	...	...	...	...	4	2	6
47	Ganey Coal	...	...	...	...	0	1	6
						<hr/>		
						110	0	10

YEW TREE PIT, CALCUTT FIELD, BROSELEY

No.		Yds	Ft	In
1.	From the surface to the coal rock	18	0	0
2.	The day rock, or sulphur coal rock	8	0	0
3.	Sulphur coal	1	0	0
4.	Brick and tile clay	4	0	0
5.	White rock	12	0	0
6.	Top coal measure to the bottom flint coal	14	0	0
7.	Bottom coal	1	0	0
8.	Bottom coal flint	6	0	0
9.	Penneystone measure	2	0	0
[131] 10.	Viger rock	6	0	0
11.	Viger Coal	0	1	6
12.	Rock	8	0	0
13.	Two-foot coal	0	1	0
14.	Ganey coal rock	4	0	6
15.	Ganey coal	1	0	0
16.	Best coal rock	6	0	0
17.	Best coal	2	0	0
18.	To the clod coal	3	0	0
19.	Clod coal	0	1	6
20.	To the flint coal	3	0	0
21.	Flint coal	0	2	3
		<hr/>		
		101	0	9

This pit is on the left of the Dark Lane, in going to Broseley, and near to where the new house for the Incumbent of Jackfield church is being built.

[132] The names are to some extent misleading, the seam, for instance, here called the Bottom coal is the Big Flint on the Madeley side of the field; but the sections themselves serve to shew how few were the seams on this side the Severn compared with those on the Madeley and Lilleshall side. The term Freshwater limestone also is one which no longer applies; the discovery having been made that the organic forms it contains are marine, and one, a tiny shell named *Spirorbis*, being commonly found in connection with it, it is now called the *Spirorbis* limestone. It occurs on or close to the surface at Caughtley, where from being often used for colouring houses it is sometimes called Lord Forester's livery. It occurs at very many points over a wide area, and is most important as indicating the existence of the Upper, or younger series of coal measures; but it is no indication of what measures lie beneath, as it not unfrequently lies, like the accompanying coals, upon the wasted or denuded edges of sometimes one and sometimes another seam, which has been partially washed away. It would scarcely be within our province, at present, to go minutely into details with regard to these seams or the faults by which they are intersected. The one which goes by the name of the Broseley Fault is the most important. It crosses the Coalport and Ironbridge turnpike roads a little below the Forester's Arms, passes the church and Birch Meadow chapel, and continues to Coalbrookdale, causing the severance of the limestone ridges of Benthall Edge and Lincoln Hill. It brings up the coal measures on the highest side to the surface, so that coal is not unfrequently found cropping out in the cellars and gardens of the houses near the bank and the Town Hall, the average amount of disturbance being over two hundred feet. In consequence of this the measures speedily disappear on the south-west, but a portion of them reappear at Shirlot, at Harcot, and at the Clee Hills. There is little doubt that originally these coal-seams were formed in continuous sheets from the Shropshire coal field to

that of South Wales; but owing to disturbances like that which created the Broseley fault they were broken up, and brought within the action of destructive waves which carried them away. The following, copied from Mr. Prestwich's paper, will shew the thickness and number north and south, and how they diminish from the former to the latter points:-

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	Total Thickness	No. of Beds
Donnington	55 feet	19
Woombridge	52	18
New Hadley	46	16
Malinslee	36	15
Dawley	43	17
Lightmoor	40	17
Madeley	33	22
Broseley	24	10
Amies	16	7

We have said that the Broseley coal field is all but exhausted, so far as coal is concerned, but there yet remains coal which may be worked to some extent if capital were employed to drain the south eastern part of the field.

THE CLAY INDUSTRIES OF BROSELEY.

Next to the Coal and Iron Industries in importance are those in which clay forms the chief material. Broseley is particularly rich in clays adapted to the various purposes of bricks, tiles, and pottery; and for one or more of these purposes they seem to have been in use for very many years. We have nothing definite with regard to the early history of brick-making in Broseley, but that of pottery is more clearly defined. At Jackfield this industry appears to have been carried on at a somewhat early period. In our *Clay Industries*, published in 1877, we quoted Messrs. Jewitt and Chaffers, who had examined the parish register of Stoke-upon-Trent, to shew that Broseley supplied a race of potters to that great centre of pot-making as early as 1560. Excavations too made some years ago at Jackfield brought to light an oven with unbaked ware, which at some period unknown had been covered by a land-slip; also in an old pit there a mug was found having upon it the date 1634. If Jackfield supplied Stoke with potters, Stoke in return appears to have sent pot-masters to Jackfield. One of these was Mr. Richard Thursfield, who is reported to have taken these works and carried them on in 1713. His brother or son, Mr. John Thursfield, ancestor of the present T. Greville Thursfield, Esq., M.D., moved to the Benthall works in 1729. Mr. John Thursfield's eldest son John carried on the Benthall works and lived at Benthall Hall, his second son Maurice or Morris, (the name is found spelt in both ways in the Parish Register), moved to Jackfield and carried on the works there. His chief production there was the famous black glazed ware, very elegant and light in body, some of which was ornamented with flowers painted on the surface of the glaze with oils, and then lightly burnt in, a few examples are still in the possession of the family at Barrow and Broseley; but the handsomest of all, with some poetry on it, is, we believe, in the possession of Mr. Morris of the Coneybury; it was painted expressly for one of his ancestors, whose name it bears.

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In 1772, or soon after, Mr. Simpson carried on the works; and he appears to have further improved the manufacture, for in addition to the, "black decanters," as his mugs were called, he made various articles of superior quality, which prior to the breaking out of the war with America found a ready sale there. The old mill turned by the waters of the Severn, where he ground his material, has recently been taken down.

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The works were next carried on by Mr. Blake way, who was subsequently joined by Mr. John Rose on his leaving Caughley, Mr. Rose afterwards carried them on by himself, but removed them to Coalport together with the Caughley works at the commencement of the present century.

These clays have been turned to greater account of late years by the manufacture of encaustic and mosaic tiles and a superior kind of terra-cotta. The first attempts to resuscitate the art of making encaustic tiles in this county were made at Jackfield, soon after 'that great master of Christian Art,' as the Cambridge Camden Society termed the late A. W. Pugin, had induced some persons in the Staffordshire Potteries to attempt its revival, which would be somewhere between 1835 and 1845. These attempts were made, if we remember rightly, by Messrs. Peter Stephan and Challoner, and William Exley. But the first designs were naturally crude, quaint, and spiritless, and altogether wanting in those nicer distinctions and qualities which, not being perceived by the

[136] mind of the producer, could not be wrought by the hand. In this as in many other branches of fictile art *insight* into the principles as well as eyesight is required, and the mistake – as in many other instances – was committed of attempting something which, with little expenditure of thought and time, might catch the uneducated eye – the object being to produce quantity rather than quality. But the call made upon the art by the enlightened demands of the age soon gave a wonderful impetus to improvement, and men of educated artistic taste – like the Maws – soon called to their aid the assistance of the greatest genius and the highest designing talent at command; at the same time that they directed their efforts to definite points in which utility might be made the instrument of beauty, and by which originality and intelligible design might be made to rise out of the most common-place wants. As this branch of industry has become such a prominent feature in Broseley, and as it is likely still to increase in importance, it may be well to quote the following short historical and descriptive notice of it, from the Encyclopedia Britannica, by A. Maw, Esq., with some additional notes by the same.

“Encaustic tiles, the term ‘encaustic’ as applied to tiles, is of modern though somewhat doubtful origin. The art bears no resemblance to the ‘encaustic painting’ mentioned by Pliny and other ancient writers, although the expression (which signifies executed by fire) is perhaps as correctly applied to this manufacture, as to the waxencised pictures of the ancients. The term is, strictly speaking, applied to tiles which are decorated with patterns formed with different coloured clays, inlaid in the tile, and fired with it. This art appears to have had its origin in the latter part of the 12th century, but the culminating point of its excellence and popularity was attained during the 13th; and it was extensively used for the decoration of Gothic buildings in connection with each succeeding change in that style of architecture.

[137] In medieval times the manufacture appears to have been almost confined to northern Europe and was principally carried on in England and Normandy, but examples of ancient tile-pavements of this description are also to be found in Holland and central France and other continental countries. The greater number of ancient examples are in squares, varying from 4 to 9 inches, but some striking exceptions occur, from which it has been attempted to trace a connection between this art and that of Roman Mosaics, as in the pavement at Ripon which seems to be an imitation of Roman work. Pavements presenting a kind of connecting link between the two have been discovered at Fountains Abbey, and in Prior Crauden’s chapel, Ely, in which the tiles are of great variety of form and size; and instead of the patterns being wholly inlaid in the tiles themselves, the design is, to a large extent, produced by the outlines of the individual pieces, which, in the latter example, are cut to the forms required to be represented, including the subject of the temptation of Adam and Eve, trees, lions, &c., the tesserae being also enriched with what may be more strictly called encaustic decoration.

[138] Encaustic tiles were almost exclusively used for pavements, but an interesting instance of their employment for wall decoration occurs in the abbey church of Great Malvern where these tiles have probably originally been used to form a reredos, and bear designs representing Gothic architecture in perspective, having introduced into them the sacred monogram “I.H.S.,” the crowned monogram of “Maria,” and the symbols of the Passion, the Royal Arms, and other devices. This example is also interesting as bearing the date of its manufacture on the margin, “Anno R. R. H. VI. xxxvi;” that is, the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Henry VI. 1457-8.

Combinations of encaustic tiles forming a cross were frequently used as mortuary slabs; and an example of this kind of monument is in Worcester cathedral in situ, whilst the detached component tiles are to be found in other ancient churches.

Many interesting ancient inscriptions are found entering into the design of encaustic tiles, amongst which is the following, from Great Malvern, which has been deciphered with some difficulty, and rendered into modern English, thus–

“Think, man, thy life
May not ever endure,
That thou dost thy self
Of that thou art sure;
But that thou keepest
Unto thy executor’s care,
If ever it avail thee,
It is but chance.”

[139] A tile from the same place also bears the following quotation from the book of Job, curiously arranged, and beautifully combined with Gothic ornament: “Miseremini mei, miseremini mei, saltem vos amici mei, quia manus Domini tetigit me.” The border of this tile bears the names of the evangelists, with the date A.D. MCCCCLVI. The armorial bearings of noble benefactors, and the devices of abbots and other church dignitaries, also enter largely into the decorations of ancient encaustic tiles. Amongst the most interesting examples of these pavements, found in situ, is that in the chapter house at Westminster, which about the year 1840 was laid open to view by the removal of a wooden

floor previously covering it. It is probably of the time of Henry III., in whose reign it is recorded that the king's little chapel at Westminster was paved with "painted tiles:" "mandatum est, &c., quod parvum capellam apud Westm. tegula picta decenter paveari faciatis." – Rot. Claus. 22 Henry III. M. 119, 237-38 A.D. The tiles of this pavement comprise subjects which may be taken to represent the king, queen, and the abbot; also the legend of King Edward the Confessor bestowing a ring, as alms, on St. John the Baptist, who appeared to him in the guise of a pilgrim; besides other curious historical designs. The tiles from Chertsey Abbey, Surrey, now in the architectural museum, Westminster, are also amongst the oldest, and, at the same time, the finest and most artistic yet brought to light.

They present a remarkable series of illustrations from the English romance of Sir Tristram, and of incidents in the history of Richard Cœur-de-Lion. These tiles were all found in fragments, but have been put together with great care.

Traces of the most ancient manufacture of encaustic tiles have been found in several places in England, and the remains of kilns containing tiles in various stages of manufacture have been discovered at Bawsley near Lynn. In the neighbourhood of Droitwich, as well as in other localities, the remains of ancient kilns, containing tiles in various stages of manufacture, have been discovered, by which an interesting light has been thrown upon the ancient process [140] of production. In almost every instance these tiles were covered with a yellowish glaze, composed principally of lead, similar to that now used in the commoner earthenware manufactures of this country.

The modern revival of the art dates from the year 1830, when a patent was granted, with this object, to Samuel Wright, a potter of Shelton, in Staffordshire; but he having failed to bring his experiments to a profitable result at the expiration of the term, a further extension for seven years was granted him. In the year 1844 his patent right was purchased, in equal shares, by the celebrated china manufacturer, Herbert Minton and Mr. Fleming St. John, the former carrying on the manufacture at Stoke-upon-Trent, and the latter at Worcester, in partnership with Mr. George Barr, an eminent china manufacturer of that city. Five years later, the firm of which Mr. Minton was the head re-purchased the residue of Mr. St. John's share of the patent right, who about the same time relinquished the manufacture. In the year 1840 Messrs. Maw & Co. purchased the remaining stock of encaustic tiles at the Worcester china works, and, on the expiration of Mr. Wright's patent, commenced the manufacture on those premises, from which they removed to the present site of their works, at Benthall, near Broseley, Shropshire, whence the marls, peculiarly suitable for the purpose, had previously been obtained."

Mr. Maw then proceeds to describe the modern manufacture of these tiles, under two heads – viz., the "plastic" and the "semi-dry" or "dust" processes. The former, which was the only one [141] employed up to the year 1863, is in every essential point the same as that used in medieval times, differing only in the greater finish and perfection which modern appliances have affected, and probably also in the material of the moulds. It is not known of what those anciently used were made, but conjecture has suggested wood, fired clay, and stone.

The great difficulty of the manufacture consists in the necessity for introducing into a single tile the variety of different coloured clays or "bodies" which together compose the design, it being essential that they should not only be perfected by the same amount of heat in the process of firing, but that they should possess an equal contractile power during each stage of the manufacture.

The tile is first impressed from a plaster-of-Paris mould, bearing the pattern in relief; and set in a brass frame, upon which fits another frame, the dimensions and depth of which correspond with the size and thickness of the tile; the pattern is thus sunk in the clay to a depth of about one-sixteenth of an inch, in the following manner. The workman first introduces into the mould what may be described as a sheet of refined clay of the desired colour for the ground of the pattern, upon this facing, which forms a kind of veneer, is placed a thicker mass of a coarser kind of clay, and the whole is then subjected to screw pressure, which consolidates the two kinds of clays, and at the same time perfectly impresses the pattern of the mould; the superfluous clay is then [142] removed with a scraper, and a second veneering of fine clay, similar to that used for the face, is placed on the back; the tile, being removed from the mould, the depressed parts of the design are filled with clay, of one or more colours, by pouring it in, in a "slip" or semi-liquid state. The tile is then set aside for twenty-four hours to stiffen, and when the "slip" inlay has become nearly of the same consistency as the tile itself, the face is brought roughly to an even surface, by "spreading" the soft clay with a pallet-knife. The tile is then further allowed to dry till it attains the stiffness of wax, when it is "finished" by scraping the face with a steel scraper, until the inlaid pattern and ground are developed, free from superfluous clay, and the edges are cut true to a square, when it is ready for the drying stove. When the drying, which takes from six to ten days, is completed, the tiles are placed in fire-clay boxes, known as "saggers," containing from eight to ten each, which are then stacked, one upon another, in the kiln or oven. The process of firing occupies four days and nights, and has to be conducted with the greatest care, as not only the

exact size and hardness of the tiles are dependent upon it, but also the perfection of the colours, with which object it is necessary to raise the heat very gradually, and to secure a regular circulation of air in the oven, so as to produce the exact degree of oxidization needed to bring out the desired colours in the materials used for the purpose. The pyrometers used in this part of the process consists of long narrow tiles, and the degree of heat is judged both by their colour and the gradual reduction in length which they undergo, each piece, as it is withdrawn from the oven, being measured in a gauge with this object, – the total shrinkage of the tile, in the drying and firing, amounting to about 1¼ inches in the foot. For purposes of paving, most of the modern encaustic tiles are used in the “bisque” or unglazed state, the glaze in the ancient tiles having apparently been employed with the object of covering the soft material of the tile itself, and of adding richness to the colour. Where glazing is found necessary in the modern tiles it is effected by dipping them in a combination of lead, alkaline salts, felspar and silica, finely levigated in water, which is fused by passing them through a kiln specially constructed for the purpose.”

Mr. Maw then goes on to describe the semi-dry or “dust” process of manufacturing encaustic tiles, an invention patented by Richard Prosser, in 1840, and concludes by saying:– “The modern application of encaustic tiles is by no means confined to the ecclesiastical purposes for which they were mainly used in mediæval times, although for this purpose many of the ancient designs have been reproduced, and the rough execution of the old examples has been imitated with striking fidelity. Some of the most eminent architects of recent years have exercised their skill in the production of designs more suitable for domestic purposes; and pavements of these tiles, combined with other kindred manufactures, have become an almost universal part of the permanent decoration of the better class of public and private buildings, for which purpose they are also largely exported to the colonies and foreign countries, substituting the perishable forms of flooring, and at the same time rendering unnecessary any decorative coverings.”

(A. M.)

But although the manufacture of geometric and encaustic tiles is a recent revival, the works introduced by the Messrs Maw, who deservedly stand at the head of these manufacturing firms, by those of Craven Dunnill and Co., and by the Broseley Tileries Co., far surpass the ancients in geometrical finish, variety, beauty of design, and breadth of pattern and effect. The works of these firms are to be seen everywhere competing with the best productions of the first establishments as well in this kingdom as on the continent of Europe. Of the Messrs. Maw it may be sufficient to say that their patterns are the work of the first designers of the day; and that they, obtained First Class Medals at the International Exhibition of 1862; Dublin, 1865 Oporto, 1865; Paris, 1867; and Philadelphia, 1876, besides some others. The works produced by them in various branches of art for the Paris Exhibition of 1878, in addition to a higher order of excellence than has been hitherto reached, contained some striking novelties: one a re-discovery of a lustre, the art of producing which had for some time been lost on the continent. We write too early to give the result of the decision of the Juries at Paris; but we might give a description of objects exhibited. Encaustic tiles, geometrical mosaics, pictorial mosaics, and Roman mosaics, for pavements, hearths, &c., &c.: enamelled and glazed tiles, plain and decorated, for wall lining, fire-places, baths, &c. Hand painted art tiles, and large slabs and plaques, for fire-place splays, and inlaying in wood and stone work. Architectural majolica for pilasters, string courses, chimney pieces, and fenders. A collection of tiles, tazzas, &c. in lustre, being a reproduction of the mediæval art. Terra cotta plant markers, &c., &c.

The following are the particulars to which the attention of the Jury was called with regard to Messrs. Maw and Co’s. collection. 1st, Novelty, as regards *Lustres* on tiles, tazzas, &c. These are reproductions of a mediæval art, hitherto almost entirely lost, and one particularly appropriate for the decoration of internal wall fittings, for introduction into cabinet work, and for objects of ornament in great variety. The red lustre known as “Ruby” and the yellow, (similar to that known in old Italian examples as “D’oro”) are the most valuable and difficult of production. Maw and Co. also shew a number of transparent and opaque enamels on tiles and majolica ware, which are of a novel and striking description. The attention of the Jury was also drawn to the novel method of attaching tiles to the cement foundation on walls &c., provided by the *Double Grip* backs which they have adopted for this purpose, and which prevents the possibility of the tiles becoming detached, and to their patent plant and other terra cotta labels written on with indelible enamel. Another feature was the correctness of form, evenness of surface, hardness of material, and beauty of colour in the tiles and majolica ware exhibited. The tiles for each pavement or wall-lining being gauged to an exact relative size, before they are sent out, evenness and closeness of joint being in every case obtained. The large plaques for the sides of fire-places are

particularly noticeable for the correctness of form and surface with which such difficult productions have been made. In the specimens of architectural majolica the pieces are so correctly formed as to enable them to be fitted together with the closest possible joints. Under the head of *Artistic Design*, the frieze and pilaster designs, in underglaze painting, which enclose the Exhibits, are noticeable as illustrations of the processes of manufacture, and as presenting an artistic embodiment of emblematical treatment, such as is applied to other purposes of the manufacture. Another feature to be noticed is the original designs of encaustic, decorated, glazed, lusted and painted tiles, and plaques, &c.

Of the Broseley Tileries Company, (Limited), it may be sufficient to say that they are manufacturers of encaustic, glazed, and tessellated tiles for churches, public buildings, halls, vestibules, corridors, &c., that these tiles are extensively used, and that pavements have been laid of them in the Home and Colonial Offices, Parliament-street; the Royal Academy, Burlington House; and the New Law Offices, Lincoln's Inn. Also in the floors of various churches in this and other counties.

The Jackfield firm have now compact and complete works for carrying on their operations. The Broseley Tileries Co., are expanding and improving theirs; whilst Messrs. Maw are erecting at the Tuckies commodious premises, not only for this class of manufactures but for other classical adjuncts of architectural embellishments, as well as of their porcelainic and fayence adaptations to articles of domestic utility. [147]

From what we have said of Jackfield it appears that Messrs. Craven Dunnill and Co's. works are on the site of one of the most ancient earthenware manufactories in the kingdom, but all the old portion is now gone, and one of the largest and most complete range of buildings, specially adapted, with every requirement which experience and capital can command, for every branch of Encaustic, Geometrical and Mosaic Tiles, is to be seen fronting the Great Western Railway at Jackfield, and close to the right bank of the Severn.

Their handsome pattern book contains designs by Alfred Waterhouse, A.R.A., and F.R.I.B. A., George Goldie, M.R.I.B.A., John Gibbs, and others, and in the reproduction of ancient tiles they have been especially successful. Chester Cathedral pavement, under the direction of the late Sir Gilbert Scott, R.A., was laid by them, and recently they have finished one of the largest and most elaborate pavements in the kingdom for Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, restored under G. E. Street, Esq., R.A. Their tiles are reproductions from the fragments left in the cathedral, but whilst all the force and vigour of the medieval tiles are given they are far superior in quality of material and glaze. The irregular surface gives to these tiles a play of light and colour which adds richness to large cathedral pavements.

Indeed it is evident from the improvements this firm is making that they are rapidly coming to the front as manufacturers.

THE WHITE, RED, & BLUE CLAY INDUSTRIES OF BROSELEY, JACKFIELD, &c. [148]

For building purposes the Broseley clays are invaluable, and their superiority is shewn by the fact that, notwithstanding the great drawback as to carriage, the various firms of the district receive orders for their productions from all parts of the country. To avoid offence we purpose making mention of these works by taking them in a line in which they occur, which, with slight exceptions, will be according to priority, that is as to the time of their establishment, so far as our local knowledge and information serves us.

THE BURTONS were originally white brick manufacturers, their work being situated immediately below where a remarkably fine bed of fire-clay was to be obtained by a level driven into the hill side, and contiguous to the Severn, by which they exported their goods. They have added to these the red brick and tile works of Ladywood¹⁵, which were carried on at one time by Mr. T. Harrington, who came here from one of the eastern counties. He had a round hovel, we remember, where he burnt his bricks, on the flat by the Severn near where the Broseley gas works now stand. He afterwards established his works however higher up, nearer to the outcrop of clay.

The fire-brick works, which are situate in the parish of Benthall, have been in the possession of the Burtons for upwards of 80 years, and the red and blue works at Ladywood for about 30 years.

[149] Their excellent fire-clay becomes a beautiful white with a slight cream-colour tint when burnt. It will stand any amount of fire, consequent upon proportion of silica contain therein; and by a judicious admixture of other clays can be made to assume very choice and delicate hues in great variety. Their architectural cress and brick roofing tiles, of which it may suffice to say they have upwards of a hundred varieties, secured for them a medal at the London Exhibition of 1862. Burton and Sons give lithographed representations of these on their price lists; the names however of the specimens are so technical in most instances as to be understood only by the trade, or by the initiated in the architectural and building arts.

The Messrs. Burton have recently erected very fine stacks of their famous white bricks, at each of their works. [See *Advt.*]

Midway between the two works now carried on by Burton and Sons, Mr. James Davis, father of Messrs. George and Francis Davis, brick manufacturers of Broseley, also formerly carried on a white brick work for some years; but this has long ceased to exist, and the Severn Valley Railway now runs over the ground where it formerly stood.

[150] THE HOLLY GROVE WORKS. These works, now carried on by Mr. Wilkinson, are probably the oldest in the parish of Broseley. They were formerly the property of the ancient family of the Beards, whose names occur in the Broseley parish register in 1584, and who resided, as we have previously stated, in the handsome old hall, built of red brick and timber, which stood near the Severn at Coleford.

The property appears to have belonged originally to the Lacons, who were connected with the Beards; and we find that in 1657 James Lacon and Dorothy his wife, of the West Coppice, leased at a yearly rental of £2 10, the old hall and eleven acres of land to Philipps Reynolds. The same Dorothy and her son John granted a new lease in 1672 of Barnett's Leasow to the same Philipps Reynolds for ninety-nine years. On the 29th of September, 1770, a lease was granted by Brooke Forester of Dothill Park. This lease expired on the 29th of March, 1791; and on the 25th of the same month in the following year a new lease of the brickworks was granted to John Beard for twenty-one years at a yearly rent of £20. This lease was probably renewed by George Forester, Esq., of Willey; for we find that in 1813 Elizabeth Beard, probably the widow of John, leased the works for £1 and 1s. per week to Samuel Roden, which lease expired on the 2nd of February, 1824. The Old Hall, the home of the Beards, had become the property of the Welds, of Willey, sometime prior to 1847, for a new lease was granted on the 25th of March in that year by George Weld to John Beard the elder for ninety nine years at £6 per year, determinable at three lives: these were John Beard the elder, Richard Beard, and Anne Beard, the latter of whom died July 3, 1820. We may add that Lacon Beard, a singular character, of whom we have also spoken, and whose book in MS¹⁶, containing a history of local events for a period of nearly three quarters of a century is now before us, was the last remaining member who resided on the property, and he got so much into debt by litigation that he lost the whole of what he had.* The works were carried on when we recollect them by Mr. Thomas Roden, and afterwards by his sons Thomas and John, but chiefly by the former who was much better adapted for business than his brother. Since then it has passed through several hands, including those of Mr. Lawes, the artificial manure manufacturer, of London, and those of Mr. Morgan, of Shrewsbury, who managed for Mr. Lawes. Mr. Wilkinson has given up the manufacture of the heavier class of goods, and confines himself pretty much to valley and red floor squares, crest, hips, and hand made tiles. Several eminent architects having expressed a wish for a covering tile, combining lightness, durability, and finish, Mr. Wilkinson has invented and patented one of that character which he now manufactures. It is light, firm, and even, with a slight curve, and interlocking appendage. † [See *Advt.*]

[152] MR. ENOCH HOPLEY'S JACKFIELD WORKS were formerly those of the Davieses, who carried them on for many years. There was William, who had the whole of the works which were

* The highest chimney of brick, and the loftiest building in England, is that at Mr. Townshend's works, Port Dandas, Glasgow, which is 454 feet from the ground.

† Lacon Beard has a note under date 25th March, 1832, that on the 10th of that month Lord Forester's men began to pull the Old Hail down, after being in the possession of his family from 25th March, 1595, (237 years,) 40th year of Elizabeth; 23rd March Lord Forester's men finished pulling the old house down.

‡ Then there were the Finneys who had a brickwork near to where Coleford chapel now stands. We have no particulars of this family, beyond the fact that they appear to have had a singular fancy for odd christian names; for we find in the parish register Aholibameli Finney buried 25th March, 1797, Mehersha Calhashar Finney buried 5th Nov. 1797, and Miamin Finney baptis ed Oct. 1798, sons of William and Jane Finney.

afterwards divided between his sons, Thomas and George, and Mr. Hartshorne. Mr. William Davies, son of George, for some time carried on a portion of these works, and did much to improve the character of their productions, by introducing new architectural forms, many of which were used to advantage in the construction of his new house at Lincoln Hill. Mr. Enoch Hopley, who married a daughter of Mr. Thomas Davies, has carried on the work of improvement in his blue buff and red roofing tiles, cress, ridge ornaments, coping bricks, chimney tops, water pipes and flooring squares. For full particulars of Mr. Hopley's productions we refer the reader to his published list of coloured specimens.

Next to the latter works come those of Messrs. Jones; and, a little farther on those of Mr John Doughty; the latter occupying a portion of the site of the old Calcutt works. At both these works the ordinary class of goods are manufactured, but we have not received a list of particulars.

THE WORKS OF EXLEY AND SON are in great part more modern than those of their neighbours already noticed, and therefore have the advantage of being more compact and complete in their arrangement, more particularly with respect to the grinding and preparation of their clay, drying sheds; and kilns; whilst their close proximity to the railway, with which they are connected by a tramway; affords facilities for the export of their goods to all parts of the country. As coalmasters also they have special advantages over some of their neighbours. Having been the contractors for the erection of Broseley church, Mr. Exley, senior, had the advantage of knowing something of the requirements of the building trade; and the firm undertake the execution of architectural designs. They publish lithograph lists of their productions, in white, blue, red, and strawberry colours. Among them will be found ordinary fire-bricks, burrs, squares, hips, gutters, chimney-pots, flooring squares, crests-grooved, rolled, flanged, and ventilating ditto; also ornamental tops for insertion in grooved ridges, socket and water pipes, skirting and garden edges, &c. [See *Advt.*] ^[153]

Early in the history of tessellated tile making Mr. Exley was induced by Mr. Peter Stephan to enter upon the manufacture of these articles under his guidance; but Mr. Herbert Minton who had obtained a share in the rights of the original patentee, put a stop to the proceedings by threatening Mr. Exley with an action.

These works were formerly the property of Mr. Hezekiah Hartshorne, the father of F. H. Hartshorne, Esq., by whom they were carried on for some years.

THE MILBURGH TILERIES OF PRESTAGE & Co. These tileries were founded by Mr. Prestage, senior, for the introduction of external ornamentation in building at the same time making the staple articles of the district the basis of the business. The works are admirably situated and well contrived, and possess excellent facilities for the production of articles of the highest class. Mr. Prestage was the first to introduce into the district the plan of up-and-down firing ¹⁷, as it is called, in burning. Mr. Prestage also devoted his attention, and that very successfully, to the production of *finials* and similar architectural decorations, a branch of art for which these clays are so well adapted. Difficulties in getting the workmen to overcome old prejudices presented technical obstacles to the carrying out of the scheme where delicate manipulation was required, and seemed to form a bar to the extensive application of the scheme. Mr. Prestage commenced a catalogue of designs of moulded stringcourses, plain and enriched, cornices and corbels, diapers, chamfers, angletops, &c., arch-mouldings, hips, ridges, brackets, chimney-tops, and a very artistic and superior description of architectural key stones, balustrades, window dressings, roundels, acroteria, &c. In fact this firm bids fair to raise the character of the clay industry of the neighbourhood to a level with the demands made upon it; all that they require to enable them to do so is men capable of careful and thoughtful treatment of the works they are called upon to produce. Thousands of pounds have, we believe, been spent in procuring and inventing machinery here for making pressed bricks and tiles, for which patents have been taken out, but which has not yet been brought to completion. [See *Advt.*] ^[154]

THE BROSELEY OLD TILERIES were formerly carried on by Mr. John Onions, the owner of the property ¹⁸. They are now in the hands of Messrs. George and Francis Davies, and are situated at the outcrop of the brick and tile clays on the upper side of the Broseley Fault, where they are worked at and near the surface. The productions of this firm are of the best material, and they receive very careful treatment under the strict supervision of the principals. The Messrs. Davis are manufacturers of all kinds of red, white, and blue bricks, roofing tiles, ridge crests, malt kiln tiles, blue and red flooring squares, fire squares, common and sewerage draining pipes, &c., &c. It will be seen from the descriptions given of these works that great advances have been made in the quality and extent of all kinds of clay manufactures, over those of a century ago. There is ^[155]

room for further expansion and improvement in the same direction, and this no doubt will ensue as superior mechanical appliances are employed, and men with cultivated taste rise up. [See *Adv't.*]

BROSELEY PIPES

There is one branch of the fictile art for which Broseley is celebrated which we have yet to notice, that of pipe making. The manufacture of clay pipes is carried on on a larger scale elsewhere, as in Glasgow, but Broseley still retains its fame and a large business is done by the Southern (sic). The late Richard Thursfield Esq. took so much interest, and devoted so much time to the collection of facts and specimens tending to throw a light upon the early history of the art as connected with Broseley, that we cannot do better than quote a paper which appeared in the *Reliquary*, edited by Llewellynn Jewitt Esq. F.S.A., in 1862, on "Old Broseleys."

[156] "Broseley has been so long famous for its tobacco-pipes, that 'A Broseley,' is a term familiar to smokers all over the world. That this locality should have been chosen as the place 'par excellence' for their manufacture, has frequently excited surprise as the clay of which the pipes are made is and as far as tradition can testify, has always been, obtained from Devon and Cornwall. The absence of coal from those districts may, in a measure, account for its exportation; and the abundance of coal about Broseley; and the easy navigation of the River Severn, may have offered sufficient inducement to the early manufacturers to settle here.



"The white pottery found at Wroxeter, is made of a different quality of clay, but no one, I believe, knows exactly whence it was obtained. The Shirlett clay, of which a few pipes were made at Shirlett and Much Wenlock, is of a coarse texture and very inferior to the Devon pipe clay. This might lead us to suppose, that the earliest manufacturers of pipes at first used the clay found in the neighbourhood, but discarded it for the purer clays which they obtained from Cornwall and Devonshire, but I feel assured the Shirlett and Wenlock pipes are not, judging from their make and shape, of very ancient date. I have in my own possession about four hundred differently shaped pipe bowls, which have been mostly picked up in the immediate neighbourhood of Broseley. Of these, more than two hundred have marks upon the spur, and no two impressions are alike. Some of these marks exhibit the maker's name in full, some abbreviated, others initials only, and one has a gauntlet on the bowl, with S.D. (probably the initials of Samuel Decon, who was alive in 1729) on the spur. In the whole of my collection, three bowls only bear dates, viz., - Richard Legg; 1687, John Legg, 1687, and John Legg, 1696. These are of large size, beautiful in shape and finish, and have never been surpassed either in material or workmanship.

[158] "I have carefully examined the Broseley Parish Register, which dates back as early as 1572, and find in 1575, 17th Elizabeth (ten years before Sir Walter Raleigh introduced tobacco), that Richard Legg had a daughter baptised. I therefore consider him to be the father of Broseley pipemakers, for even at the present day, many of his descendants follow the trade in this place - from various causes no longer as masters - and still bear the family names of Richard and John Legg. A stone slab let into the front of a substantial cottage, with the words 'Richard Legg built this, 1716' testifies to the well-to-do position held by the family in the early part of the 18th century.‡

"No others, of the many names found on the spurs of the pipes, live amongst us now as pipe-makers, and it is a curious fact, that in almost every instance where a pipe-maker's name for the first time appears in the register, it is on the occasion of baptising a child as though they were strangers come to live in the neighbourhood. I have, therefore in the accompanying plates of pipes and marks on the spurs, placed under the name of each maker found in the register

‡ Besides the many makers of the name of Legg found in Mr. Thursfield's examples, the name of Ben Legg occurs on a pipe found in Worcestershire, now in the possession of Mr. C. Roe. [Ed. RELIQ.]

the date of his first mention in the register; but there are many names very common on the pipes which are not to be found in any of the registers in the immediate neighbourhood, and yet, from being found here, it would seem to be their place of residence.

“Pipemaking in the early days of its introduction was a very different matter from what it is now. Then the greater part of the manipulation was performed by the master, and twenty or twenty-four gross was the largest quantity ever turned in one kiln. This required from 15 cwt. to a ton of coal. Each pipe rested on its bowl, and the stem was supported by rings of pipe-clay placed one upon the other as the kiln became filled; the result was, that at least 20 per cent. were warped or broken in the kiln. At the present time, the preliminary preparations of the clay are performed by men, but the most delicate part is almost entirely intrusted to the hands of women. The pipes are placed in saggars to be burned, after the Dutch mode; and from 350 to 400 gross in one kiln is not an uncommon quantity. The breakages at the present day amount to not more than one per cent.

“About eighty years ago, the pipe-makers began to stamp, their names and residences on the stems of the pipes instead of the spurs, the stems being, in many instances, eighteen inches or more in length. They likewise made a small corded mark, at such a length from the bowl that when held between the fingers at that spot, the pipe was balance.

“A pipe-maker, named Noah Roden, brought the long pipes to great perfection, and supplied most of the London clubs and Coffee Houses of that day;” he died about 1829, and his business was carried on by William Southorn who made great strides in improving the manufacture, and whose son and grandsons are now carrying on the famed business of makers of the “Real Broseleys.” [159]

“The pipes I have in my possession, which were picked up in the rubbish which was being sifted from the base of Wenlock Abbey, in 1817, are very small, and I fancy of very early date. Those Mr. Bernard Smith mentions, as coming from Buildwas Abbey, were found under an old oak floor, laid down, I should say, very soon after the destruction of the monastery they are very small and of good workmanship. One of them, smaller than the rest, might be thought, but for the initials, to be Dutch; but I believe it is of early Broseley manufacture.”

The following are the names and initials referred to by Mr. Thursfield:—

ANDR	MICH	THO	WILL	EDE	MOR	
BRAD	BRO	MAS	DAR	WARD	RIS	
LEY	WNE	BODEN	BEY	Decon	Decon	
JOHN	JOS	THO	HAR	JOHN	THO	AR
HARTS	HUG	HVG	HAR	HARTS	HVG	HVG
HORNE	HES	HES	PER	HORNE	HES	HES
WILL	RAL	JOHN	RICH	RALP	RICH	RICH
HAR	HAR	HVG	HAR	HAR	LEGG	ARD
PER	PER	HES	PER	PER	1687	LEGG
JOHN	SAM	JOHN	THO	THO	THOS	LANE
LEGG	uel	LEGG	MAS	OVER	OVER	OVER
1687	LeGG	1696	LEGG	LEY	TON	TON
OL.I.	JOHN	WILL	JOHN	MOR		
VER	PART	PAR	ROB	RIS		
PRICE	RIDGE	TRIDGE	EBTS	SHAW		
WILL	THO	MICH	THO	THO		
WILK	MAS	BROWN	CLARKE	CLARKE		
SONE	WARD		1647			
Mor	HEN	Sam	THOM	JOHN		
Decon	DRY	Decon	EVANS	HART		
JOHN	RICH	IOHN	JOHN	IOHN		
HART	IAMES	JONES	IAMES	IONES		
SAM	THO	RICH	WILL	-R-	Tom	
LEGG	LEGG	LEGG	LEGG	LEG	Legg	
RICH	JOHN	Sam	JOHN	WILL	GEORGE	
LEG	LEGG	Legg	LEGG	LEGG	SMITH	

* it is said that George Forester, Esq., (the famous Willey Squire), purchased a box of Roden’s pipes in London, and on their arrival at Willey sent for Roden to shew them to him as examples for him to imitate, much to the astonishment of the maker, who soon set the old Squire right.

-U-	R A	H B	HB	HB	SB	WB	HB	B	M B		
WARD	DB	HB	HB	HB	TC	IC	IC	I-C	TC		
TC	E|D	MD	MD	SD	E D	SD	CD	RD	MD		
ED	MD	WD	ED	AD	MD	SD	ED	TD	SD		
SD	MD	HE	PF	TG	TG	WG	T.G	IH	WH		
HB	IH	IH	IH	WH	WH	†H	LH	GH	RH		
WH	RH	TH	I-I-I	TH	GH	TH	WH	IH	WH		
WH	I:I	TI	RI	LI	LI	AI	HI	T:I	TI	TI	III
AI	HI	AI	EI	III	AI	RL	SL	SL	RL	R|L	
IL	RL	RL	RL	RL	RL	IL	NL	FL	RP	OP	
IR	SR	NR	IR	TR	WS	ES	TS	NS	RS	RS	
IS	-T-	T-T	RV	RV	RV	RV	W	W	IY		

These names, initials, marks, and devices, are in squares, parallelograms, circles, ovals, heart shaped and other outlines, on the heels of the pipes. Some have no initials or letters, but marks.

F. H. Hartshorne, Esq., informs us that he has a pipe found in Broseley of an earlier date than any of those in Mr. Thursfield's collection; a collection which is now the property of Mr. Mayer, of Liverpool.

Mr. Llewellyn. Jewitt, F. S. A., &c., says:—

[161] “The period at which the introduction of tobacco into England took place is a vexed question, which it is not necessary here to attempt to solve To Sir Walter Raleigh, Mr. Ralph Lane (his governor of Virginia, who returned to England in 1586;), Sir John Hawkins (1565), Captain Price, Captain Keat, and others, have respectively been assigned the honour of its introduction, and of its first use in this country. But at whatever period tobacco was introduced, it must not, I think, be taken for granted that to that period the commencement of the habit of smoking must be ascribed. It may reasonably be inferred, from various circumstances, that herbs and leaves, of one kind or other, were smoked medicinally, long before the period at which tobacco is generally believed to have been first brought to England. Coltsfoot, yarrow, mouse-ear, and other plants, are still smoked by the people, for various ailments, in rural districts, and are considered highly efficacious, as well as pleasant; and I have known them smoked through a stick from which the pith had been removed, the bowl being formed of a lump of clay rudely fashioned at the time, and baked at the fireside. I have no doubt that pipes were in use before “the weed” was known in our country, and that it took the place of other plants, but did not give rise to the custom of smoking.”¹⁹

[162] THE SEVERN, AS A MEANS OF TRANSIT AND A SOURCE OF FOOD.

With our present means of transit it is difficult to conceive the disadvantages our ancestors laboured under, particularly where they had need to send heavy goods to market. Navigable rivers in those days conferred of course great privileges upon those who lived and manufactured upon their banks. The Severn was then the great highway of communication with the coast in one direction, and with towns like Shrewsbury and, afterwards by means of canals, Liverpool, on the other. The Shropshire, Shrewsbury, and Ellesmere canals, sweeping extensive districts, united the Severn, the Mersey, and the Dee, and the rival ports of Liverpool and Bristol. Shrewsbury, Coalbrookdale, Broseley, Bewdley, afterwards Stourport, and Gloucester, were the great centres from and through which the traffic flowed; lead, iron, crude and manufactured, bricks, tiles, pottery, and pipes being among the exports, and hay, hops, cider, timber, and groceries of various kinds, among the imports. A fair representation of the traffic in the middle of the last century is given by a writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1756, a period at which the Broseley iron-works and collieries may be said to have been in full operation. The writer says:— “This river, being justly esteemed the second in Britain, is of great importance on account of its trade, being

[163] navigated by vessels of large burden, more than 160 miles from the sea, without the assistance of any lock: upwards of 100,000 tons of coals, are annually shipped from the collieries about *Broseley* and *Madeley*, to the towns and cities situate on its banks, and from thence into the adjacent countries; also great quantities of grain, pig and bar iron, iron manufactures, and earthen wares,

as well as wool, hops, cyder, and provisions, are constantly exported to Bristol and other places, from whence merchant's goods, &c., are brought in return. The freight from Shrewsbury to Bristol is about 10s. per ton, and from Bristol to Shrewsbury 15s., the rates to the intermediate towns being in proportion.

"This traffic is carried on with vessels of two sorts: the lesser kind are called barges and frigates, being from 40 to 60 feet in length, have a single mast, square sail, and carry from 20 to 40 tons; the trows, or larger vessels, are from 40 to 80 tons burden; these have a main and top mast, about 80 feet high, with square sails, and some have mizen masts; they are generally from 16 to 20 feet wide and 60 in length, being when new, and completely rigged worth about 300*l*.

"Their number being greatly increased of late, I caused in *May* 1756, an exact list to be taken of all the barges and trows upon the river *Severn*, whereby the increase, or diminution of its trade, may be estimated in future times, which were as follows:

<i>Belonging to</i>	<i>Owners</i>	<i>Vessels</i>	
Welchpoole and Pool-stake	4	7	
Shrewsbury	10	19	
Cound and Buildwas	3	7	
Madeleywood	21	39	[164]
Benthall	8	13	
Broseley	55	87	
Bridgnorth	47	75	
Between it and Bewdley	8	10	
Bewdley	18	47	
Between it and Worcester	7	13	
Worcester	6	21	
Between it and Upton	2	2	
Upton	5	5	
Tewksbury	8	18	
Evesham, upon Avon	1	2	
The. Hawe	3	4	
Gloucester	4	7	
	210	376	

Since taking the above list, the number is advanced to near 400 vessels; they are mostly navigated with 3 or 4 men, who being generally robust and resolute, may be esteemed a valuable nursery of seamen."

Broseley in fact at that time had by far the largest share of the traffic. Towards the latter end of the century efforts were made by Mr. Jessop to render the river navigable for vessels drawing four feet at all seasons of the year from Worcester to Coalbrookdale. He proposed to obtain a sufficient depth for that purpose, at all seasons of the year, by the erection of 13 or 14 weirs between those places; and he also recommended that the depth should be obtained below Diglis by dredging and correcting the natural channel of the river. The Stafford and Worcester Canal Company, joined by the iron manufacturers of Shropshire, applied in the year 1786 to Parliament for powers to carry out Mr. Jessop's recommendations, so far as they related to the portion of the river, described in the title of the bill as from Meadow-wharf, Coalbrookdale, to the deep water at Diglis, below the city of Worcester. The bill was lost owing to the strong feeling of objection on the part of the public to the erection of locks and weirs, and also owing to the dislike of the carriers to pay toll at all seasons of the year. As it was there were often three, four, and five months in the year when barges could not navigate the river with a freight equal to defray the expenses of working them; indeed, instances occurred in which for two months of the twelve only the river could be advantageously worked. The Severn carriers too contributed to the decline of their traffic by malpractices that were notorious. They were a distinctive class of men, whom you could have readily recognised anywhere. They were primitive in their habits. They studied the points of the wind, knew the direction most favourable for driving the rain against the great watershed of Wales, so as to swell the volume of water in the river, were familiar with the moon's changes, were great waiters on Providence, and would stand for months looking into the stream, patiently watching for a "fresh" to carry them down. You may have told them by their appearance. They had broad backs, legs which swelled like skittle pins at the calves; some were hard drinkers, heavy swearers, given to gasconade and good living. Formerly 'tis said (but this may be a myth) they claimed an insertion in their agreements that between Gloucester they

[166] should not be compelled to eat salmon soup oftener than three times a week; it being the custom for the owner to provision his company or crew during the voyage to Worcester Gloucester, or Bristol, and back. To have heard them talk, the difficulties of a voyage to the East Indies was nothing to those of captaining a barge to the mouth of the Avon or the Wye. They were clever in playing tricks with their freight. They often got game, and frequently dined off fowl that, somehow or other, found their way on board as they lay at anchor for the night. Besides being tolerable shots, they were clever in staving a cask, taking out its head, replacing a hoop; and in abstracting buckets of cider, perry, porter, wine, or spirits. These tricks refer to the back carriage of groceries &c. by the men, who managed to elude the vigilance of the owners. But the coal-owners, getting their cargo at Coalport, had an allowance of 7½cwt. per boat-load-five tons of coal, yet complaints were continually made at Stourport, Worcester, and Gloucester of short weight, and tricks to deceive by false tickets of weight, were not unfrequently made and exposed. The vessels were drawn against the stream by strings of men linked to ropes by loops or bows, who were called bow-haulers. It was slavish work; and Richard Reynolds was so struck with the hardship and unfitness of the practice that he obtained an Act of Parliament for the construction of a road by the side of the river, called a towing path, by which horses may be substituted. Sometimes, when a favourable wind blew against the stream, vessels with all sails set would make good progress without further assistance; and it was a pleasing sight to see the larger ones, [167] the trows, sailing along the valley. It was not unusual for one of these, if the cargo suited, to go down from Broseley to the Bristol Channel, and coast it, going up the Thames to London.

The Severn was a source of food to those living along its banks. The monks of Buildwas, and hermits who hewed out to themselves caves along the river side, had weirs for taking fish; the former, as we have said, had barges, and attached much importance to its fisheries.

A writer in the Field, quoting certain regulations found in the Record Office, says:—

“King John issued a royal license to certain favoured individuals, whereby they were empowered to have priority of purchase of lampreys at a price not to exceed 2s. each (or 32s. in our currency), which shows the high estimation in which they were held. They fell, however, to a lower price in the reign of Edward III., and were then sold for 6d. or 8d., apiece; but that was a value high enough to keep them from the table of any but the rich, for a Thames salmon during the same reign could be bought for 1s. 4d. or 1s. 8d., and the best for 2s.

The record says:—

[168] “The King our Sovereign lord James, by the Grace of God, King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c. Having certain knowledge that in his stream and river of Severn and in other rivers, streams, creeks, brooks, waters and ditches thereinto running or descending, the spawn and brood of trout, salmon and salmon-eggs and other fish is yearly greatly destroyed by the inordinate and unlawful taking of the same by the common fishers using and occupying unsized and unlawful nets and other engines: and that also divers and sundry persons do water hemp and flax in the rivers, running-waters, streams and brooks running and descending into the said stream, and river of Severn against and contrary to the ordinances and statutes thereof made and ordained, to the great hurt, loss, and prejudice of the common wealth; for reformation thereof his Majesty by his letters patent hath made and appointed his well beloved subjects Michael Turner and Thomas Bennett to be his water bailiffs of all his river, water, and stream of Severn, and of all his creeks, rivers, brooks, and running waters and ditches into the said river or water of Severn falling or running from the bridge of Gloucester unto the head of the same river of Severn and to have oversight and correction of the same and of all and singular offences and defaults, hurts and nuisances to the prejudice of the commonwealth perpetrated, committed or done or which shall be perpetrated, committed or done therein contrary to the tenor form and effect of the laws and statutes in such case provided, ordained or being. And therefore his highness straightly chargeth and commandeth that no manner of person or persons of what estate, degree or condition he or they be of, take or kill any salmon or trout not being in season, nor use nor occupy any manner of taking any trout, salmon, or salmonetts within the said river or stream of Severn or any the rivers or streams running or descending into the same, from the 1st day of October until the 1st day of April upon pain of forfeiture, at the first time 10s. and every time after 20s. and punishment at the discretion of the said water-bailiffs.”

[169] The document then goes on to prohibit the making of hemp or flax in any river, stream, or brook running or descending into the Severn, under a forfeit of 20s.; and to command that no draught or other nets, engines, &c. shall be laid in the months of March, April and May, and that during the said season no one shall take any draught of fish, either in the broad river or in any river-stream descending thereto without the oversight of the water-bailiffs or their deputies, under a fine of 5s. 8d., and the forfeiture of their nets.

“And also that no manner of person at any time use nor occupy any casting-net nor any kind of casting-nets in the said rivers or any part of them upon pain of forfeiting for every time so taken and proved 5s. 8d., and the said net and nets to be taken by our water-bailiffs or their deputy or deputies. That no man use nor occupy nor have net nor ‘sheene’ nor shore net nor other unlawful net but they be made after and according to the standard meshe in such case provided. And also that no person or persons use nor occupy any ‘clear wells’ or ‘drift wells’ except they be according to the said standard mesh, nor no other unlawful engine upon pain of forfeiture of the same and punishment after his offence. And also that every man keep their assise in evry of their nets, wells, and other engines according to the Kings Majesty’s said standard upon pain of forfeiture of the same. And that no man shall take or kill any pike or pickerel not being in length ten inches of fish or more, nor any salmon not being in length fifteen inches of fish or more, nor any trout not being in length eight inches of fish or more, nor any barble not being in length twelve inches clean fish or more, upon pain of forfeiture of 20s. for every time and the fish so taken. And that no manner of person or persons bring or cause to be brought unto the market any roach to be sold or given unless two of them be worth a penny, nor pickerel, perch, nor pollard unless they be of the length of 14 inches according to the King’s standard upon pain of forfeiture of the same. And that our said water-bailiffs or one of them or their deputy or deputies or the deputy or deputies of one of them make in every market or markets as well within its liberties as without due search for all such offences and offenders. And also his Majesty straightly chargeth and commandeth that no man use any ‘Cowning’ in the said river nor in any part thereof upon pain of forfeiture at the first time 10s. and at evry time after 20s. And further straightly chargeth and commandeth that no manner of person or persons forstall nor stop the Kings stream with stake nor “flake” nor hedge nor leave, set up or make any new wears without the Kings licence or the oversight of his said water-bailiffs’ or one of them or the deputy or deputies of them or one of them, upon pain of forfeiture of one hundred marks [£66 13s. 4d.]. And also that no person at any time use, occupy or exercise any angle rod, hook nor line within the said river nor in no river or stream or brook running or descending into the same or thereunto belonging, nor lay no pike hooks in any part of the said river or stream upon pain of forfeiture of one hundred shillings.” [170]

Provision is further made for the holding of courts, and the infliction of fines before Justices of the Peace.

Acts were passed in the reigns of Elizabeth and the 18th of George III.; and again in the 24th and 25th Victoria; the former relating to the size of fish to be taken, and the latter to fence time, the size of the meshes of nets, unlawful modes of fishing &c. A summary of the Acts of Parliament of the 18th George 3rd, and 24th and 25th of Victoria affecting the fisheries of the Severn and its tributaries, was issued by the United Association for the protection of these fisheries in a cheap form in 1862. [171]

The earlier acts of parliament were designed with a view to discourage rod-and-line fishing, anglers, who, according to Holinshead ranked third among rogues and vagabonds, being subject to a fine of £5; and although recent legislation has been intended to encourage this harmless amusement, and to increase the growth of fish, the best efforts of both legislators and conservators have been frustrated hitherto by the Navigation Company, whose locks and weirs turn back the most prolific breeding fish seeking their spawning grounds. The first of these were erected in 1842; and four or more have since been added. By the 158th and 159th sections of the Severn Navigation Act the Company were to construct fish passes; and although attempts have been made at various times to do this, no efficient means have been adopted. Not only have salmon decreased since their erection, but shad, flounders, eels, and lampreys, scarcely ever now visit this portion of the river. Formerly Owners of barges and their men, when they were unemployed, could spend their time profitably in fishing, and could half keep their families with what they caught.

During the present session (1878) Mr. Mundella in accordance with the wishes of various angling societies, has brought in a bill which, at the time we write, is before a select committee for the protection of fresh-water fish, which includes all kinds of fish other than trout and char, which live in fresh water, except those kinds which migrate to or from the open sea. It fixes the period from 15th of March to 15th of June, as a close season for these fish, the object being to protect them during their spawning season, and it imposes a fine not exceeding 40s. upon any person who during that time fishes for, catches, or attempts to catch or kill any such fish, but it gives power to Boards of Conservators, with the approval of the Secretary of State, in the interest of the salmon fisheries, to exempt the whole or any part of their district from the operation of The Act as regards the close season. [172]

The Bill is a short one, and as it is likely to pass in its present form, we give clauses 4 and 11, as printed and amended by the Committee.

“4. This Act shall come into operation from and immediately after the 31st day of December, 1878.

11. (1.) In this section the term “freshwater fish” includes all kinds of fish (other than pollan, trout, and char) which live in fresh water, except those kinds which migrate to or from the open sea:

(2.) The period between the fifteenth day of March and the fifteenth day of June, both inclusive, shall be a close season for fresh water fish:

[173] (3.) If any person during this close season fishes for, catches, or attempts to catch or kill any freshwater fish in any river, lake, tributary, stream, or other water connected or communicating with such river, he shall, on summary conviction before two justices, be liable to a fine not exceeding forty shillings:

(4.) If any person during this close season buys, sells, or exposes for sale, or has in his possession for sale, any freshwater fish, he shall, on summary conviction before two justices, be liable to a fine not exceeding five pounds:

(5.) On a second or any subsequent conviction under this section the person convicted shall be liable to a fine not exceeding five pounds.”

[174] The importance of preserving fish in the Severn cannot well be over rated, not only in relation to food, but as affording innocent amusement, good healthy exercise – and the virtues of patience and perseverance. Paley once said:- “ I have been a great follower of fishing, myself; and in its cheerful solitude I have passed some of the happiest moments of a sufficiently happy life.” It is impossible to over estimate the advantages which would accrue if proper means were taken to allow fish to come up from the estuary to the upper basins of the river, where they would breed, and feed themselves. Providence in its wisdom and goodness has given us one of the finest rivers in the kingdom, and has evidently designed us good and abundant fish food in any quantity. That the present fish-passes and weirs on the lower Severn are insufficient to allow fish to come up is evident from the perceivable increase we get during an exceptionally wet season when there happens to be a large body of water going over the weirs. †

FLOODS IN THE SEVERN.

The Severn is 178 miles in length; it runs through 11 counties, and drains an area, according to the Ordnance Survey, of 4,350 square miles. It is fed by a number of tributaries, one of which, the Vyrnwy, into which runs the Tanat, very much influences its waters. Watermen say they can tell by the colour of the water when there is a rise whether it comes from the upper Severn or from the Vyrnwy and Tanat, by the colour of the water; the former coming over limestone shales gives it an opaque yellow colour, and the latter, being from a boggy and peaty district, gives it dark but transparent brown colour. The old experienced Broseley Watermen could also tell whether there would be much or little water in the river during continued rains from the direction of the wind. If it blew from the south, south-west, or west they expected “a water,” but if from other points it required excessive rains to make one.

[175] From the extent and peculiarities of its watershed, the Severn has always been subject to great and, often, unlooked for floods. In modern times these can to some extent be guarded against, as the news of any sudden and extraordinary rise in the upper basin is communicated by means of the telegraph to those living lower down. Formerly this, of course, could not be done; a flood would then travel faster than a letter, and coming upon towns and villages suddenly, perhaps in the night time, people would find the enemy had entered their households unawares, and the only way of escape would be through the roof. It was no unusual thing to see haystacks, cattle, timber, furniture, and, in one instance, we have heard old people tell of a child in a cradle floating down the stream. Many of these floods are matters of tradition; others being associated with special events have been recorded. Shakespeare has commemorated one called “Buckingham’s Flood,” in his Richard III., thus:-

* This not to apply to persons taking freshwater fish for bait.

† Of the 115 tons of Salmon which, according to the return of the Severn Fishery Board, were taken in the Severn in 1877, 16000 were taken in the lower or tidal portion of the river, and 1,800 in the upper or non tidal portions. The latter were more on account of the wet and cool season that year.

“The news I have to tell your majesty
Is, – that, by sudden floods and fall of waters
Buckingham’s army is dispersed and scatter’d,
And he himself *wandered away alone,*
No man knows whither.”

Proclaimed a traitor, and forsaken by his army, he concealed himself in woods on the banks of the Severn, and was betrayed and taken in Banister’s Coppice, near Belwardine.

The newspapers of 1795 record a sudden rise in the Severn and its disastrous results. It appears that on the 17th of Decr., 1794, the season was so mild that fruit-trees were in blossom, whilst early in January, 1795, so much ice filled the Severn after a rapid thaw as to do great damage. The river rose at Coalbrookdale 25¼ inches higher than it did in November, 1770. The rise in the night was so rapid that a number of the inhabitants were obliged to fly from their tenements, leaving their goods at the mercy of the floods. The publicans were great sufferers, the barrels being floated and the bungs giving way. In the Swan and White Hart, Ironbridge, the water was several feet deep. Two houses were washed away below the bridge, which stood the pressure, but Buildwas Bridge blew up, the river having risen above the keystone in the centre of the main arch. Crowds visited the locality to see the floods and the ruins. This flood was so great that at Shrewsbury, on the night of the 10th, in several houses the water was three feet deep in the upper story; beds were immersed, and so strong a current set in through several of the lanes or passages near the river, that no boat could stem the torrent. On the evening of the 11th several families were taken out of their miserable dwellings, and conveyed to the House of Industry, and other places. In some instances it was found necessary to break through the roofs of the houses in order to extricate the inmates. In some houses it was found impossible to rescue the inhabitants, so food, with difficulty, was conveyed to them. [176]

Four houses were swept away by the flood, their occupiers narrowly escaping with their lives, whilst their furniture, bedding, &c., floated down the stream. Timber yards were emptied of their contents by the force of the water, and the warehouses of the Quays, and some malhouses, were greatly damaged. It is said that the Abbey Church exhibited a singular appearance; all the graves in the aisles and chancel had fallen in, and appeared as if, in consequence of the last awful trump, they had given up their dead. In consequence of the swell of the waters two of the arches of the bridge at Bridgnorth gave way. [177]

An old man named Adam Yates cut his initials half way up the chimney-piece, in a house at Jackfield, where they may still be seen, as a record of the event; but in other houses the water reached to the roof. On the Coalbrookdale Warehouse, and on a house by the side of the brook, the height of these floods are to be seen recorded. At Worcester, a little above the bridge, a brass plate has the following inscription:– “On the 12th February, 1795, *The Flood* rose to the lower edge of this plate.” The lower edge measures just 3 feet from the pavement level. Another plate at the archway opposite the Cathedral bears the following:– “On the 18th November, 1770 *The Flood* rose to the lower edge of this Brass Plate, being 10 inches higher than *The Flood* which happened on Dec. 23rd, 1672.” This measures 7 feet from the ground immediately underneath.

There are three other marks which have been cut out in the stonework on the wall adjacent to the archway referred to, which are as follows:–

“Feb. 8th, 1852,
Nov. 15th, 1852,
Aug. 5th, 1839.”

The one in February measures from the ground 6 ft. 2 in.; Nov., 1852, 8 ft. 2 in.; and the one in August 5th, 1839, 6 ft. 2 in.

As J. Prestwich, F.R.S., Professor of Geology at Oxford (himself a Broseley man) and others have suggested, these surplus waters should be utilised by being stored in their catchment basins, either as Mr. Bateman proposed for the supply of towns or for use in the river itself in dry seasons. [178]

There was a curious ancient custom mentioned by the poet Dyer, which perhaps ought to be noticed that of sprinkling the Severn with flowers at Shearing-time. He said:

“ With light fantastic toe, the nymphs
Thither assembled, thither every swain;
And o’er the dimpled stream a thousand flowers,
Pale lilies, roses, violets, and pinks,

Mixed with the greens of burnet, mint, and thyme,
And trefoil, sprinkled with their sportive arms.

Such custom holds along the irriguous vales,
From Wreakin's brow, to rocky Dolvoryn,
Sabrina's early haunt

* * * * *

Pleased with honours due,
Sabrina, guardian of the crystal flood,
Shall bless our cares, when she by moonlight clear,
Skims o'er the dales, and eyes our sleeping folds:

* * * * *

And mingles various seeds of flowers and herbs
In the divided torrents, ere they burst
Through the dark clouds, and down the mountain roll,
Nor taint-worm shall infect the yeaning herds,
Nor penny-grass, nor spearwort's poisonous leaf."

The Fleece, Book I.

[179]

AMUSEMENTS INDULGED IN AT BROSELEY AND NEIGHBOURHOOD

Among the most innocent amusements were those of foot-ball, hand-ball, and boat racing on the river, especially coracle trials of skill and strength – the latter little vessel is peculiar to the Severn, and is still so common that it scarcely needs description. As our readers know, the coracle was known to and used by the ancient Britons; and we believe that it is the same now in construction, or, at any rate, little different to what it was when our painted forefathers used it in fishing and ferrying themselves across the river. The principal difference was this,– that they were made of "sally-twigs" interwoven with each other, and covered with horse-hide; whereas now they have a lath like framework, covered with tar-cloth. They are not well fitted for long journeys; but one man is said to have taken a voyage to Worcester one, to see King George III., when that Monarch visited the city. Duck hunting on the Severn is another amusement, and like coracle racing is one still practised at wakes and holiday times. Of late years punts, canoes, and pleasure boats of various kinds have come more into use than formerly.

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Among the more brutalising were cock fighting and bull baiting. Taking advantage of the natural pungancy of Game Cocks, our ancestors considered it no harm to afford them frequent opportunities of indulging their propensity, and even of encouraging them to the utmost of their power. This was an amusement by no means confined to the vulgar; gentlemen travelled long distances to witness, and betted largely on, Mains of Cocks. The following advertisement is from an old provincial newspaper:– "A Main of Cocks to be fought at Thomas Tomkinson's, at the Sign of the Pack-Horse in Salop, between the Gentlemen of Cheshire, to weigh on Monday the 17th of May, thirty-one. Cocks on each Side, for five Guineas a. Battle; and to fight the 18th, 19th, and 20th following.

FEEDERS, *Thomas Tomkinson and John Bate.*" The Broseley and South Staffordshire colliers were constantly getting up Mains of Cocks either in one county or the other; and it was no unusual thing to see them marching off on Sunday mornings with their favorite birds under their arms, either for the purpose of fighting or as presents to esteemed friends. We knew one man, who, when asked what he was going to do with the bird beneath his arm, replied that it was to cheer up his brother who was ill!

An anecdote is told of a Broseley cock-fighter being attacked with cholera and drugged with brandy till he became stupified and was presumed to be dead. He was placed in a coffin; for burial immediately took place to prevent contagion. He was taken to the cholera ground and placed in a grave, when the men hearing a noise in the coffin ran away to fetch assistance, and the noise continuing they opened the coffin when the man was found to be alive!

[181]

Bull baiting was equally popular among the lower class of people at the same time. The Green at Broseley Wood, and an open space at Coleford, were the two favourite spots in the parish. At both places we have known of the bull breaking loose, when the scenes that ensued may be better imagined than described. In some cases the infuriated animal has trodden down all

before him; and in one instance, at Coleford, the bull took to the Severn with all the dogs let loose at his heels, and succeeded in reaching the opposite shore.

These bulls were generally purchased from farmers for the purpose by well to do master colliers, who sold them afterwards to the butchers. To prevent the bull being tampered with by those who laid heavy stakes on their dogs a man was usually engaged to keep watch over the beast the previous night. The dogs used for the purpose were about the ugliest brutes it is possible to imagine, and they were kept and petted all the year round for the purpose, and were occasionally tried upon poor donkeys, if the owners of the dogs happened to meet with them grazing by the road side. Indeed they were not particular about the animal on which preliminary trials were made of pluck, for horses, cows, and sheep would often be found to have been worried in the night time: and in one instance the Rev. J.W. Fletcher tells us how he himself narrowly escaped at Madeley Wood, some colliers crying out "let us bait the parson." The bull pups kept by these fellows were regarded even with more affection than their children, and received considerably better treatment. The anecdote of the South Staffordshire miner, who asked his respected parent to go on all fours for pups to have a run at his nose, by the way of trial, is no doubt familiar to the reader. In the last century many of these cock fightings and bull baitings took place on Sundays, and often in open spaces near the church. [182]

A Maypole stood where the bull stake was within our recollection on the Green, at Broseley, and the public-house close by was called the "Maypole Inn" but we never remember to have seen it used, except for a garland at some time of rejoicing.

Next to cock fights, and bull baits came badger bating; so long as badgers were to be found among the rocks of Benthall Edge, or in any of the woods in the neighbourhood; and after that came dog fights. Pugilistic encounters, of course, were common; and we have seen a mother acting as bottle-holder to her own son; giving him drinks of hot gin-and-water to encourage him. About the time that Spring and Langon entertained the nobility with their famous feats of pugilistic skill, these encounters were very common, not only amongst adults but with juveniles, especially school boys.

At wakes and fairs, jumping in sacks among the men, running for gown-pieces among the women, and running after the greasy tail of a pig, or swarming a greasy pole, were among the amusements of the time for boys.

Social tea-parties, entertainments, lectures, and reading-rooms were, of course, things unknown at that time, and the more ignorant and brutal the lower orders were kept the better, it was thought, so far as making good soldiers and sailors was concerned. Religion was at a low ebb, and the people were left pretty much to their own devices; the parsons cared little, so that they got their tithe, their Easter-dues a bow from men and boys, and a curtesy from the women they met, as acknowledgements of their superiority. We could say more on this subject by adding a little of our own experience were it necessary to do so, but we pass on to notice [183]

MATTERS RELATING TO RELIGION.

We have already stated, (p.p. 30 and 31) that there were faithful men then in the established church, and that the "pastor of Broseley," Edmund Barton, was one among those who in 1642 signed the "Testimony borne by the ministers of the Province of Salop, to the truth of Jesus Christ, and to the Solemn League and Covenant; as also against the Errors, heresies, and Blasphemies of the times, and the Toleration of them." It may be fitting here to mention that according to "Fox's Book of Martyrs," William Flower, who practised physic and surgery at Broseley for nine months, suffered martyrdom on the 24th April, 1555, in the time of Bishop Bonner. It appears that Flower was educated as a Roman Catholic; and being brought up to the church, was admitted into orders and became a secular priest. We copy from a very old edition of the work, which says, that coming into Northamptonshire (after leaving Broseley) he was employed by a gentleman to teach children their primers and to write and read. "On Easter Day when living at Lambeth, he crossed the water to St. Margaret's Church at Westminster. Being much offended there with John Cheetam a priest he very injudiciously struck and wounded the priest with his *wood* knife when holding the chalice, with the consecrated host, on which some of the blood was sprinkled. [184]

He was examined before Bishop Bonner, laid in the Gate House at Westminster, there he was loaded with irons as much as he could bear. He was executed on the eve of St. Mark, at the churchyard of St. Margret's church, Westminster."

A later edition of the work the following gives details of the execution: "he was chained to the stake, and his left hand fastened to his side. The other, with which he had struck the priest, was then held up, and cut off: this he bore without the least apparent emotion. The faggots were then piled round him, and being kindled, he cried out, 'O thou Son of God, have mercy upon me; O thou Son of God receive my soul.' These words he repeated three times, when the smoke took away his speech; but he still shewed the spectators that he was not deprived of life, by holding up the arm from whence the hand had been cut, with the other as long as he was able. There not being a sufficiency of fagots he underwent great torture, the lower parts of his body being consumed a considerable time before the others were much affected. At length, however, the executioner finished his miseries by striking him a violent blow on the head which brought the upper part of him into the fire; and in this dreadful manner he yielded up his life."

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We have not a complete list of the rectors of Broseley; we have given the names of some of the earlier ones p.p. 28,29,30; and there is a memorandum that John Matthews was rector in 1727, and that he was succeeded by Richard Corbett Hartshorne, A.M., who in a description of the Scilly islands is said in 1735 to have given £25 to the schools there. He was succeeded a few years afterwards by the Rev. Daniel Hemus, who was buried on the 19th of October, 1799. The Rev. Townshend Forester, A.M., brother to the first Lord Forester, afterwards D. D., and Canon of Worcester Cathedral, succeeded Mr. Hemus, and was rector for forty years. He was succeeded by his nephew, the Honourable and Revd. O. W. W. Forester. On Mr. Forester leaving for Doveridge, the Rev. R. H. Cobbold succeeded. On Mr. Cobbold resigning for the living of Ross, given him by the bishop, the late Lord Forester gave the living to the present rector, the Rev. G. F. Lamb. The Rev. Charles Henry Hartshorne, M.A., F.S.A., the author of *Salopia a Antiqua*, was for some time curate of Broseley.

On the fly leaf of one of the books is the following list of churchwardens from 1739 to 1766.

1739 Wm. Lewis and Robt. Evans.
 1740 Jos. Gardner and Wm. Lewis.
 1741 John Pearce and John Morris.
 1742 John Acton and Saml. Pitt.
 1743 Frans. Wilde and Saml. Tonky.
 1744 Jas. Grosvenor and Rich. Corbett.
 1745 Thos. Shaw and John Cound.
 1746 John Guest and Josh. Simpson.
 1747 Nichs. Harrison and Danl. Onions.
 1748 John Sherbrook and Fras. Adams.
 1749 Richd. Beard and Wm. Wellins.
 1750 Thos. Bedow and Humpy. Hill.
 1751 Edwd. Howells and Peter Onions.
 1752 Rich. Weaver and And. Hartshorne.
 1753 John Wilkinson and Edw. Brown.
 1754 John Guest and John Morris.
 1755 Michl. Stevens and John Wilkinson.
 1756 John Roden and John Oswald.
 1757 Wm. Evans and John Benbow.
 1758 John Acton and Jos. Reynolds.
 1759 John Bell and Wm. Easthope.
 1760 John Cound and And. Cartwright.
 1761 Peter Onions and Thos. Bryan.
 1762 Nichs. Harrison and Win. Williams.
 1763 John Morris and Benj. Haines.
 1764 Chas. Guest and John Thursfield.
 1765 John Rowlands and Aaron Simpson.
 1766 Wm. Loyd and John Bannister.

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We have already described Broseley old church; in the clock room of the new church is inserted a curious stone which was taken from the old one. It is very curious, and a complete puzzle to archaeologists; it is half circular, with vesica, chevron, and balls, with the letter R. on the left side, and a Greek cross, which is evidently intended for an I., on the right. These may have had an heraldic bearing; and the stone may have formed part of an altar tomb.

According to the census which was taken of the parish on the 14th of February, 1842, the population was computed at 4,824, of which number 1500 belonged to the Jackfield district. The old parish church contained kneelings for 782, of which only 168 were free. Jackfield church [187] contained kneelings for 272 of which only 70 were free. It was therefore proposed that a new Church be erected somewhere in Broseley Wood, and that there should be sittings for 1400, 800 of which were to be free, and subscriptions were obtained to the amount of £2000, of which sum Lord Forester was a subscriber of £500.

On the 14th March, 1842, it was proposed to erect the church in a field near Mr. John Pritchard's house, preserving the old church for burial service and weekly duties; 15 plans were obtained, and Mr. Egginton's of Worcester was accepted.

The material of which the church should be built was a matter of dispute; some contended that it should be of brick, to represent the industry of the district, whilst others were for stone. A decision in favour of the latter was ultimately arrived at, after a memorable sermon preached by the rector, the Rev. O. W. W. Forester, now canon of York, who shewed very conclusively that there was no example in scripture for building a place of worship of other material than stone.

On the 4th of April, 1842, it was decided that the site near Mr. Prichard's house was not a safe one, and that the old church should be taken down and the new one erected on the same site. On the 3rd of June, Mr. Exley became contractor for the erection of the edifice for the sum of £3,388 4s. and it was decided that the old church clock should be given to Jackfield church.

In the church register, which, as we have said, commences in 1570, there is an enumeration [188] of the baptisms, burials, and weddings, for 1770 as follows:

Males baptised	...	...	59
Females do.	...	...	64
Males buried	...	...	38
Females do.	...	...	30
Weddings	...	...	<u>35</u>
			<u>226</u>

'This is continued again from 1781 to 99:

Year	1781	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
Males baptised	70	78	62	61	72	82	106	95	109	91
Females do.	75	62	73	71	71	75	91	86	78	78
Males buried	78	33	40	84	73	54	48	60	42	84
Females do.	84	34	35	60	58	38	53	53	38	85
Married	41	26	27	21	21	39	37	37	35	31
	<u>348</u>	<u>233</u>	<u>237</u>	<u>297</u>	<u>295</u>	<u>288</u>	<u>335</u>	<u>331</u>	<u>301</u>	<u>369</u>

Year	1791	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99
'Males baptised	96	87	89	85	81	101	74	90	98
Females do.	82	94	73	92	85	85	74	86	74
Males buried	57	39	44	73	47	44	53	49	52
Females do.	54	43	47	55	39	42	61	61	45
Married	28	47	37	30	18	21	18	22	25
	<u>317</u>	<u>310</u>	<u>290</u>	<u>335</u>	<u>270</u>	<u>293</u>	<u>280</u>	<u>308</u>	<u>294</u>

After 1800 the statistics of baptisms, burials, and marriages, were kept separate. There is a statement of these for 1800:

Males baptised	97
Females do.	78
Males buried	53
Females do.	43
Married	<u>18</u>
			<u>289</u>

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There is also a list of marriages from 1754 to 1837 as under:

Year	1754	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	
	24	27	20	13	39	38	27	33	32	25	18	
Year	65	66	67.	1813	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
	28	18	15.	16	11	15	16	10	31	25	33	
Year	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
	27	30	31	17	40	20	34	21	20	26	38	30
Year	33	34	35	36	37.							
	27	49	36	38	17.							

One of baptisms, thus:

Year	1813	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	127	141	118	111	104	109	115	136	117	120
Year	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
	105	136	105	135	123	123	105	118	107	112

There is a summary of the burials from 1813 to 1839, as follows:—

Year	1813	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	75	79	64	102	91	81	116	81	70	86	94
Year	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
	87	96	80	109	78	100	91	92	107	63	108
Year	35	36	37	38	39						
	83	118	122	71	73						

We shall find it necessary to refer to the register again further on.

[190] There are no ancient mural monuments commemorative of great families to be found at Broseley. The lords of the soil were buried elsewhere and, as we have shown, page 30, the mother church of Wenlock did not as late as 1542, probably not till 1570, the date at which the register begins, allow burials to take place here, but compelled Broseley people to bury their dead at Wenlock. The oldest gravestone in the churchyard is sixteen hundred and something; we could not make all the figures out. The tablets and other memorials inside the church are here given *verbatim*, and in the order in which they occur as to dates.

Near this place is deposited
(with the remains of her Mother)
MRS. ELIZABETH CROMPTON,
Daughter of Thomas Crompton of
Stone Park, Lord of the Manour of Stone
In the County of Stafford Esq.
by Ursula his wife
eldest daughter of Sir Walter Wrottesley
of Wrottesley in the said County Baronet.
She died unmarried April 13th 1747
Aged 60
The last heir of that Ancient Family.
To perpetuate the Memory of
so Pious, so deserving a Person, and in
honour to that sincere and
inviolate Friendship so
long cherished between them
for sole Executrix and adopted Heir,
MARY daughter of RALP BROWNE, of

Caughley Esq. has caused this
Monument to be erected.

Sacred to the memory of
SUSANNA BARRETT,
who Died 16th Jany. 1752 aged 72.
The Benevolence of her Disposition
Shewn in her unaffected Charity and liberal
Hospitality
Justly endeared her to all her Neighbours. [191]
Her fortune which was considerable
She distributed with a bountiful Hand
Amongst her numerous Relations
One of whom out of Gratitude,
Has erected this Marble.

In a Vault neare this
place in Secret Lieth
the body of Sarah the
Wife of Thomas Calley
Who departed this Life
January ye 3d. 1773 Aged 29 years.
Her glass is Run her days are done,
Her body is left here,
Till the last Trump shall sound her up,
To meet her Saviour dear.

In memory of
ANN the wife of Thomas Wild,
of this Parish, who died
February 10th 1791, aged 34 years.
Also of
Drusilla Beard, daughter
of the above named
who died August 21, 1803, in the
23rd year of her age. Also of
the above named Thomas Wild,
Who died March 31st, 1827,
Aged 78 years.

In memory of ANN,
the wife of John Pritchard.
Solicitor and Banker of this Parish,
(His death is recorded on a tablet in this Chancel)
She died the 20th February 1809, [192]
Aged 44 years.

Also of the following children
of the above named John and Ann Pritchard.
WILLIAM,
Died 13th December 1801, aged 10 mouths.
ELIZA,
Died 18th June 1811, aged 7 years.
THOMAS
Died 12th May 1829, aged 31 years.
EMMA,
Died 27th April 1832, aged 29 years.
Also of FANNY,
The second wife of the said John Pritchard,
who died 14th November 1839,
Aged 79 years.

Near this spot are deposited the remains
of Edward Blakeway Esqr. late of Broseley Hall,
who departed this life July 17th 1811,
in the 92nd year of his age.
As a small tribute of affection to the memory of
one of the best and kindest of fathers, his
children have caused this tablet to be erected.

In the family vault in this church yard
lie the mortal remains of
John Onions, who died, Nov. 27th, 1819.
Jane, his wife, " May 30, 1825.
and their children
Jane, who died July 26th, 1804
William, " Aug. 5th, 1804
Mary, " Novr. 30th, 1825
Martha, " April 25th, 1860
[193] { Elizabeth, " Decr. 27th, 1846
with George Osborne Gordon, her husband
April 1. 1822.
and Alexander Gordon, their son, April 24, 1811.

Also
In a vault adjoining,
George Gordon their son,
who died, aged 50, June 4, 1865.

In a vault
opposite this spot are deposited the remains
of the Rev. Michael Pye Stephens,
Rector of Willey and Sheinton and perpetual
Curate of Barrow in this county,
Who departed this life August 1st MDCCCXXII,
aged LXX years,
as a last testimony of gratitude and affection
to parental regard and kindness
this monument is inscribed by his only child
Harriet Hill
wife of Wadron Hill Esquire of Broom House,
Worcestershire.

Also to the memory of ANN her mother
who died January eighth 1832,
And lies buried in St. Saviours church yard
St. Heliers in the Island of Jersey.

To the memory of
WILLIAM ONIONS
Who died October 22nd 1825
Aged 70 years.

[194] Also ANNE, his wife
who died May 15th 1815 Aged 63 years.
Also MARTHA EVANS,
who died Dec. 25th 1815
Aged 83 years.

In memory of William Wase Gent.
who died Decr. 8th 1829 aged 87 years.
Also John son of the above
who died June the 11th 1815 aged 31 years.

“Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.”

In his family vault in this chancel
are deposited the remains of
JOHN STEPHENS ESQUIRE,
formerly of this parish
late of Bridgnorth;
who departed this life
on the 14th Decr. 1830, aged 76.
The well merited affection of his widow
has caused this tablet to be erected,
as a grateful tribute
to the memory of
a most tender and affectionate husband.

In memory of George Potts;
Who died January 16th 1873, in his 63rd year.
Also of Civil, wife of the above,
Who died April 13th 1849, in her 37th year.

BEQUEST OF MRS. MARY COTTON
Of Devonshire St. Portland Place London,
Who died November 8th 1838.

“I give and bequeath unto the Rector and Churchwardens for the time being of Broseley in [195]
Shropshire the sum of Three Hundred Pounds Three per Centum Consolidated Bank Annuities
upon Trust to receive the Interest and Dividends thereof as the same shall become due, and to
divide the said Interest and Dividends on the Twenty-ninth Day of December yearly for ever
among Forty poor Widows of good Character belonging to the said Parish of Broseley. And I
direct that it shall be lawful for the said Rector and Churchwardens for the time being from time
to time, as occasion may require, to alter and vary the said Stocks and Funds for other Stocks,
Funds or Securities of like nature upon and for the Trusts aforesaid.

“I have appointed the said twenty-ninth day of December for such Division to be made on
account of its being the anniversary of the day on which my late Husband JOHN COTTON was
born.”

Sacred
to
the Memory of
The Revd. Townsend Forester D.D.
A Canon of Worcester Cathedral,
and during forty years
Rector of this Parish.
Died October 4th 1841, aged 69.
Also of Anna Maria,
his beloved Wife,
who died February 21st 1842.

In memory of
JOHN PRITCHARD,
Solicitor, and Banker;
For nearly fifty years
a resident in this Parish.
He died the 14th June 1857,
In the 78th year of his age.

[196]

A kind and indulgent husband
And Father,
A ready and faithful Friend

And Adviser,
A Liberal Benefactor of the Poor,
This good man so held his course
As to gain the respect
And affection of all around him,
Showing by his example that
The duties of an active profession,
May be zealously discharged,
Without neglecting those
Essential to the character of
A true Christian.

The surplus of
A subscription for engraving
the portrait of the deceased,
enables his friends and neighbours,
by this tablet,
to perpetuate his memory.

This Memorial Window was dedicated to the
Glory of God by
Richard Thursfield A.D. 1861, and this Tablet
placed in affectionate
remembrance of him by his Widow and Children,;
1869.

[197] On Memorial Window:-

In Memory of Amy Rose only Daughter of Richard and Frances Padmore Thursfield, Born February 21st 1834, Died September 24th 1855.

In Memory of Richard second son of Richard and Frances Padmore Thursfield, Born June 25th 1838, Died October 5th 1860.

GEORGE PRITCHARD

Eldest son of John and Ann Pritchard.
Died 24th Decr. 1861, in the 69th year of his age.
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.
His domestic virtues and humble piety are best
known to his widow and near relatives, who are
left to mourn his loss, and who desire by this
tablet to record their fond remembrance of one
so justly loved.

“Right dear in the sight of the Lord,
Is the death of his saints.” Ps. CXVI. 15.

BENEFACTIONS.

[198] We have given one benefaction, that of Mrs. Cotton, who went a poor girl from Jackfield to London, and who, becoming wealthy by marriage, bequeathed a handsome sum to poor widows of this parish, besides other bequests to the churches of Claverley, Worfield, Madeley, &c. We now add others, with remarks thereon taken from Bagshaw's "History and Gazetteer of Shropshire, as follows:- "*John Barratt, Esq.*, bequeathed the sum of £200 to time poor of

Broseley. *Frances Morgan* left £50, the interest to be divided among twelve poor widows on Christmas-day annually. Richard Edwards, of Rowton left £110 to be laid out in land, and the profits thereof to be distribution Christmas-day and Easter-day, in equal proportions, among such poor widows of the parish as his heirs and the minister of the parish should Judge proper objects of charity. *Esther Hollyman* left £20 to be added to the poor's stock in 1730. It appears from entries in a modern parish book and from a memorandum in the hand writing of a late curate of the parish, that the several legacies above specified, amounting together to the sum of £380, were lent to the parish about the year 1777, and employed (with other monies borrowed and raised by subscriptions) in building a market house and shops, from the rents of which it was agreed that a sum not exceeding £18 should be annually distributed among the poor. By a more recent resolution, which purports to have been made at a parish meeting held on the 31st of May, 1802, it was resolved – “That there should be paid to the poor, from the revenues of the market hall, in half yearly payments, the annual sum of £18 until the £3 above £15 should liquidate a debt which appeared due to the said poor of £43; and that then £15 per annum should be paid only as the permanent interest of £380 borrowed of the trustees of the said poor, and for the purpose of building the said market hall.” How the debt of £43 originated we are not able to state, the old parish books, which would probably have thrown some light upon the subject, having been lost. [199] It appears to us, however, not improbable that this sum may be the remains of the poor's stock arising from the benefactions which are recorded on the tables in the church, left by ten several donors, and amounting to £51 10s. If the debt of £43, stated to be due from the parish to the poor, was part of the stock arising from the above benefactions, the resolution by which it was determined to distribute it by instalments among the poor seems to be at variance with the intentions of the respective donors, whose object clearly was the establishment of a fund that should continue permanently productive. It may be necessary to observe that although by the payment of £3 per annum, according to the terms of the resolution above mentioned, the debt of £43 would be wholly liquidated in the year 1816, yet the annual payment of £18 has been since continued without any abatement. This sum is distributed by the minister in equal moieties, at Christmas and Easter, among the poor inhabitants of Broseley, in sums proportioned to their necessities.

William Lewis, by indenture, dated January 2nd, 1740, granted a yearly rent charge of 20s., issuing out of a messuage and two acres of land, situate near the church, in Broseley, with the penalty of 6s. for every day that the payment should be in arrear, and directed the same to be distributed among twenty poor widows. It further appears from the benefaction table that Andrew Langley, of the Woodhouse, left 12s. yearly to be distributed by the minister and churchwardens on St. Andrew's-day yearly, and to be paid for ever by the owner of the Woodhouse estate. [200]

Fanny Pritchard left £100 in trust to the same parties, to be invested in government securities, and directed the interest to be divided among ten poor widows on St. Thomas's day.”

BROSELEY OLD FAMILY NAMES AS THEY APPEAR IN THE REGISTER AND OTHER RECORDS.

An unmistakable interest is felt by people returning after a prolonged absence from distant parts of the world in looking at the gravestones, in what has not inaptly been termed “Gods Acre,” and in reading the tablets and other mural monuments recording the virtues, deeds, and benefactions, which call to mind old family names. Next to such interest is that felt in searching old registers in which births, baptisms, and marriages, as well as deaths of some of the town or village notables occur; and thanks to the pains-taking researches of Mr. J. T. Prestage, of Broseley Hall, we are in a position to give such information as cannot but be both useful and interesting to those whose attachments and connections centre in the old town. We propose giving the names alphabetically, with such brief comments as may serve to make the subject intelligible; and it is appropriate that the name which appears on the first page in these records is that of ...

ADAMS The name, Thomas Adams de Broselev, also occurs about the same period in the Corporation Register, 40th Elizabeth (1597), where he is said to have been elected by the Sixmen and Bailiff's-peers to be Bailiff the following year. It is spelt Addams at the commencement of the register, but the second d is dropped farther on. Representatives of the family still live in this and adjoining parishes, and one, George Adams, is at present a well known ironmaster in South Staffordshire. **ADDENBROOKE** also a name associated with iron-making and coal mining occurs.

The ancient name of **BLAKEWAY** is literally the first entry on the register, which commences 1570; a name which goes still farther back in the Corporation books, and which had its

representatives in Edward Blakeway, who was a partner with Messrs. Rose and Horton, and who lived and died at Broseley Hall; and more recently in the Mr. Blakeway who died at Bridgnorth, and was buried at Astley Abbots. **BALDWIN** sometimes spelt Baldwyn, and **BENBOW** are names which occur both on the register and in the Corporation records, also in registers of adjoining parishes. The former is one still borne by ironmasters of South Staffordshire, Stourport, &c

[202] **BEARD** is another old Broseley name, borne by succeeding generations from early to modern times, one connected too with the local coal, clay, barge-owning and barge-building industries of the parish. John Beard of Broseley married a Lacon in 1770: Thomas Beard became sole judge of the South Wales Circuit; and his brother Henry sole judge of one of the Provinces of North America. **BURTON** a name borne by a respectable firm of brick-masters occurs 1643; and in 1675 and 1693. We also get early mention of the ancient family names of Ball, Bradley, Bowdler, Brooke, Booth, Buckley, Boden, Burrows, Beddow, and Blithe; and still later on those of Bagley, Blaze, Brock, and Broadhurst. **BLITHE** is sometimes spelt Blythe; as where the name occurs in connection with the families residing at the Woodhouse and Conebury house, sometimes called Conebury Hall. Henry Blithe, born 1679, married Anne, daughter of John Lacon, of West Coppice. Of the marriage of the Harrieses with the Blithes we have spoken on page 89.

[203] Among the C's we get Cartwright, Charlton, (a name also occurring early in the register of the Corporation), Crannage, Cox, Cullis, Creswell, Crompton, Crumpton, Crump, Cleobury, and **CROWDER**. Of the latter family was the late Alderman Crowder of the city of London, who went from Broseley to London, where he established a publishing business in Warwick Square, at the back of Newgate. He was successively elected Alderman, Sheriff, and Lord Mayor of London, and retired to a handsome residence at Hammersmith where he died, leaving a fortune of £80,000.

The name of Davies occurs 1601 and 1760, and **DOUGHTY** from 1706 to 1716; but the latter is found in old records of earlier dates. The name occurs attached to a deed respecting the partition of Shirlett after it ceased to be a forest, in 1625, and is there spelt Doughtie. In the churchyard is a tombstone to Daniel Doughty at whose death his three handsome daughters were sent for by their aunt who kept the Tobits Dog in St. Paul's Churchyard, London, and who all married well: one to a Mr. Campbell, a Surgeon, who from the unexpected death of several heirs apparent and

[204] presumptive, ultimately became Earl of Breadalbane, and she lived and died Countess of Breadalbane.

The name of Evans takes us back nearly 200 years; that of Edge not so far. **EASTHOPE** is the name of an extensive family well known along the Severn, several of whom reside at Bridgnorth. Sir John, the proprietor at one time of the Morning Chronicle, came down to contest Bridgnorth a few years since.

The names of Ford and Firmstone occur but rarely, like that of Finney, the latter in 1797 and 1798. The name of **FOSBROOKE** occurs in 1637, and also at an earlier date in the register of the corporation, where Roger Ffosbrooke de Madeley is admitted a burgess (1620). Was this an ancestor of the gentleman known in the world of literature by that name in later years? A man of the same name is now living at Stirchley.

We now come to the Garbetts, Goughs, Goodalls, Garmstones, and **GUESTS**. The Guests are another old Broseley family, the members of which have at various times migrated to other places. The name appears in the parish register from 1674, but it occurs otherwise at earlier dates.

[205] John Guest was born at Broseley 1522; and his son Andrew resided there in 1550, and was buried there 1609. The Guests were connected with other old families: by marriage with that of Huxley (1602), with that of Haddon (1630), with that of Harrison (1658), with that of Yates (1668), with that of Hartshorne, at Benthall (1683), with that of Pugh (1660), with that of Mayor (1696), with that of Wilmore (1746), with that of Phillips (1777), with that of Beard (1736), with that of Easthope (1729), Firmstone (1774), and those of Wright, Onions, Davenport, and many others, including those of the Earl of Lindsey, and the present duke of Marlborough; the present Sir Ivor Guest being son of the late Sir John Josiah Guest, whose father went from Broseley to South Wales and founded the Dowlais Works, which brought in £80,000 a year. John Josiah Guest was created baronet 30th June, 1838.

Gabert is mentioned 1593, Griffiths 1571, and Geary, Glover, and Gething later.

[206] The family of **HARTSHORNE** appears to have resided in Broseley and neighbourhood from the time of Queen Elizabeth. The name occurs in the register in 1635, and again from 1765 to 1773; and is found in the 'Corporation register at earlier dates. An old deed in the possession of F.H. Hartshorne, Esq., who is a descendant of the family, and who resides in the old ancestral home,

shews certain exchanges of land in the Fiery field between Andrew Hartshorne and ‘William Bromley in 1758. Another deed of 1759 shews that Andrew Hartshorne “leased a piece of waste land near Clench-acre for 500 years.” Another shews that Richard Hartshorne leased to Robert Evens a piece of ground in the “Clenchacre which shooteth from an ash tree near the barn lately erected by R. Watkiss down to the garden hedge of Ursula Watkiss, widow.” Of the Rev. Corbett and Charles Hartshorne we have already spoken on a former page. The name of **HUXLEY** appears occasionally in the 17th century and then ceases; but whether ancestors of the present professor of that name or not we cannot say.

The name of **HOOF** occurs in 1755. This was an ancestor of a man who went to London as a navy, who was afterwards employed by Mr. Tiernay Clarke, the engineer to the Hammersmith Water Works and Hammersmith Bridge, and amassed a considerable property under Mr. Clarke, [207] and died at a large mansion at Kensington, opposite the Gardens, leaving between £120,000 and £150,000 personal property. The name of **HILL** commences 1582; Harrison in 1658; and those of Howells, and Humphries about a century later afterwards those of Harris, Harrington, and Harvey.

The familiar name of **JONES** occurs 1665. George Jones of Ruckley Grange, a well known ironmaster, was a Broseley man, and a son, we believe, of Walpole Jones. The name of **JEVONS** occurs 1733. Was this an ancestor of the present professor of that name, who first called attention to the period of the probable exhaustion of our coal-fields, a work highly lauded by John Stuart Mill in the House of Commons?

The name of **KNOWLES** occurs, one of which family was formerly a well known butcher in Broseley.

The name of the old family of **LACON**, at one time of Willey, at another of West Coppice, and lastly of Linley Hall, occurs at various periods, the last being the registry of the burial of Richard Lacon at Linley. Of the **LANGLEYS** of the Tuckies, the Woodhouse, Swinney, Swinbach, and the Amies, we have before spoken. The name occurs in 1524, 1572, 1595-6, 1620, 1622, 1650, 1659, 1696, and subsequently. The name of **LISTER** occurs 1605, that of Leadbetter 1635; that of **LLOYD** 1653; and Langford 1764. **LEGG**. Richard had a daughter baptised in 1575. Richard Legg occurs again in 1687; John Legg in 1687; and John Legg again in 1696; they were among the early pipemakers of Broseley. [208]

Mason and Mitton are names in the old register, and that **MORRIS** of occurs 1632; Meredith 1749; and Map 1763.

Nevett 1724 and downwards. **OAKES** occurs in 1615; and 1723. We have spoken of Peter **ONIONS** who removed from Broseley to Merthyr Tydvil, and patented an important discovery in puddling. The late John Onions, of the same family, who carried on iron foundries at Broseley and Newtown, Montgomeryshire, was buried at Birch Meadow chapel.

Pumford occurs in 1625; Palmer, Pitt, Perry, Plimley, and Pugh, a little later; **POTTS** in 1649; Powell 1742; Patten 1744; **PRITCHARD** 1758. We do not find the names of the influential families of Pritchard and Potts extending very far back in Broseley parochial records. With regard to the Pritchard family, we refer the reader to the mural inscriptions on previous pages it is not often that a general concurrence exists on the subject of posthumous praise, but few in this case will be found who do not endorse the sentiments thus set forth, or who refuse to accord to surviving members of the family a large share of their esteem. It may fearlessly be said of the late George Potts that he was distinguished by an integrity in his numerous business transactions which made him an ornament of an honourable profession. In the register of 1784 the name of **PRESTIDGE** churchwarden, is found; afterwards on the 14th April, 1804, there is a register of the burial of Civil Prestwich and on the 7th Sept., 1809, occurs the register of the marriage of Joseph Prestwich and Catherine Blakeway, the progenitors of the celebrated Professor Prestwich, the present Professor of Geology at Oxford, late president of the Geological Society of London, author of “The Coalbrookdale Coalfield,” &c., &c. He is a native of Broseley and went from Broseley to London with his father, who established an extensive business in the wine trade [210] there; he was succeeded in business at Broseley by the Listers.

Among the R’s we get Reynolds Richards; and in 1616 and 1681, **RODEN** already mentioned before as pipemakers. Noah Roden, who brought the manufacture of long pipes to great perfection, and who died in 1829, supplied most of the London clubs and coffee-houses.

RANDLE sometimes spelt Randall, occurs in 1738 and at various other dates. The grandfather of the writer was a small freeholder, a barge-owner, and kept a little shop at the back of the Delph. Of two of his sons, Edward and Martin, Llewellyn Jewitt, F.S.A., in his “Ceramic Art of

Great Britain,” makes honourable mention. Other members of the family continued barge-owners and watermen down to a recent period. Rushton occurs in 1760.

Shaw occurs 1583, Sankey 1729, Stephens earlier, and Snead 1748. The name of **SOUTHORN** occurs from 1704, 1718, to 1746; and in Corporation records much earlier.

[211] Taylor occurs 1589, and Tranter 1598. Transom is a name found as early as 1624. The name of **THORNEYCROFT** occurs from 1690 to 1707; and again from 1767 to 1707. These were ancestors of the family of which George Thorneycroft, the founder of the Shrubbery Ironworks, and first Mayor of Wolverhampton, was a member. **THURSFIELD**, of whom we have also spoken, occurs 1729, in which year John Thursfield, son of John Thursfield of Stoke-upon-Trent, and who in 1713 is supposed to have succeeded a Mr. Glover in the carrying on of Jackfield pottery, married a lady named Eleanor Morris, of Fearney Bank, Broseley, who is curiously described in the register as a sojoiner. He died in 1751, leaving two sons—John, who built the works at Benthall; and Morris, who succeeded his father at Jackfield, and who was succeeded by Mr. Simpson, who carried on the works in 1763. T. G. Thursfield, M.D., and T. Thursfield, Mayor of Wenlock for the present year, (1878), are descendants.

Watkiss occurs 1794; and **WILD** for 200 years. We also get the names of Wellings, Williams, Wilkinson, Wyke, and Walker, and that of Yates, all of which occur at later dates.

[212] Other names will be found in documents quoted in various parts of the work, prior and subsequent to some of the dates given above; and in connection with our account of the Quakers, Baptists, &c. In this list we have confined ourselves pretty much to the registers in use prior to the Act appointing Registrars of births, marriages, and deaths.

JACKFIELD CHURCH ON THE HILL

“The New Church,” or Jackfield church on the Hill, as it is now called to distinguish it from the Pritchard Memorial church in the valley, and which may appropriately be called the Blithe Memorial Church, as stated on page 89, was built in 1759 by Francis Turner Blithe, as a pious memorial of one of the female members of that family, and as a chapel-of-ease for the convenience of those living along the Severn side of the parish, and was dedicated to St. Mary. It has one bell, upon which are words “The gift of Mrs. Brown, 1760.” She was a sister of the founder, Francis Turner Blithe. The church contained kneeling boxes for 272, of which 70 were free. It is of red brick, with white stone facings; and standing on the brow of the hill overlooking the Severn, forms not only a pleasing landmark but an interesting feature in the landscape. Many of the old inhabitants of the valley and the eastern side of the parish generally lie here, and survivors occasionally come to weep over the buried remains of those their tears and efforts were in vain to save. An additional ingredient in the cup of grief of such is the neglected and ruinous state of the

[213] burial ground, now seldom used but when some human relic of times gone by wishes to mingle his own with the family dust. It would be vain indeed to attempt to describe the wreck and ruin the scene presents—the results of under-ground working and mining which have taken place. Here were laid the lifeless tenements of friends, in the belief that no unhallowed greed or love of gain would disturb them; in the belief too as the words till “this mortal shall put on immortality” were yet sounding in their ears – that they would lie and sleep till the last trump should sound and all graves yield up their dead. So it is however, and even had the well known epilogue of the Avon bard

“Blessed be the man who spares these stones;
And cursed be he, who moves my bones,”

been written on every headstone, we marvel if it would have been much different.†

The church, outside and in, is a picture of still greater desolation. Rents and gaps, upheavals and depressions, exist to an extent that may naturally lead to an impression on the mind of a stranger that an earthquake had been at work. Gaps are made in the roof and in the walls, the latter of which are rent from top to bottom. The arches and window frames are riven, the glass and lead are gone; the ceiling has fallen, the floor stands in ridges and trenches, but the tall oak pews, the pulpit and reading-desk yet stand. Arms and armorial bearings, painted on less durable

[214] materials are in keeping with the rest of the interior; the canvas is torn, and the fragments flutter in winds which, as they sweep unchecked through the building, seem to revel in the wreck and

† “The cholera ground,” as it is called, near the graveyard, which was consecrated by a special visit of the bishop in 1832, lies open and exposed, not having been even railed in, or if railed in the fence has gone a long time since.

ruin they help to make. Stern and honest men who wished to lay their bones here when they died made pilgrimages to the late bishop; and the bishop wrote letters warning the evil-doers; but bishops are not men to go down pits to see encroachments made, and the miners went on paring away the indurated clay and coal, and clay ironstone, like mice eating into a choice cheese. Finally, one, bolder than the others said to its guardians who were looking on: "What's the use of nibbling away at the outside like this, let us go under it entirely;" and its guardians said "yes, do;" and they rubbed their hands and exchanged glances which seemed to say: "if it throws it down what matter; it is a great trouble, and we shall perhaps get it off our hands and rid ourselves of an incumbrance."* But thanks to the honest builders of the last century, the walls – although they leaned this way and that, and separated here and there – refused to fall; but down came alabaster, marble, and other memorials intended to record to generations yet to come the virtuous acts and deeds of men and women of olden time.



ST. MARY'S CHURCH, JACKFIELD. (NOW IN RUINS)

We speak of what we saw in May last, but we are told that since then the bricklayers have levelled the floor and stopped the gaps in the walls. When a neighbouring mining company on the opposite side of the Severn ventured with the consent of the Rev. J. H. A. Gwyther, to get the mines under the glebe lands of the church at Madeley, the Rev. John Bartlett, then patron of the living, upon its coming to his knowledge enforced restitution, and £800, we understood, was paid over, and devoted to the augmentation of the value of the living. It this case no compulsion was needed, for we understand that on a representation being made of the state of the building, an agreement was honourably entered into in March 1874 on Mr. Foster's behalf by his agent, Mr. Pearce, setting forth that the church should be made convenient for holding divine service therein – or in lieu thereof a Mortuary Chapel should be erected on or contiguous to the site of the present church, capable of seating about 70 persons, such chapel to be in style of architecture not inferior to the present building. [215]

* In support of this view of the case it may be remarked that at one time it was proposed to take it down and sell the materials; but such was the storm of indignation raised by the Jackfield people that the proposers desisted

In justice to Mr. Foster it should be stated that he is not the only offender, although he is the only one who has come forward to make compensation. The ground is now settling, and the building may, we should imagine, be restored with safety.

[216] Now what we suggest is that the church should either be restored for the use of the people living at Broseley Wood and neighbourhood, for divine service, as the Rural Dean, the Rev. George Edmonds, proposes, or as a cemetery is required to relieve the overcrowded churchyard of Broseley, and as no burial ground exists in connection with the Pritchard Memorial Church, that ground should be added to that on the hill, either by the patron of the living, who we believe is willing to give it, or by the parish, in which case the building being restored (as promised by Mr. Pearce,) the edifice might be partitioned off for church people and dissenters, in case they cannot agree to use it as a whole. Certainly no place could be more suitable, and it may even become ornamental if not attractive. The £40 per annum left by the founder ought certainly to be restored to keep the building and churchyard in repair, and this would have a soothing effect on the feelings of those who have been so much hurt by the heartless proceedings of past times.

Of the memorials spoken of above, which have since been removed and placed in the Pritchard Memorial church in the valley, one is in memory of the founder of the church. It is of white marble and is surmounted by an urn. It has this inscription

Sacred to the Memory of
FRANCIS TURNER BLITHE OF BROOK HALL
Who departed this Life
Sept. 22nd, 1770,
Aged 61 years.

Others are as follow:-

This marble is intended to perpetuate the memory
OF THOMAS CARTER PHILLIPS, ESQ.,
Who departed this Life (Deservedly Lamented)
January ye 9th 1783, Aged 29 years.

Honest as the Nature of the man first made,
ere fraud and vice were fashions.

[217] Also of MARGARET his virtuous & affectionate relict
(Who agreeable to the Divine Will)
Died Feb. 28th 1783, aged 26 years.

Reader, forget not to observe how transient their days,
And that such may be thy own,
Go thy way then, and prepare accordingly.
The Crest is a lion rampant.

In Memory of Alexander Brodie Esq.
Iron-Master of Calcutt,
Who died June 1, MDCCCXXX.
Aged LXVI years.

The register of this church dates from the year 1750.

PRITCHARD MEMORIAL CHURCH AT JACKFIELD.

[218] This handsome little structure was raised by subscription, as stated upon the tablet in Broseley church already noticed, and by one also over the door in the Memorial Church itself, in memory of the late George Pritchard, Esq. It has a very neat interior. A painted window, presented by the Anstice family, contains the following subjects relating to the Passion of our Lord, the agony in the Garden, with the words underneath, "Father, Thy will be done;" Christ bearing his cross, with the words, "Then they led Him away to Crucify Him." The other subjects are Christ on the cross, which forms the centre. The descent from the cross, with the words, "Then they took the body of Jesus and wound it in linen clothes." The Resurrection, with the words "He is risen" underneath. There is a handsome freestone fount. Over the entrance are the words "In Thy presence is fulness of joy," Ps. 16, 11. The service as usually conducted here is bright and cheery, and such as draws good congregations. The living is worth £210 per annum,

and is in the alternate gift of Francis Harries Esq., and the rector of Broseley. The Rev. E. Lloyd Edwards is incumbent.

Jackfield National Schools, erected when the Honourable and Rev. O. W. W. Forester was rector here, consist of boys, girls, and infants. There are over 200 on the books, and an average attendance of 170. Mrs. Hughes mistress.

NONCONFORMITY IN BROSELEY.

Early in the history of quakerism the disciples of George Fox established themselves in Broseley, but not without considerable opposition. The clergy, and their friends who so recently had been the victims of interdicts and heavy penalties, now became the persecutors, and they were not discriminating in selecting objects for oppression. The Quakers were the first of the Protestant sects who sought to establish a society here. When Oliver Cromwell proclaimed a fast on account of a general drought in 1656, George Fox answered the Protector from Shrewsbury, stating that "where the good seed was sown rain in sufficient quantity had fallen." In October of the same year a few of the Shrewsbury quakers came to Cressage, where "the servants of the parish priest met them with a great noise of kettles, a frying pan and candlestick," near the "Steeple-house yard," and where the "Priest's maid and others threw water in the faces of many." Although acting peaceably and orderly, they were, nevertheless seized by constables, taken to prison, tried at the assizes five months afterwards, and then committed for three months more for contempt in appearing before the Justices with their hats on. [219]

At Broseley they met with no better fate. Professing to live lives of strict morals and devout faith without the aid of such forms as needed the intrusion of a privileged profession, they were not long before they attracted notice, and drew down upon themselves such pains and penalties as they of vested interests and their friends could command. Examples of piety themselves they, the quakers, were fined by the Justices for the impiety and wickedness of non attendance at church. With an irony characteristic of the times, too, they were fined because they did attend religious meetings. The following is an extract relating to Broseley, from a work called "The Sufferings of Friends," by Joseph Besse. "For being at a religions meeting in the parish of Broseley, 1673, the following distraint was made. From Roger Andrews was taken cloth, serge, and other goods to the value of £45 6s. 6d. From Thomas Hughes, household goods to the value of £3 4s. 6d. From Ann Hemlock, widow, pewter and brass worth £2 13s." These persecutions tended to check the progress of the Society, and it was not till 1692 that the Meeting House was built, and then chiefly by subscriptions raised through societies in different parts of the kindom. A question was put at one of the Boards – a very natural one – what can our Broseley friends themselves raise? The Broseley Meeting-House was erected in 1692, at which time the mineral property of the district was becoming appreciated. The old Meeting-House at Broseley was then the only one for [220] Friends on both sides of the Severn, the present one at the Dale not being built till some time afterwards. Funerals from Coalbrookdale, attended by horsemen or carriages, had to go over Buildwas bridge, and across Benthall Edge. The inconvenience felt in this respect is said to have suggested to the Darbys the advisability of a bridge over the Severn; an idea strongly entertained by the second Abraham Darby, and finally matured and carried out by the third.

Among the earliest marriages recorded here is that of John Tipper, of Lower Arley, Worcester, to Mary Edwards of Benthall 31st 3rd mo. 1691. Samuel Roden, son of Samuel Roden, carpenter, Broseley, was married to Ann Powell of Broseley, 27th 8th mo. 1723. Edward Cliveley, of Much Wenlock, was married to Martha Meredith, Much Wenlock, 2nd 1st mo. 1719. Thomas Rose, Coalbrookdale, hinge maker, son of Thomas and Rebecca Rose, of Birmingham, was married to Debora Richardson of Coalbrookdale, 21st 6th mo. 1726. There are other marriages, but the burials recorded are much more numerous, shewing an immigration probably of Friends from a distance to the works. The number is 85; and amongst them several members of the old family of Bradley, Andrew Bradley, "son of Andrew and Bretage," 1702. Some of these were of Benthall and Horsehay. Ten of the Darbys are among the number.

Esther Darby, Daughter of Abraham and Mary Darby, of Coalbrookdale	1709.	
Abraham Darby, senior,	1717.	[221]
Joan Darby, wife of John	1724.	
John Darby	1725.	
Margaret Darby, wife of Abraham	1740.	
Abraham Darby, son of Abraham	1740.	
Edmund Darby do.	1740.	

Edmund Darby	1756.
Do. do. of Albrighton	
William Darby of Coalbrookdale, son of Abraham and Abiah	1757.
Jane Darby do. daughter of Abraham and Abiah	1758.
Darby Ford	1756.
Richard Ford, son of Abraham and Jane	1758.
Mary Ford, (City of Worcester)	1782.
Robert Horton, son of Robert and Agnes	1757.
Samuel Horton do. do.	1758.
Elizabeth Horton, widow	1758.
Hanah Reynolds, wife of Richard Reynolds of Ketley Bank	1762.

Dixon (Madeley Wood), Hartshorne, (Benthall), Parker, Coalbrookdale, Rose do., Sergeant. Roden do. Phillips do. Slicer, and other names occur; the latest burial being 1760.

But quakerism does not appear to have flourished in Broseley. It was a plant too tender for the rough elements which surrounded it. Men could not understand their silent meetings. An anecdote is told that on one occasion a collier, one of a group assembled inside the door, not being able to restrain himself longer, called out in a stentorian voice, "I say, him that speaks fust shall have this opple ;" and on one of the Friends on the rostrum saying "Turn that man out," he threw the apple at him, with the remark, "thee shat hav it lad!" After the Friends left the place the [222] chapel was for many years used as a school by Mr. Nicholls, and by Mr. Thomas. It was also used as a chapel by the Independents, or Congregationalists, who have the burial ground at the back of the building, which still stands.

THE BAPTISTS.

According to an old book containing the confession of faith, a list of members, a register of births, deaths, &c., and other matters in connection with the " Old Baptists at Broseley," it appears that this body first established themselves here in 1741. The following statement is from page 7.

[223] "The preaching of the Gospel at Broseley was began at ye house of Jacob Wyke ye sixteenth day of September, 1743, by Mr. John Oulton, pastor of ye Baptist Church in Leominster, and by him Mr. Robert Morris, of Wellington, &c. There were preached abt. ten Sermons before the new Chappel was opened which was ye second day of February. 1741-2, from wch. time for about ye space of 2 years we had no constant supply but what by the providence of God ministers of other congregations were sometimes sent to assist us and some of them from very different places from us in which time several persons received the Gospel and were Baptised afterwards Mr. John Waine who had been one of our helpers came and resided with us and ye number of converts was increased to abt. fifteen whereof there were four men viz., Jacob Wyke, Thomas Jones, John Jones, and George Cartwright, who on or about ye first of December, 1749 (according to ye Gospel rule) Incorporated themselves together and constituted a church, and soon after, ye members of other congregations who were resident here obtained their dismissal from their respective Churches viz., Mr. John Waine and his sister Hannah Waine from Bressey green in Cheshire and Isaac Wyke, Mary Freeman, Joanna Wyke, and Dameries Talbot from Leominster and gave themselves up (in ye Lord) to, and were accepted by, ye church att Brosley and whereat this church was then only Incorporated and not organized after previous fasting and prayer the 9th of October, 1751, was appointed for ordination of proper church officers when Mr. Phillip Jones of Upton upon Severn, Mr. John Johnson of Liverpool, and Mr. Evan Jenkins of Wrexham, were at ye request of ye congregation convened together and by their choice and appointment they ordained Mr. John Waine, pastor, Isaac Wyke ruling elder, and George Cartwright a Deacon."

Page 1 contains the "Articles of Faith professed & believed by every person before they are admitted to ye ordinance of Baptism and ye covenant according to Gospel order stipulated & subscribed by all those who are received into fellowship & full communion with ye Church of Christ holding believers baptism meeting att Broseley."

These Articles set forth the belief in one God and the doctrines of "personal election, particular redemption, effectual calling, and ye final perseverance of ye saints. Dated August, 1688."

It appears that in 1801 certain disagreements took place, and that these were carried to such an extent that "At a Church meeting assembled by public notice the 27th day of December 1801 to take into consideration the state and Circumstances of this Society: It appears unto us upon the [224] most mature Deliberation absolutely necessary, in order to maintain Peace and Unity among ourselves, to dissolve, break up, and annihilate our present Church State or Society whereunto we do mutually agree, and do declare that this Society is hereby dissolved, Witness our Hands.

William Lloyd	Mary Aston, her mark
Thomas Churchman	Mary Perry
Job Barker	Lydia Smith
Thos. Jones	John Withington Tyler
Thos. Theevlow	Mary Ann Tyler
Joseph Steele	Charles Blakemore
Saml. Nevett	Stephen Jones, his mark
John Barney	Alice Nevett, her mark
Sarah Haines	Sarah Leadbeater, her mark
Sergeant Hartshorn	Hannah Page, her mark
Zacheus Wilks	John Bagnall, his mark
Gco. Plimmer	Jane Hartshorn, her mark
Mary Plimmer	Josiah Wilson
Thos. Nicholls	William Davies
Martha Phillips, her mark.	Jane Harris
Oliver Higgins, his mark.	Sarah Wild
Susanna Barney	Joan Billingsley
Thos. Gethin, his mark	Saml. Morris, his mark
Jane Perry	Mary Boden

Elizabeth Patten.

The new Society formed on the 27th of December 1801 drew up five resolutions or rules for their guidance; and also another set of articles of faith, not differing however in any material point from those previously referred to. About this time or shortly afterwards the Birch Meadow Chapel was built, and a considerable number went over to the new church; and since that time the Old Baptists, as they are called, do not appear to have flourished, judging from the number of members found on the books at different periods. Thus, in 1803 there were 66 members; in 1827 [225] there were 39 members; in 1829 there were 33 members; in 1838 there were 27 members; and in 1878 there were 17 members.

The pastors of this church appear to have been: Waine, Marston, Faulkner, Davison, Crowther, Webster, Thomas, Willsher, co-pastor with Mr. Thomas, who resigned in 1840, after being pastor 39 years, Jones (W.), Yale, Jones (E.), and Hemus, since whose time there has been no stated minister.

The church enjoyed several endowments, but which from mismanagement or some other cause do not appear to have been very productive. A Mrs. Marlow in 1776 left by will £200 at 3 P cent, three fourths for the minister and the remainder for the poor. Of this the minister now gets £1, and the poor 6s. 10d.

Mr. Joseph Wyke bequeathed £100 in 1790 in support of the minister; but a portion of this having been misappropriated by using it for the repairs of the chapel, no benefit is at present derived from it; on the contrary £20 per annum has to be paid, till the £150 borrowed is restored. This £20 is at present paid out of the £26 rent received for the house and grounds. There were other gifts made to the church; one of a silver cup, by Dr. Perrott, in 1763, for the use of the ordinance. The chapel has a bell* and in an old book is an entry of the sum of 10s. paid to

* A cruel joke was practised by a man, whose name as he is still living; we will not give in full, but his initials only, which are B. P. It was when Mr. Thomas was Pastor, and when he was an infirm old man. In the passage from the house to the chapel is a trap door which covers the well or cistern in which the initiatory process of baptism is performed, and by incessantly ringing the bell after he had opened the trap door he induced Mr. Thomas who had retired to rest to get up to go into the chapel; when, holding the candle straight before him, and looking up, the old gentleman fell into the trap set for him, and went plump into the well, in his night-shirt.

On another occasion the same wag carried a young donkey into the pulpit, putting his forelegs over the cushion, and by again ringing the bell brought Mr. Thomas in to look at it.

Sergeant Hartshorne for ringing, opening and closing the chapel and lighting the candles. There is a good graveyard connected with this chapel.

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BIRCHMEADOW CHAPEL.

This chapel was erected in 1803 at the joint expense of Mr. John Guest, ironmaster, and Mr. George Crompton, draper, and was opened for public worship on the 31st of August, by Mr. John Sharpe, of Bristol. The present pastor is Mr. Thomas Jones, who some years ago ministered here for a considerable period, but left to go to London, and who has returned to end his days among the few who are left of his old flock. The chapel has a neat and comfortable appearance, and is well attended, the service being conducted in a cheerful and efficient manner; the doctrines taught are those of Calvin. There is a very efficient Sunday school connected with this place of worship. In the graveyard is the tomb of the founder; also that of the late Mr. John Onions, and others of Broseley and elsewhere.

WESLEYAN METHODISM IN BROSELEY.

[227] We have not been able to ascertain the exact date at which Wesleyan Methodism was first established in Broseley, or that at which the chapel was built. The latter is said to have been erected in 1772; and it is probable enough that that event took place prior to the visits paid by the founder of Methodism. Mr. Wesley twice visited Broseley, and the wonderfully accurate records of the journeyings of that remarkable man supply the exact dates of his visits. Having been at Shrewsbury on the 28th and 29th of July, 1774, he says:-

“Sat. 30. – I went on to Madeley; and in the evening preached under a sycamore-tree, in Madeley – Wood, to a large congregation, good part of them colliers, who drank in every word. Surely never were places more alike, than Madeley-Wood, Gateshead-fell, and Kings-wood.

[228] “Sun. 31. – The church could not contain the congregation, either morning or afternoon but in the evening I preached to a still larger congregation at Broseley; and equally attentive. I now learned the particulars of a remarkable story, which I had heard imperfectly before:- Some time since, one of the colliers here, coming home at night, dropped into a coal-pit, twenty-four yards deep. He called aloud for help, but none heard all that night, and all the following day. The second night, being weak and faint, he fell asleep, and dreamed that his wife, who had been some time dead, came to him, and greatly comforted him. In the morning, a gentleman going a hunting, an hare started up just before the hounds, ran straight to the mouth of the pit, and was gone; no man could tell how. The hunters searched all round the pit, till they heard a voice from the bottom. They quickly procured proper help, and drew up the man unhurt.”

Again being at Shrewsbury, (April, 1780), he says:-

“Not knowing the best way from hence to Brecon, I thought well to go round by Worcester. I took Broseley in my way, and thereby had a view of the iron bridge over the Severn: I suppose the first and the only one in Europe. It will not soon be imitated.

“In the evening I preached at Broseley; and on Saturday, 21, went on to Worcester.”

Alderman John Humphries remembers his father telling him that Mr. Wesley preached in his grandfather's kitchen at the Woodlands, on one occasion. If this was so it is probable that it took place prior to the visits just recorded. Early in the history of Methodism, Broseley was in the Chester circuit, and the preachers came on horseback, with saddlebags, once in three months. Afterwards Broseley was placed in the Shrewsbury circuit, and the preachers visited Broseley once in three weeks. The chapel has at different periods been much altered and enlarged, and a school-room has been added on the opposite side of the street.

WESLEYAN CHAPEL AT COLEFORD

[229] This chapel was built for the accommodation of those of the Wesleyan persuasion living at Coleford, Jackfield, and the Lloyd Head. It cost £275, with the ground; and was first opened for divine worship on Sunday, Nov. 24th, 1825. A house for the chapel-keeper has been added, which has for some years been occupied by a very worthy and truly pious self-taught man, Aaron Langford, an energetic local preacher, usually designated “the bishop of Coleford.”

The Primitive Methodists have a society and a chapel at Broseley Wood.

CONGREGATIONALISM IN BROSELEY.

The Rev. D.D. Evans of Bridgnorth, who is Secretary of the Salop Association of Independent Ministers and churches, has written a comprehensive little work shewing the introduction and progress of Congregationalism in Shropshire, from which we venture to make a few extracts relating to Broseley. After giving an account of other places, Mr. Evans says:- "As in the case of Wellington, the Association, in 1837, deputed some of its members to survey and try the ground at Ironbridge, Wenlock, and Shifnal: but, they fixed upon Broseley, a larger Town with more than 4,000 people, as the most open at the time. And, accordingly, several Evangelists in succession were sent to labour there. The Friends' Meeting house with some land connected with it was purchased: an excellent chapel was built in 1841 at a cost of £700; and the old building was fitted up for a school-room. For some years, the church flourished; but through changes in trade and manufactures, its membership declined." Mr. Samuel Evans laboured here gratuitously for 17 years, with such effect that he has now a fixed stipend, and has gone to reside at Broseley.

Among the earlier ministers was the Rev. Samuel Newth, M.A., a distinguished scholar and mathematician of the London University, and now Dr. Newth, Principal of New College, London, and one of "the company of the Revisers" of the English New Testament.

BROSELEY NATIONAL SCHOOLS.

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The foundation stone of these schools was laid June 8th, 1854, by Mrs. Pritchard, Astley, assisted by the late Archdeacon Waring. Nearly all the inhabitants of the town were present at the ceremony, including the clergy and gentry of the neighbourhood; and the company and children sang hymns on the spot where the schools now stand. The buildings comprise rooms for three departments, boys, girls, and infants. The architect and builder was Mr. Robert Griffiths, (a native of Broseley.) They are built of blue brick of Broseley manufacture, (Messrs. George & Francis Davis), and have an imposing appearance from the High Street. The Hon. and Rev. Canon Forester was then rector of Broseley, and it was through his energy, perseverance and influence, nobly seconded by the liberality of the well-known Pritchard family that these, important schools were established. Lately, a new wing has been added in the same style, to accommodate 100 additional children.

MATTERS SOCIAL AND POLITICAL

To appreciate the changes politically and socially which have taken place in Broseley we need go back no farther than our own experience; but to make the picture more complete, and the contrast the greater, we will for the sake of our more youthful readers, commence with the state of things the generation but one remove from ourselves witnessed. It was not then so much Whig and Tory as Tory and revolutionist. Society was divided into two complete hostile camps. [231] Abuses which no one now will deny existed; but to call for their removal then was to subject oneself to bitter hospitality and to be denounced as innovators amid rebels against king and country. The test acts were in process of being abolished, but justice was difficult of attainment, and justices of the peace were tools in the hands of others to torture, imprison, or banish those who made themselves obnoxious by the least disposition to exhibit an independent spirit. Michael Pye Stephens was not a bad type of the clerical justices of that time. A present of a new pair of top-boots, a dish of fish, a leg of mutton, or if one had been promised by each litigant and one increased the present to two, it would turn the scale. Cobbet, Hetherington and Richard Carlile were the prophets, the reformers of that day sworn by. It was illegal to buy Cobbet's publications, and men went round evading the law by taking as many straws in their hand as they had books, *selling the straw* but giving the book away; and we well remember the first book we ever bought when a very little boy, was one of Cobbet's, of whom we had never before heard, but which attracted our notice by the picture of the gridiron. It was sought to make the Government feel by refusing to consume exciseable articles, and a shop was opened for the sale of roasted corns, as a substitute for Coffee. Prohibited publications were brought out of London in coffins and hearses, with fictitious mourners, who at convenient spots began to sell them; and a man has been known to be sent from the neighbourhood to Birmingham to secure an early copy of some cherished advocate of popular views.

An old man in a red coat, with a face equally red, on an old horse, with pistols in his holsters, [232] brought all the letters and newspapers from Shifnal, (then the nearest point to reach a coach), which were required for Broseley and other places near. We have before us two letters; one sent

from Mr. Prestwich, Wine Merchant, Broseley, to his cousin in London on business, and another from London to Broseley, one dated 1806, the other 1807, both charged 2/3 postage. It was deemed good policy to have a heavy duty on paper and on newspaper, in order to keep information from the people. The consequence was that when times of depression, and bad harvests came, men attributed the evil to their rulers, or to farmers, landowners, or manufacturers, and rioting, rick burning, and a destruction of machinery took place. The following letter, written to a newspaper, dated Nov. 12, 1756, will convey a better description of the state of things existing than any words of our own. It is as follows:

[233] “On Monday last a large Number of Colliers, joined by a few Watermen, and other Labourers, went in a riotous Manner to Much-Wenlock Market, and obliged the Sellers of Grain, and of other Productions of the Country, to sell at Rates proposed by the said Colliers, &c. Wheat they would have for five Shillings, Barley for two Shillings and Six-pence, and Oats at Two Shillings and Twopence per Bushel; other Necessaries of Life they reduced the Price of in Proportion. All who refused their Proposals were plunder’d; a like Fate met the Hucksters in the Town and Neighbourhood. The next Day the Roiters assembled in greater Numbers, and marching to Shiffnal Market, paying their coarse Contributions to several substantial Farmers in their Way, who submitted to small Contributions adding fair Words, and plentifully supplying them with Ale and such Eatables as upon so abrupt a Visit could be found. At Shiffnal they search’d most of the Houses for Cheese, Bacon, Flour, and Grain, seized much, but paid for little; and with their Success, their Insolence increased. The soft Persuasions of the principal Inhabitants, were answered with hard Threats of another Visit, and much more cruel Treatment. – Wednesday they went to Broseley, where, in spite of what some neighbouring magistrates and Gentlemen could do, (who read the Proclamation to disperse Rioters) they proceeded to greater Acts of Oppression; paid for very little that they seized, and used several inhabitants very roughly in their persons, as well as Property. – Thursday they came to Wellington, it being Market Day, but here the farmers brought little, being apprehensive of losing what they brought; on this the Mob separated into Bodies, Part plundering many of the Inhabitants, and others robbing the neighbouring Farmers; They lived at large on the Inns, most of which suffered much, and many of the private Houses had nothing left for their Families at their departure. The Gentry had little regard paid them, the middle Sort of People less, and the Poor were stript of every Thing. In the Dusk of the Evening, when the main body had left the town, one of the Gang snatched a Piece of Beef from a Butcher’s Stall, on which some of the Town’s People ventured to seize him, which occasion’d a smart Scuffle; the Townsmen had the Advantage, took three Prisoners, and kept the Field, (if I may be allowed the Expression) This Action greatly alarm’d the Town for now nothing was thought of by the Timorous but that the Colliers would return in the Night and fire the Town, as they frequently threatened to do on their next Visit; others prepared for their Defence by keeping armed all Night, and forming Schemes for the Recovery of part of what they had lost, and also for bringing some of their Enemies to Justice. Little Sleep was had that Night, Hunger and Anxiety forbid that in most Families: However, our Fears were entirely dissipated, for soon after Day-light this Morning Edward Cludd, and Edward Pemberton, Esqrs. appeared at the Head of a large Party of their Neighbours, Tenants, and Servants, all pretty well armed, and seemed [234] to look with determined Resolution to annoy the Enemies of our Peace, the Farmers too for some miles round came in, and a Body was formed of nearly 1,500 Men, (as was supposed;) these immediately marched to assist the Townsmen, who set forward somewhat earlier, to prevent the Junction of the Colliers, now calling together with Horns: On the Appearance of Opposition, the Rioters dispersed, many of whom are taken and much of their Pillage brought back; this happen’d near Wellington: At the same Time, (for so it appears to have been agreed among the Gentlemen residing near the said pillag’d Towns), the Hon. Brook Forester collected a large Body of Men, (some say about 1,000) and marching thro’ Broseley and Little-Wenlock, seized several of the principal Rioters in those Parts; then met the other Gentlemen and their Party, and settled their different Routs, and what Measures to pursue for effectually suppressing them. The Gentlemen above-named cannot be too much commended; their Presence, Courage, and Conduct having nearly put an End to the troublesome Affair I have been relating, and that without the loss of one Life, or any one much wounded, altho’ several Colliers were fetched from underground, with large Quantities of Provisions, &c. Their Motives for Rising are the high Price of Corn, and the seeming Unreasonableness of the Farmers Demands for their Commodities.”

The results of the riot were given in a paper of the period in the following paragraphs:-

“ Last Friday Night was taken up at Bridgnorth, William Benbow, alias Billy Hell, of Broseley, a principal Accomplice in the above Riot, and after being examined by the Magistrates (before whom he confessed of upwards of 70 of his Accomplices, he was committed to Shrewsbury Gaol.”

“ On Saturday last Sir Thomas Whitmore and Sir Richard Acton went to Bridgnorth Market, in Expectation of the Rioters being there, and obliged their several Tenants to sell their Wheat at 5s. per Bushel, or under, for which they promised to allow them in their Rents.”

The years 1795, 1815, 1817, and 1819, were periods of great distress; furnaces were blown out, pits were put to stand, and one third of the Shropshire banks failed. A description of the suffering of the people at the former period, may be found in a letter by Richard Reynolds. [235]

“The wants of the poor are far beyond what has been at any former time experienced, and from the best account that could be collected, the quantity of grain of all sorts in the country is three thousand bushels short of the consumption before harvest. There are many families now in want of bread, and the present supply is very scanty in proportion to the increasing demands. The colliers, &c. have hitherto been prevented from rising by assurances that the gentlemen of property were disposed to contribute liberally to their relief, as well as to adopt measures for obtaining from different parts such aids as can be procured; and I have by their direction sent to Liverpool for one or two thousand bushels of Indian corn; but such are the increasing wants, and such the consequent murmurs of the poor, that it is impossible to say what will yet be the consequences, and I should not be surprised if they applied in a body at those houses where they expected to find provisions, or from which they thought they ought to be relieved. They already begin to make distinctions between those whom they consider as their benefactors and those whom (as George Forester expresses it in the annexed letter) are at war with their landlords; and I fear those whom they would consider as deserting them in their distress would not only incur their disapprobation, but might be the next to suffer from their resentment.”

On that occasion Squire Forester, together with J. H. Browne, and Richard Reynolds, advanced £700 each to purchase corn, and gave £105 each, to which sum were added Cecil Forester’s £105, and the Coalbrookdale Co’s £105. Language cannot paint the deep distress which existed. Men, with wives and families dependent upon them, saw their only ground of hope taken from them. Starving by thousands, and yoked like horses, they might have been seen drawing materials for the repair of the roads, or conveying coal into Staffordshire. Disturbances were frequent; mobs of men collected, and went about taking food where they could find it, whilst the militia had often to be called out to quell disturbances. Not only ironmasters, but manufacturers generally, were reduced to despair. [236]

We remember one of these bad harvests when spurted corn had to be used, and women had to take care to make the oven doors close to prevent the bread running out of the oven, and when they used to go to the pipemakers for broken pipes to stick in the loaves to let the steam out whilst baking, and it would be like putty when drawn.

During one of the more recent periods of distress a mob of 1000 strong visited Blisser’s Hill, cut the pit ropes, and threatened to turn the canal into the works unless the men ceased working. They then marched on to Ironbridge.

Then there was the cholera. This was another serious visitation. At the approach of this fearful visitation a number of gentlemen went round the parish to look into the condition of poor people; and the large house at the Calcutts was set apart as a hospital. The plague however arrived and swept away hundreds, if not thousands, in Broseley and neighbourhood. We have before us a great number of the names of the victims, and among them we notice the name of Mr. John Lister, who is described as dying of spasmodic cholera, on the 26th of February 1832. On Wednesday, the 21st of March, in the same year there was a general fast for deliverance from the plague, as it was called. Still the contagion raged, and great numbers died along the river side, and on board barges on the river, in May, June, July, August, and September. We have already mentioned the circumstance that the bishop consecrated a piece of ground at Jackfield church on the hill for the burial of those who were victims of the plague. Men and women were attacked, were dead, and buried on the same day; and sometimes were buried before they were dead, as previously stated with regard to an old cock-fighter, (page 180). [237]

THE BROSELEY VOLUNTEERS.

When Napoleon in 1803 threatened a descent upon our shores and England took the alarm, Broseley in connection with Wenlock formed a company and a half of volunteers; the half being at Broseley, and another half at Little Wenlock. Mr. Pritchard, Mr. Onions, Mr. Turner of Caughley, Mr. Harries of Benthall, and other gentlemen of the neighbourhood, were amongst the officers and leading members, the Squire of Willey being captain. It was a period of great excitement, and martial music was as familiar as the church bells, Sunday usually being the day for drill, which took place in a field near Arlscott, between Broseley and Much Wenlock.

“There was open house at Willey, and no baron of olden time dealt out hospitality more willingly or more liberally. The Squire was here, there, and everywhere, visiting neighbouring squires, giving or

[238] receiving information, stirring up the gentry, and frightening country people out of their wits. Boney became more terrible than bogey, both to children and grown-up persons; and the more vague the notion of invasion to Shropshire inlanders, the more horrible the evils to be dreaded. The clergy preached about Bonaparte out of the Revelations; conjurers and “wise-men,” greater authorities even than the clergy, saw a connection between Bonaparte and the strange lights which every one had seen in the heavens! The popular notion was that “Boney” was an undefined horrible monster, who had a sheep dressed every morning for breakfast, who required an ox for his dinner, and had six little English children cooked – when he could get them – for supper! At the name of “Boney” naughty children were frightened, and a false alarm of his coming and landing often made grown-up men turn pale.”

“Old Sports and Sportsmen,” by J. Randall.

In 1806 the force was 352 strong, and Cecil Forester, Esq., was Lieut-Colonel.

To sum up a series of events of local importance, we may mention that on the 28th of July, 1814, there were great rejoicings to celebrate the termination of a plague as great as that of cholera. 1400 people dined in a field at Broseley, in honour of the proclamation of Peace. Illuminations took place, and over the door of the market hall was painted the words “Peace Proclaimed and England triumphant.” The group of trees at the Hay Cop were, we believe, planted to commemorate this or some similar event.

[239] Somewhere between 1825 and 1828, during one of those periods of distress we have alluded to, the New Road was made from Ironbridge by the Rock and the Forester’s Arms; and the coach ran along it for the first time, Nov. 18th, 1828. Previous to that time coaches had to travel up the very steep hill by Messrs. Maw’s works; and often in coming down it were upset, more particularly at a point where the road was crossed by iron rails, laid down for conveying goods from the foundry to the Severn.

In 1832 it was computed that 12,000 people marched in procession in favour of reform through Ironbridge, Broseley, and Jackfield; this number included the children of many of the schools. On June 28th, 1838, the Sunday school children of Broseley, 928 in number, dined in a field opposite what was then the Angel Inn, now Mr. Bartlam’s house, to celebrate the coronation of our present queen; and on the same day 2000 men, women, and children, dined at the Tontine and in the market-place at Ironbridge. On the 29th, in the field above mentioned, 600 women had tea “with plenty of rum in it,” as a local recorder of events informs us, in honour of the same event, at a cost of £84.

[240] Under the old state of things Broseley had its Court of Requests, which had jurisdiction in eight of the neighbouring parishes. There were eight Commissioners who sat to represent the different parishes, and a Bailiff, the last two whom we remember being Jeremiah Perry, (Perry the Bum, as he was called), and Mr. Henry Booth. It was last held at the Hole-in-the-wall, a house belonging to Mr. Guest, who presided at its sittings. This court was superceded by the County Court Act for the recovery of small debts. The old court was subjected to great abuse. Near it was the lock-up, or “Louse-Hole,” as the prison was disrespectfully but justly called. It was in a most filthy condition, and was seldom untenanted. It was not very secure, and it was not unusual for a prisoner to make his escape by getting down a filthy sewer which communicated with the closet, and on emerging at the other end making his way across the Severn into Sutton parish, where he was out of the borough and beyond the jurisdiction of the constables.

The powers exercised not only by this court but by the borough justices, were most arbitrary, especially when the individual who came within their power happened to be a dissenter, or “a dangerous radical.” On the merest pretence blank warrants were issued, which unscrupulous constables, like “Sammy Walters,” as he was called, carried in their pockets, and filled as occasion required. One notorious instance was that of three Dutch girls, (Buy-a-Brooms, as they were called), whom Walters overtook in his “Teazer,” between Wenlock and Shrewsbury, and invited to ride with him. Calling at a public house on the road he went in, filled up three of his warrants, and then drove them straight to Shrewsbury gaol. This case came before the House of Commons, and was inquired into by the Home Secretary, and the system of granting blank warrants was abolished throughout the kingdom

[241] PETTY SESSIONS. Broseley is one of the three Wards into which the Borough is divided; and has two Aldermen and four Councillors to represent it. Drs. Thursfield and Fifield were the first Aldermen chosen, January 6th, 1836, after the changes effected in the constitution of the Corporation upon the passing of the Municipal Reform Act in 1835. It has its sessions alternately with Wenlock and Madeley, which is once in six weeks. The first grant of magistrates other than

those existing under the old corporation took place in the 6th year of the reign of William IV., and was as follows:-

“William the Fourth by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith; To our beloved and faithful the Mayor of the Borough of Wenlock, and the Mayor of the said Borough for the time being, Sir Francis Lawley, Baronet, William Anstice of Madeley Wood, John Rose of the Hay, Francis Blithe Harries of Benthall Hall, Richard Mountford of Shiffnal Banker, James Thomson of Lightmoor Ironmaster, and Thomas Mytton of Shipton Esquires Greeting;

Know Ye that We have assigned you and every of you jointly and severally our Justices to keep our Peace in and throughout the Borough of Wenlock, and to keep and cause to be kept all Ordinances and Statutes made for the good of our Peace and for the Conservation of the same, and for the quiet rule and government of our People in all and every the Articles thereof in the said Borough according to the form and effect of the same, &c., &c.”

In addition to Petty Sessions held by the magistrates, Broseley in common with its neighbours shares the privilege of having had a grant of Quarter Sessions, made by our present queen, in the 6th year of her reign. The grant commences thus:-

“Victoria by the Grace of God of the united Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland Queen, Defender of the Faith, To our trusty and well beloved The Mayor, Aldemen, Burgesses of the Borough of Wenlock, and to the Inhabitants of the said Borough, and to all Others whom it may concern Greeting. Whereas the Council of the said Borough has pursuant to the Provisions of an Act passed in the 6th year of the reign of [242] his late Majesty King William the fourth, instituted ‘An Act to provide ‘for the regulation of Municipal Corporations in England ‘and Wales,’ signified by Petition to us in our Council the desire of the Council of the said Borough that a separate Court of Quarter Sessions of the Peace shall be holdon in and for the said Borough. Now know Ye that we having taken the matter of the said Petition into our consideration and being above all things anxious to promote the due administration of Justice, Have thought fit to comply with the said Petition. And we therefore do hereby grant unto the said Borough that a separate Court of Quarter Sessions of the Peace shall hence forward be holden in and for the said Borough according to the Provisions of the said Act. And further Know Ye that We do assign the Recorder for the time being of the said Borough our Justice to enquire the truth more fully by the Oath of good and lawful Men of the aforesaid Borough. by whom the Truth of the matter shall be better known, of all and all manner of felonies and misdemeanors, and of all and singular other crimes and offences of which Justices of our Peace may or ought lawfully to enquire by whomsoever or after what manner soever in the said Borough done or perpetrated, &c., &c.”

MUNICIPAL AND OTHER PRIVILEGES.

Broseley forms part of the Borough of Wenlock both for municipal and parliamentary purposes; and thereby enjoys privileges superior to smaller and less important parts of the same borough, which share only parliamentary privileges.

PARLIAMENTARY. Broseley is one of the most populous Wards of the Borough, and plays an important part in parliamentary elections. Some of the severest contests in which it has had to take part were those of 1820 & 1826 – the former when B. Lawley, and the latter when Beilby Thompson, the father of the present Lord Wenlock, put up; and that of 1832, when the present Lord Forester and J. M. Gaskell, Esq., were opposed by Mr. Bridges. Broseley and the other [243] Wards of the borough were closely canvassed. Francis Blithe Harries, Esq. was then bailiff. The writ, came down on the 10th of December, and at the nomination the show of hands was in favour of Bridges, being 50 more than those for Forester, and 54 greater than those for Gaskell. The poll was so close that nearly all the electors in the borough were polled, and Mr. Bridges lost by two. The election in which the sitting members were opposed by Sir William Sommerville, was about as close. The most important election after that of Sir William Sommerville, was that in which the present member, A. H. Brown, Esq., opposed the two sitting members in 1868, when Mr. Gaskell retired. A very severe contest took place when the present Mr. Gaskell contested the borough, as to numbers polled, in proportion to the total number on the list, as, out of the 3,541 on the list, 3,119 voted; the numbers being, for

General Forester	1,708
For Mr. Brown	1,575
And for Mr. Gaskell	846

The more recent elections will be in the recollection of our readers.

THE MARKET AND THE MARKET HALL.

We have been unable to obtain particulars relative to the first establishment of a market in Broseley. The late Mr. Thomas Onions, who was a native of Broseley, and of a very observant turn of mind, in a note to some verses published in 1833, said that the market was originally held under a large tree in the Whitehouse farm yard, near to the rectory, and also to the residence of [244] the late Mr. Cornelius Reynolds, for many years agent to John Wilkinson, Esq. Mr. Onions at the time he wrote spoke of the market as going-to decay, for he says:

“Degenerate Town, where is your traffic fled ?
Why this great Pile so idly left alone ?
Is all your Public Spirit gone and dead,
And all your former busy actions gone ?

“Commodities were brought for general use,
And placed around this useful massive pile:
Food in various forms, it did adduce,
To cheer and feed the humble sons of Toil.

“The Country’s offerings brought were kind tho’ rude
With varying splendour and differing hue;
Here oft Pamona her gay gift bestow’d –
The fragrant Apple, and the Damson blue.

“Horticulture! a sacred art! was known
In all the beauties of her mild career,
Vegetables of various kinds were strewn,
And her varied forms were patent here.

Here friends and neighbours often us’d to meet,
Exchanging friendly words of good import,
Enquiring of each other’s health, and greet
Each other’s presence with their kindest forte.

“Perhaps discuss the Gossip of the Town,
Proclaim good news, or bad to barter forth,
Exchange a friendly smile, perhaps a frown!
Or extol some good neighbour’s sterling worth:

[246] “Send invitation to some distant friend,
And kindly request him to dine or tea:
Or some communication wish to send
On business, and with due civility.”

This market, which was held on a Wednesday, fell so much into disuse that it was discontinued entirely; and it was only a few years ago that an attempt was made to revive it, Saturday being fixed upon as a more suitable day. A Market Company was formed of which Mr. Wiggins was²⁰ Secretary; and on the 1st of June last year the Saturday evening market was opened, the *locale* being the open space in front of the Town Hall and the lower portion of that building. Since that time, notwithstanding “the chilly blasts of winter” the market has gone on successfully and is now firmly established, the consumer (sic) naturally taking advantage of being able to obtain almost at his own door what he had previously to go to a distance for, and the tradesmen reaping the benefit of much larger takings. The prosperous state of the staple trades of the district, the general increase of wages, and the payment of the same weekly had much to do with the encouraging result attained. The committee and shareholders have reason to be proud of what they have done, but suggest that Broseley should possess of a building suitable for the purposes of the market, one as worthy of the public spirit of the inhabitants of the town as their new gas works.

[247] The following is a copy of the first balance sheet:—“*Capital Account.*— DR.: To receive on first issue of shares, £47; to ditto on second ditto, £20 2s.; to ditto from Tolls account, £1 4s. 2; total, £68 14s. 2d. CR.: By paid for stalls and covers for ditto, £54 4s. 7d.; printing, &c., £2 7s. 2d.; new lamps, &c., £12 2s. 5d.; total, £68 14s. 2d.

Tolls Account.— DR.: To amount received for tolls to the 14th June, 1873, £52 3s. 5½d. CR.: By paid for putting up the stalls, £19 14s.; by rent to Lady-day, £5 10s.; by paid to Share account, £1 4s. 2d.; by printing, 5s. 9d.; by dividend (first issue, £4 14s. ; second, £1 0s. 6d.) £5 14s. 6d.; by sundry expenses, 15s. 8d.; by balance, £18 19s. 4½d.; total, £52 3s. 5½d.”

The following are the inscriptions on some of John Wilkinson’s coins, issued from 1787 to 1792, referred to on a previous page:²¹

1. Ob. John Wilkinson, Ironmaster. Bust in centre.
Rev. Furnace, Steam Forge, with Man at Work. Date 1787.
2. Silver piece, weight 10 dwts. Ob. same as No. 6.
Rev. Ditto, the words Fine Silver, 1788.
3. Rev. Inclined Plane at Ketley, 1789, with representation of same.
4. Oh. John Wilkinson, Ironmaster. Bust.
Rev. Vulcan at Forge. Halfpenny, 1790.
Rim Bersham, Willey, Bradley, Snedshill.
5. Ditto 1791.
6. Ditto Bust and Name.
Rev. Ship in full sail. 1792.
Rim Payable in Anglesey, London, or Liverpool.
7. Ob Bridge with Barge passing under. Leg. Iron Bridge at Coalbrookdale. Erected anno 1779.
Span 100 feet. Date 1792.

PUBLIC HOUSES AT PRESENT IN BROSELEY AND JACKFIELD

The Wine Vaults	Duke of York	Duke of Cumberland	Pheasant	
Lord Hill	Victoria	King’s Head	Talbot	[248]
Cape of Good Hope	Forester’s Arms	New Inn	Crown	
Lion	Elephant	Albion	Hole-in-the-Wall	
Hand and Tankard				
Beerhouses.				
Globe	Seven Stars	Napoleon	Cross Keys	
Prince of Wales				
Jackfield.				
Werps Inn	Lloyd Head	Duke of Wellington	Dog and Duck	
Half Moon	Summer House	Severn Trow	Black Swan	
Tumbling Sailors				
Beerhouse e.				
Boat Inn				

SHIRLOTT FOREST, SHIRLOTT MINES AND IRONWORKS.

In the earlier pages of this work we said that Broseley was at one time included in Shirlott Forest, but was afterwards taken out of its jurisdiction; we also referred to the existence of coal and ironworks there. We are now enabled through the kindness of a friend, who has a store of such documents, to give the contents of a deed on two large skins of parchment in which reference is again made to these early works as well as other matters of interest. The deed commences thus:—

Articles of agreement quadripartite concluded and agreed upon the ffirst day October Anno Dm. one thousand six hundred and twenty and five by and between Walter Acton [249] Esquier Chiefe Lord of the Soile of the Comons and waste grounde called or knowne by the names of Kinge Haye and Earles Wood in Sherlett: in the parish of Morefeild and Mannor of Acton Round in the Countie of Salopp conteyninge one Thousand fiftie three acres and one rood or thereabout, John Weld Esquier Chiefe Lord of the Soile of the Comons and wast grounde called or knowne by the names of Willy Held and the Priors wood in Sherlott, in the parish of Much Wenlock or elsewhere in the County aforesaid, conteyninge One thousand Twoe hundred and fortie foure Acres and three Roode or thereabout, Francis Billingsley Esquier the elder and Francis Billingsley the younger Esquier* Chiefe Lorde of the Soiles of the Comons and waste ground in the parish of Astley in the said Countie conteyninge foure hundred three score and

four Acres or thereabouts beside Mr. Smith's Coppice which is not measured and Sir Edward Bromley knight one of the Barons of His Ma'tie. Courte of Exchequer Sir Willm. Whitmore knight, Humfrey Briggs Esquier, Thomas Hord Esquier, Thomas Lawley Esquier, John Slaney Esquier, Richard Ridley gent, Ffrancis Ridley gent, Richard Acton gent, Charles Baldwyn gent, Willm. Chese gent, Thomas Borraston gent, Ffrancis Lokyer gent, Rowland Benbowe gent, Willm. Smith gent, Joane Varkcombe widdowe, Ffrancis Crowther, Willm. Bayly, John Rowley, Roger Ffather, John Baker, Rowland Cowlinge, Richard Harley, Thomas Bayly, Roger Harper, Thomas Parker, James Weaver, John Walker, Roger Jeffreyes, Willm. Lee, Willm. Smithe, John [250] Wakelem, Wilim. Dorsett, Edward Symons, Edward Benbowe, Willm. Plethin, George Symons, Raiphe Veyos Clerke, Margaret Weald widow, Ffrancis Doughty, Ffrancis Smith, John Skitt, Edward Weald, Richard Higgons, Mathew Wyer, Stephen Marsh, Giles Rowe, Edward Aston, Humphrey Benbowe, John Hotchkis, Thomas Bentley, Ffrancis Gery, John Yeomans, Edward Syner, George Backster Clerke, Robert Ffarmer, Roger Haselwood.

Ffrancis Butcher, Ffrancis Harley Clerke, Willm. Grenous, Edward Ruckley, Thomas Adams, Beatrice Adams, Richard Dowghty, Edward Tayler, John Heyward, Bryan Richarde, Thomas Heeley, Richard Lewes, Jobn Tarte, Ralphe Tarte, Thomas Batley, John Benbowe, Mauld Habberley widdowe, Thomas Adams, Thomas Doughtie Clerke, John Corbett, Joane Hawes widow, Richard Shyles, Thomas Harrison, Willm. Corbett, Ffrancis Harper, David Gittons, Thomas Sanckey, John Langley, Ffrancis Allen, Reynold Wheelwright, Dorothy Grainger widdowe, Lewes Widdow, Raph Wheeler, Richard Adams, John Wheelwright Sen., John Wheelwright jun., Thomas Symons, Edward Mullett, Edmond Beavon, Joane Smith, Richard Goldinge, and Edward Litherland, some of them freeholders, some coppiholders, some Leassers, and undertennants that have used or claimed Comon in the wast ground and comonable places in the parishes and places aforesaid or some of them for, touchinge and concerninge the peaceable [251] enjoyinge usenige divideinge and ordring of the said soils waste grounde and Comone betwixt the said Cheife Lords and the freeholders and other Comoners and their undertenante for ever hereafter And for avoidinge of contentous variances and suite in laws in tyme to come. And for preventige of future erectinge of Cottages upon the said soiles Comons or waste grounde without warrant of lawe.

The deed then proceeds to state particulars as to the land, waste lands, highways, driftways, passages, &c., in which the aforesaid parties were interested, with much of that repetition for which such documents are remarkable. It also defines the boundary commencing at Hangsters Gate and going southwards through the shop of Rowland Hanunows unto the brook between that part of the Comon called Willey Hold and Willey by a place or well called Atton wells and so on to the bounds of Astley and that part of the Comon set forth for the freeholders and tenants of Willey. It further describes the certain allotments for the freeholders and tenants of Barrow called the Foxholds passing by the lands of Thomas Adams, and including the School House and Almes house.

With regard to the Billingsleyes portion it is agreed that the freeholders, Tennants, Coppiholders, Residents, and Leassees shall suffer leave or sett out, out of everie their said severall and respecive part convenient wayes, gates, stiles, and passages, for carte and carriages, and for the comon case of people, and for other the purposes hereafter mentioned. And it is agreed that if the said Cheife Lord at any time hereafter shall cutt down any tymber or wood in their third parte respectively, or digge for Coles, Ironstone, Mynes, slate, or quarres there, that then they shall have convenient ways, gates, or passages, for the comon ease of the people by [252] carts, carriages, or otherwise in or through all the twoe part formerly allotted and divided for the freeholders and Comoners as aforesaid.

And it is agreed that everie of the said Cheife Lorde respectivelie, their heires and assignes, now and at all times hereafter shall and may have in and throughout all the said respective soiles soe limited and allotted for the severall Lordships, Townships, and hamlette aforesaid, the sole liberties to dig for all Coles, Ironstone Mynes, slate and quarries, and to take, sell, and convert them or any of them to their owne use, with free ingresse, egress, and regress, with menservants, carte, and carriages, in, by, and through the said twoe parte at their will and pleasures. And alsoe at all tymes hereafter as accasion shall require to have convenient place or places to lay the said Coles, Ironstone, mynes, slats and quarres in, and to stake them or lay wood on and doe all things necessarie for the workings of the same; and to have convenient ways and

passages to and from all such Colepitte, Ironstone pitte mynes, and quarries, by and through all the said twoe parte in as ample manner to all intente and purposes as heretofore they have accustomed or as they lawfullie might have done before this agreement. And the said Lorde shall and may take all waifestrays; and fellons goods (if any shalle at any time hereafter be found and taken in and upon any of their said respective twoe parte, as was lawful for them to take before this agreemen.

ITEM it is agreed the Cheife Lorde respectively shall repaire such wayes as they spoile in the twoe part by means of their pticular carriages of Coles, wood, &c. And shall fill up with rubbish [253] such pitt as they shall digge hereafter in any of the twoe parte so as the Comoners cattle may not be in danger, so soon as they have done workinge in such pitte.”

Other items follow, one of which is that the “house and enclosure by the Colepitte wherein Porter now dwelleth shall be enjoyed by such as shall be employed by Mr. Weld, his heires and assignes, in his Colework, dureinge the contynuance of the worke in that place at twelvecence rent per annum. And it is intended and agreed that if the Coleworks be removed to any other partse hereafter that then the like proportion of ground as now Porter hath shall be allotted to build upon for his Colework men at the like rent duringe the contynuance only of the Coleworks in such place.”

The last clause is, “It is agreed that the water and furnace which Mr. Acton nowe useth shall remayne for the use of the said Mr. Acton, and his heires as heretofore he hath used the same for his Ironworks.”

Then follows the names of fifty-three witnesses, eighteen of whom make their marks.

The names of persons and places mentioned in the deed, as well as the provisions made as to mining and iron making, and the privileges granted in relation thereto, are interesting in many ways. The family names occurring among the witnesses and parties interested in the deed are, for the most part, familiar to us. That of Francis Billingsley, for instance, the younger, being in all [254] probability the young man who cut his initials in the strong oak beam over the fireplace where the family lived in Astley Abbots parish, (still to be seen) and who distinguished himself and fell in leading on the Royalists against the Cromwellian troops in St. Leonard’s Churchyard, Bridgnorth.

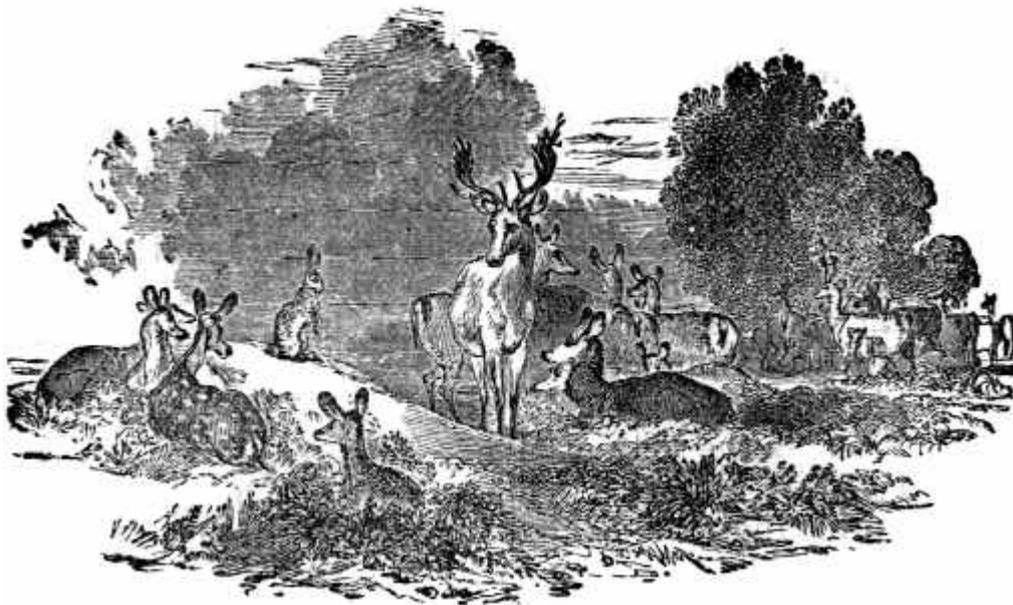
With respect to the mention of a coal hearth a much earlier reference is found in records relating to the forest boundaries by perambulators in the beginning of the fourteenth century. At this Perambulation, (1301) as before stated, Broseley, Barrow, Benthall, Buildwas, Belswardine, Willey, Walton, Linley, Caughley, Sweney, and Appley, and many other places were mentioned as having been taken out of the jurisdiction of the forest, names indicating the extent of the forest, or its jurisdiction at least, to have been over something like twelve miles by five. Many of the names mentioned by the perambulators as marking the forest bounds are obsolete. Thus, we find the perambulators went up to the Raven’s Oak, thence straight to the Brenallegrene, near the Coleherth (Coal Health) going up by the Fendeshok (Friends’ Oak) to the Dernewhite-ford. Thence upwards to the Netherconmbesheved; and then down to Caldewall. Then down through the Lynde to the Mer Elyn. Thence down to Dubledaneslegh, and then up by a certain watercourse to the Pirle; and so up to Wichardesok; and so to the Pundefold: and so down by the Shepewey to the Holeweeu, and then up by a certain fence to Adams’s Hale (Adam’s Hall), and thus by the assarts which John de Haldenham (Aldenham) holds at a rent of the king to the [255] corner of Mokeleyes Rowe. (Muckley Row); and thence down to Yapenacres Merwey, where the first land-mark of the Haye begins. There was also, it was said, a certain bosc which the King still held in Shirlett forest, called Benthlegh Haye, (Bentley Haye), for taking game of a higher sort.

The deed of 1625, it will be seen, mentions a piece of ground known as the King’s Haye; shewing that the king had a haye here. At a much earlier period we read of the Haye of Shirlett, opposite to which a portion of the forest in the fifth of Henry III.’s reign was ordered to be assarted, which consisted in grubbing up the roots so as to render the ground fit for tillage.

Hayes are sometimes spoken of as “imparkments;” being enclosures, paled, or in some way fenced round. In connection with these Hayes, generally, a staff of foresters, verderers, rangers, stewards, and regarders was kept up; and forest courts were held. Hugh Forester and Robert the Forester, founders of the present family of the name at Willey, had custody of the Wrekin Haye, which was where Haye Gate now is; and it is a noticeable fact that a piece of ground near Haye Gate, granted to these Foresters, either by the Crown or by one of the Norman nobles for the

discharge of their duties in connection with this forest of the Wrekin, has remained in possession of the family, or is, at any rate, now held by the present Lord Forester.

[256] Philip de Baggessour was Forester of the Fee in the king's free Haye of "Schyrlet" in 1255, and is said to have had under him "two foresters, who gave him 20s. per annum for holding their office, and on whom he could make a levy on oats in Lent, and wheat in autumn." "The aforesaid Philip," it is said, "hath now in said Haye of Windfalls as much as seven trees, and likewise all trees which are wind-fallen, the jurors know not by what warrant except by ancient tenure." These privileged officers had good pickings, evidently, by means of their various time-sanctioned customs, and jolly lives no doubt they led.



SUPPOSED APPEARANCE OF SHIRLETT HAYE AT THE TIME REFERRED TO

[257] In the forty-second of Henry III. Hammond le Strange was steward of this forest, and in the second of Edward I. the king's forester is said to have given the sheriff of the county notice that he was to convey all the venison killed in the forests of Salop, and deliver it at Westminster to the king's larder, for the use of the king's palace. According to the same record, the profits that were made of the oaks that were fallen were to be applied to the building of a vessel for the king. In the nineteenth of Richard II., Richard Chelmswick was appointed forester for life; and in the twenty-sixty of Henry III. the stewardship both of the forests of Morfe and of Shirlet was granted to John Hampton and his heirs. Some of the chief foresters also held Willey and probably resided there. On page 7 we alluded to a building which bears marks of extreme antiquity, between Barrow and Broseley, called the Lodge was once the hunting lodge. It has underneath strongly arched and extensive cellaring, which seems to be older than other portions of the superstructure, and which may have held the essentials for feasts, for which sportsmen of all times have been famous. Near the lodge, too, is the *Deer-Loape*, or Deer Leap, a little valley through which once evidently ran a considerable stream, and near which the soil is still black, wet, and boggy. A deer leap, deer loape, or *saltory*, was a pitfall, a drop-down fenced round for protection—a contrivance common during the forest periods, generally at the edge of the chase, for taking deer, and often granted by charter as a privilege – as that, for instance, on the edge of Cank, or Cannock Chase. [258] In the History of "Shifnal and its Surroundings" we have spoken of a field on rising ground near the Bridgnorth road, which lay on the edge of Shifnal Manor park, still called the Dear Leap, and

* This was not by any means the only instance in which Shropshire timber has been in demand for ship building. In the latter part of the last century much valuable oak timber was cut down in the neighbourhood of Shirlet and the Smithies for naval purposes. None of the old forest trees remain that we know of, excepting one, which being an ash, was spared. It stands in the road at Barrow. We remember, it 50 years ago being riven by lightning, but it still lives. Loudon describes a tree, having been cut down in Willey Park which spread 114 feet, and had a trunk 9 feet in diameter, exclusive of the bark. It contained 24 cords of yard wood, 11½ cords of 4 feet wood, 252 park palings, 6 feet long, 1 load of cooper's wood, 16¼ tons of timber in the boughs; 28 tons of timber in the body, and this besides fagots and boughs that had dropped off. The late Lord Forester was especially careful of the fine old trees on the estate, particularly of such as are known to have been the descendants or patriarchal contemporaries of those which flourished when the forests of Shirlett and Willey extended their green unbroken mantles to the Severn.

quoted Shirley on Deer and Deer Parks, who says, "a Deer Leap was a sort of *cul de sac*, near the park fence, by which deer could descend, but too steep for them to return." Sometimes these pitfalls, dug for the purpose of taking game, were used by poachers, who drove the deer into them. It is, therefore, easy to understand why the forest lodge should be near, as a protection. It was usually one of the articles of inquiry at the Swainmote Court whether "any man have any great close within three miles of the forest that have any saltories, or great gaps called deer loapes, to receive deer into them when they be in chasing, and when they are in them they cannot get out again."

A survey of the Haye of Shirlett, made by four knights of the county, pursuant to a royal writ in October 21, 1235, sets forth "its custody good as regards oak trees and underwood, except that [259] great deliveries have been made by order of the king to the Abbeyes of Salop and Bildewas, to the Priory of Wenlock, and to the Castle of Brug, for the repairs of buildings, &c."



Among those who in these forest periods had an interest in this kind of antlered game we must not omit to notice the Priors of the adjoining Abbey of Wenlock; the heads of which establishments by no means confined themselves within the limits of the chapter-house. They were no mere cloistered monks, devoted to book and candle, but, jolly livers, gaily dressed, and waited upon by well-appointed servants; like the Abbot of Buildwas, who had for his vassal the Lord of Buildwas Parva, who held land under him on condition that he and his wife should place the first dish on the abbot's table on Christmas Day, and ride with him any whither within the four seas at the abbot's charge. They had huntsmen, hounds, and hawks, and one can imagine their sporting visitation rounds among their churches, the chanting of priests, the deep-mouthed baying of dogs, early matins, and the huntsman's bugle horn harmoniously blending in the neighbourhood of the forest. Hugh Montgomery in his day gave to the abbey a tithe of the venison which he took in its woods; and in

1190 we find the Prior of Wenlock giving twenty merks to the king that he may "have the Wood of Shirlott to himself, exempt from view of foresters, and taken out of the Regard." [260]

The rights and privileges set forth in the deed of partition of the waste lands of Shirlett, given a few pages back, more particularly those in which the Actons and Welds were concerned, remained in force to a recent period, excepting that Lord Acton, a few years ago sold portions of Shirlett to the late Lord Forester, whose family succeeded to the property through George Forester of Willey, whose father married a Weld, which leads us to speak of

WILLEY.

In describing Willey we purpose making free use of what we have previously written (in "Old Sports and Sportsmen") on this subject.

It is clear that Willey would be close neighbour to the Royal Chace of Shirlett. The name is probably of Saxon origin; and in wattle and dab and wicker-work times, when an osier-bed was probably equal in value to a vineyard, the place might have been as the word suggests, one where willows grew, seeing that various osiers, esteemed by basket makers, coopers, and turners, flourish along the stream winding past it to the Severn. The name is redolent of the olden time and one of those word-pictures which so often occur to indicate the earlier features of the country. Under its agricultural Saxon holders it so grew in value and importance that when the Conquest was complete, and King William's generals were settling down to enjoy the good things the Saxons had provided, Willey fell to the lot of a Norman, named Turolde, who, as he [261] held twelve other manors, considerably permitted the Saxon owner to continue in possession under him. Domesday says "The same Turolde holds Willey, and Hunnit (holds it.) of him." "Here is half a hide geldable. Here is arable land sufficient for ii ox teams. Here those ox teams are, together with ii villains, and ii boors. Its value is v shillings." At the death of Hunnit the manor passed to a family which took its name from the place; and considerable additions resulted from the marriage of one, Warner de Williley, with the heiress of Roger Fitz Odo, of Kenley. Warner de Williley appears to have been a person of some consequence from the fact that he was appointed to make inquiry concerning certain encroachments upon the royal forests of Shropshire, but an act of oppression and treachery, in which his wife had taken a part, against one of his own vassals whose land he coveted, caused him to be committed to prison. Several

successive owners of Willey were overseers of Shirlett Forest; and Nicholas, son and heir to Warner, was sued for inattention to his duties; an under tenant also, profiting probably by the laxity of his lord, at a later period was charged and found guilty of taking a stag from the king's preserves, on Sunday, June 6th, 1253.

[262] Andrew do Williley joined Mountford against King Edward, and fell August 4th, 1265, in the battle of Evesham; in consequence of which act of disloyalty the property was forfeited to the crown, and the priors of Wenlock, who already had the seignory usual to feudal lords, availing themselves of the opportunity, managed so to increase their power that a subsequent tenant, as shown by the Register at Willey, came to Wenlock (1388), and "before many witnesses did homage and fealty," and acknowledged himself to hold the place of the lord prior, by carrying his frock to parliament.

By the middle of the 16th century Willey had passed in to the hands of the old Catholic family of the Lacons, one of whom, Sir Rowland, held it in 1561, together with Kinlet; and from them it passed to Sir John Weld, who is mentioned as of Willey in 1666. He married the daughter of Sir George Whitmore, and his son, George Weld, sat for the county with William Forester, who married the daughter of the Earl of Salisbury, and voted with him in favour of the succession of the House of Hanover.

Willey, augmented by tracts of Shirlett, which were, as we have seen, in 1625, apportioned, came into possession of the Foresters by the marriage of Brook Forester, of Dohill Park, with Elizabeth, only surviving child and heiress of George Weld, of Wiley; and George Forester, "the Squire of Willey," was the fruit of that marriage.

[264] Who among the former feudal owners of Willey built the old hall, is a question which neither history nor tradition serves to solve. Portions of the basement of the old buildings seem to indicate former structures even more ancient. Some of the walls are three feet in thickness, and the buttressed chimneys, and small-paned windows – "set deep in the grey old tower" – make it a fair type of ancient country mansions, and a realisation of ideas such as the mind associates with the homes of its early owners.



Although occupying a slight eminence, it really nestles in the hollow, and in its buff-coloured livery stands pleasingly relieved by the high ground of Shirlett and its woods beyond. In looking upon its quaint gables, shafts, and chimneys, one feels that when it was complete it must have had something of the poetry of ancient art about it. Its irregularities of outline must have fitted in, as it were, with the undulating landscape, with which its walls are now tinted into harmony by brown and yellow lichens. There was nothing assuming or pretentious about it; it was content to stand close neighbour to the public old coach road, which came winding, by from Bridgnorth to Wenlock, and passed beneath the arch which now connects the high-walled gardens with the

shaded walk leading to its modern neighbour, the present mansion of the Right Honourable Lord and Lady Forester.

From the lawn and grounds adjoining, a path led to the flower-gardens, intersected by gravel walks and grassy terraces, where a sun-dial stood, and where fountains, fed by copious supplies from unfailing springs on the high grounds of Shirlett, threw silvery showers above the shadows of the trees into the sunlight.

The interior corresponded pretty much with the exterior. It had capacious fire-places, and rooms wainscoated with oak to the ceiling. Against the walls were grim portraits of the Welds, and others; representations of dogs and favourite horses; whilst in the great hall were various trophies of the chase, and guns which had done good execution in their time. Here and there were ancient time-pieces, singularly constructed and quaint in contrivance, one of which, on striking the hours of noon and midnight, set in motion figures with trumpets and various other instruments, which gave forth their appropriate sounds. A great lamp – hoisted to its place by a thick rope – lighted up that portion of the hall into which opened the doors of the dining and other rooms, and from which a staircase led to the gallery. [265]

A meet in the neighbourhood of Willey was usually well attended: first, because of the certainty of good sport; secondly, because such sport was often preceded, or followed by receptions at the Hall; so famous for its cheer. Jolly were the doings on these occasions; songs were sung, racy tales were told, old October ale flowed freely, and the jovial merits and household virtues of Willey were fully up to the mark of the good old times. The Squire usually dined about four o'clock, and his guests occasionally came booted and spurred, ready for the hunt the following day, and rarely left the festive board 'neath the hospitable roof of the Squire until they mounted their coursers in the court-yard.

Dibdin, from materials gathered on the spot, has, in his own happy manner, drawn representations of these gatherings. His portraits of horses and dogs, and his description of the social habits of the Squire and his friends, are thus faithfully set forth in his song of "Bachelor's Hall:"

"To Bachelor's Hall we good fellows invite
 To partake of the chase which makes up our delight,
 We've spirits like fire. and of health such a stock,
 That our pulse strikes the seconds as true as a clock. [266]
 Did you see us you'd swear that we mount with a grace
 That Diana had dubb'd some new gods of the chase.

Hark away! bark away! all nature looks gay,
 And Aurora with smiles ushers in the bright day,

Dick Thickset came mounted upon a fine black,
 A finer fleet gelding ne'er hunter did back;
 Tom Trig rode a bay full of mettle and bone,
 And gaily Bob Buckson rend on a roam;
 But the horse of all horses that rivalled the day
 Was the Squire's Neck-or-Nothing, and that was a grey.

Hark away! &c.

Then for hounds there was Nimble who well would climb rocks,
 And Cocknose a good one at finding a fox;
 Little Plunge, like a mole, who, would ferret & search,
 And beetle-brow'd Hawk's Eye so dead at a lurch;
 Young Sly-looks that scents the strong breeze from the south.
 And Musical Echo with his deep mouth.

Hark away! &c.

Our horses, thus all of the very best blood,
 'Tis not likely you'd easily find such a stud;
 Then for foxhounds, our opinion for thousands we'll back,
 That all England throughout can't produce such a pack.
 Thus having described you our dogs, horses and crew,
 Away we set off, for our fox is in view.

Hark away! &c.

Sly Reynard's brought home, while the horn sounds the call,
 And now you're all welcome to Bachelor's Hall;

The savoury sirloin gracefully smokes on the board,
And Bacchus pours wine from his sacred hoard.
Come on, then, do honour to this jovial place,
And enjoy the sweet pleasures that have sprung from the chase.
Hark away! hark away! while our spirits are gay,
Let us drink to the joys of next meeting day.”

[267]



THE WILLEY SQUIRE

George Forester was descended from an ancestry associated with forest sports and pursuits, he lived in what may be called the dawn of the golden age of fox-hunting. There were fewer packs of hounds in Shropshire then, and the Squire had a clear field extending from the Clee Hills to the Wrekin; but he sometimes went beyond these notable landmarks, the day never appearing to be too long for him.

[268] Four o'clock on a hunting morning usually found him preparing the inner man with a breakfast of underdone beef, and eggs beaten up in brandy. Thus fortified he was ready for a fifty miles run. He was what Nimrod would have called, "a good rough rider" over the stiff Shropshire clays, and he generally managed to keep up with the best to the last.

He could scarcely top a flight of rails, or skim ridge, furrow, and fence, however, with Phoebe Higgs, one of his many mistresses, who sometimes accompanied him. Phoebe, would take hazardous leaps, beckoning Mr. Forester to follow; which led the Squire to wager heavy sums that in leaping she would beat any woman in England. With Phoebe and Moody, and a few choice spirits of the same stamp on a scent, there was no telling to what point between the two extremities of the Severn it might carry them. They might turn up near its source or its estuary, and not be heard of at Willey for a week. One long persevering run into Radnorshire, in which a few plucky riders continued the pace for some distance and then left the field to the Squire and Moody, who kept the heads of their favourites in the direction Reynard was leading, passed into a tradition; and was commemorated in some doggerel lines still current.

Very romantic tales have been told of long runs by a superannuated servant of the Foresters, old Simkiss, who had them from his father. One formed the subject of a song, which the late Richard Shaw; of Benthall, was wont to sing, but which is too long for our purpose. It will be found in our "Old Sports and Sportsmen," together with a longer account of Torn Moody than we are able to give here.

[269] Although we have had the register of Broseley parish searched from beginning to end we have been unable to meet with the entry of the baptism of this famous whipper-in, who is generally believed to have been a native of the parish. Whether he was a parishioner or not, his

mother lived here, and Tom himself was apprenticed to a Mr. Adams. It is probable enough that Tom never was baptised, and that he never was the subject of any religious ceremony excepting that associated with his exit from the world, when in conformity with his dying request three hunters' cheers were added at his grave. In "Tom Spring's Life in London," dated Sunday, December 13, 1840, we find the following:-

"Tom Moody was a poor boy, the son of a poor widow. He was born at Broseley, in Shropshire, near the residence of Mr. George Forester, of Willey, who then hunted the Shropshire country. Tom, when a lad, was employed by a maltster of the name of Adams, who resided at Broseley, to carry out malt. Among the customers of this maltster, was Mr. Forester. One day, Tom – who little knew how much would hang upon the events of that day – had taken two sacks of malt upon the back of a horse to Willey, which he carefully delivered in returning home, he came to a gate adjoining the park, and tried to leap his horse over it. He made attempts and failed; but determined to accomplish his purpose – evincing at the same time the resolution and energy which distinguished his future career – he at length succeeded, and rode his horse clear over the gate. This extraordinary proceeding on the part of a mere boy, was accidentally witnessed by Mr. Forester. He was struck with his courage and perseverance, and made immediate inquiries who the lad was. He was told it was the maltster's boy and that his name was Moody. Mr. Forester, having marked him for his own, sent a messenger to ask Adams if he would part with the boy, saying he wanted to see him at Willey. The maltster complied but when his mother learnt that Mr. Forester wanted to see him, she was sorely afraid that Tom had been committing himself, and trembled for the consequences. The result was that Tom was engaged as a stable boy, and from his attention to his business, his courage in riding, and that extreme good nature and kindness which always accompanied him, he was eventually made whipper-in, and placed under the direction of John Sewell the huntsman. He was delighted with his post, and performed its duties in a manner so satisfactory, not only to his master, but to every one who hunted with the hounds, that the fame of Tom Moody, as the best whipper-in in England, spread far and wide, and Tom was undoubtedly the best whipper-in that ever mounted a horse. Like him, no one could bring up the tail end of a pack from the closest, the most extensive cover; like him, no one could surmount obstacles which appeared terrific to attempt; like him, no one could preserve that equanimity of temper and of bearing which drew about him the hearts of all; like him, no one could sustain the long chase, like him no one could manage his horse in such a manner as to present the circumstance, that however difficult may have been his position however numerous the obstacles which presented themselves – there, at the death of the fox, with every hound well up, and without his horse tiring, was Tom Moody! Unfortunately, the brightest day is liable to be dimmed by some obscuring cloud. Tom Moody – the 'observed of all' observers' in the chase – respected by all in the pursuit of the fox, for his uniform civility and good nature, even when the chance of success was hopeless, and disappointment the unavoidable consequence – Tom Moody was addicted to deep drinking. Famed in all the country around and respected by all who witnessed the display of his many good and superior qualities his good nature paved the way for this sad daily growing evil. Tom, however much he might have drunk, was himself again whenever he got astride his horse; and, under these circumstances, he was never thrown, and never fell off."

When the squire gave up hunting. Tom and a few old favourite hounds were kept on at the hall; but having more time upon his hands he drank more than ever, not only of Willey strong ale, but of that brewed, by the landlady of the little inn at Hangster's Gate, a favourite hostelry when coaches ran from Bridgnorth past Old Willey Hall to Wenlock. Tom was a great gun at this way-side inn, when old Scale, the Barrow schoolmaster, Crump the butcher, and others from Broseley, were wont to meet there in an evening to read the newspapers or hear the news brought by coach passengers when the movements of armies and great battles, or rioting, were the chief topics of conversation. It is said that passengers have been known to leave the coach and stop to hear Tom give his tally-ho, or who-who-hoop and one London gentleman who heard the wonderful modulations of Tom's voice on one of these occasions, declared that he was "astonished and delighted, and hardly knew how to praise it enough; he never heard anything so attractive and inspiring in all his life, its tones were fine and mellow as a French horn."

Towards the end of the year 1796, Tom, who was wont to say that his constitution was as sound as a roach, was well nigh worn out; and finding his end approaching he expressed a wish to see his old master. "Well," said the Squire, "what is it, Tom?" "My time here won't be long," Tom, added; "and when I am dead I wish to be buried at Barrow, under the yew tree, in the churchyard there." The remainder of the request may be gleaned from the following letter from the Squire to a friend:

“Dear Chambers, ‘

“On Tuesday last died poor Tom Moody, as good for rough and smooth as ever entered Wildman’s Wood. He died brave and honest, as he lived – beloved by all, hated by none who ever knew him. I took his own orders as to his will, funeral, and every other thing that could be thought of. He died sensibly and fully collected as ever man died – in short died game to the last; for when he could hardly swallow the poor old lad took the farewell glass for success to fox-hunting, and his poor old master (as he termed it), for ever. I am sole executor, and the bulk of his fortune he [273] left to me – six and twenty shillings, real and bona-fide sterling cash, free from all incumbrance, after every debt discharged to a farthing. Noble deeds for Tom, you’d say. The poor old ladies at the “Ring of Bells” are to have a knot each in remembrance of the poor old lad.

“Salop paper will show the whole ceremony of his burial.

“ ‘Sportsmen, attend. – On Tuesday, 29th inst., was buried at Barrow, near Wenlock, Salop Thomas Moody, the well-known whipper-in to G. Forester, Esq.’s fox-hounds for twenty years. He was carried to the grave by a proper number of earth-stoppers, and attended by many other sporting friends, who heartily mourned for him.’

“Directly after the corpse followed his old favourite horse (which he always called his ‘Old Soul’) thus accoutred: carrying his last fox’s brush in the front of his bridle, with his cap, whip, boots, spurs, and girdle, across his saddle. The ceremony being over, he (by his own desire), had three clear rattling view haloos o’er his grave; and thus ended the career of poor Tom, who lived and died an honest fellow, but alas! a very wet one.

“G. Forester”

“Willey, Dec. 6, 1796.”

It will be seen that Tom’s wish was literally carried out, and that he was honoured in true fox-hunting style by old sportsmen who had often listened to the equally stirring sounds of his own voice. The newspaper account adds: “thus ended the career of poor Tom.” But local tradition [274] has it that Tom lay uneasy in his grave, and that he was wont to appear above ground when the hounds came that way. Pot companions returning from Hangster’s Gate, with sharpened or double sight, easily persuaded themselves that they had seen him. At an early meet at this famous fixture, just in the mist of early morning, Tom’s spectre is said, to have appeared upon the scene of his early exploits. Our engraving²² represents the huntsmen pointing in the direction where an old touchwood tree gave out a phosphorescent and unearthly looking light; some exclaiming:-

“See the shade of Tom Moody, you all have known well,
To our sports now returning, not liking to dwell
In a region where pleasure’s not found in the chase,
So Tom’s just returned to view his old place.
No sooner the hounds leave the kennel to try,
Than his spirit appears to join in the cry;
Now all with attention his signal well mark,
For see his hand’s up for the cry of Hark! Hark!
Then cheer him, and mark him, Tally-ho! Boys Tally-ho!”

Tom was a, man after Dibdin’s own heart; one of the Poor Jack and Ben Backstay sort; and the composition of the song:-

“You all knew Tom Moody, the whipper-in, well,” &c.,

was a real labor of love; and when he was about to leave Willey, where he had been very hospitably treated whilst collecting materials, and Tom’s old master enquired what he could do to requite him; the great ballad writer “The Beranger of England,” as he was called, replied nothing; [275] he had been so well treated. Mr.Forester pressed, but Dibdin still refused; and the former, finding artifice necessary, asked the latter to deliver a letter for him at his bankers in London. Dibdin consented, and on delivering it was told that it was an order to pay the bearer £100!

When the song came out in London, Charles Incedon, by the “human voice divine,” was drawing vast audiences at Drury Lane Theatre. On play-bills, in largest type, forming the most attractive morceaux of the bill of fare, this song, varied by others of Dibdin’s composing, would be seen; and when he was first announced to sing it, John Cox Morris and a few fox-hunting friends with the Squire went to London to hear it. Taking up their positions in the pit, they were

all attention as the inimitable singer rolled out, with that full volume of voice which at once delighted and astounded his audience, the verse Commencing:-

“You all knew Tom Moody the whipper-in well,”

But the great singer at succeeding to the satisfaction of the small knot of Shropshire fox-hunters in the “tally-ho chorus,” they jumped upon the stage, and gave the audience a specimen of what Shropshire lungs could do.

The song soon became popular. It seized at once upon the sporting mind, and upon the mind of the country generally. The London publishers took it up, and gave it with the music, together with woodcuts and lithographic illustrations, and it soon found ready sale.

The Willey Squire was a keen sportsman, but he took an interest in local matters, and usually assembled at his table, when at home on Sundays, the leading men of the neighbourhood; as Harries of Benthall, Turner of Caughley, Hinton Of Wenlock, Blakeway of Broseley, Bryan of the Tuckies, Michael Pye Stephens, and John Cox Morris, till the latter gave offence by allowing Esquire to be added to his name on his carts, when Mr. Forester told him there could be only one Squire at Willey, and gave him notice. Mr. Forester also filled important offices of trust, and was generally ready to respond to the calls made upon him by his neighbours. That he enjoyed their confidence is clear from the frequent calls made upon him to act as Bailiff and Chief Magistrate of the Borough; and also to sit as its representative in Parliament. He was Chief Bailiff in 1769; also in 1772; 1775; 1777; 1779; 1781; 1783; and 1790. On his retirement he presented the mace now in use, bearing the following inscription:- “The gift of George Forester of Willey, Esq., to the Bailiff, Burgesses, and Comonalty of the Borough of Wenlock, as a token of his high esteem and regard for the attachment and respect they manifested towards him during the many years he represented the borough in Parliament, and served the office of Chief Magistrate and Justice thereof.” He also sat for many years as member for the borough in Parliament. He was sent to the new Parliament which met in December, 1757, but gave way to Cecil Forester, a few months prior to the marriage of the king with the Princess Charlotte. He was returned again with Sir Henry Bridgeman in 1768, and sat till 1774, and was again returned with the same gentleman in [277] October of the same year. He was returned to Parliament in 1780, in the place of Mr. Whitmore, who had been returned for Wenlock and Bridgnorth, and who chose the latter. He sat till 1784, when Sir H. Bridgeman and John Simpson, Esq., were returned; but succeeded the latter who accepted the Chiltern Hundreds the following year, and sat till Parliament was dissolved after its prorogation in June, 1790.

The Squire of Willey retired from Parliament, it will be seen, in the same year as he did from the office of Chief Magistrate, intending no doubt as years advanced to enjoy a quiet country life. But this was not to be.

We have briefly alluded, *ante* page 237, to the part Mr. Forester took in raising a second corps of Rifle Volunteers, and it may be well here to say something of the first, which was disbanded before the second was formed. On that occasion the doings of Napoleon and the threat of the French Minister of Marine to make a descent upon our shores roused the national ardour of the old sportsman. A meeting was called at the Guildhall, Wenlock, and another took place at Willey some time after, when the Squire had had time to work himself up to the proper pitch of enthusiasm; and when he is said to have made a characteristic speech, in good round Saxon. We have given an epitome in our “Old Sports and Sportsmen.” “Gentlemen,” he said, “you know very well that I have retired from the representation of the borough. I did so in the belief that I had discharged, as long as need be, those public duties I owed to my neighbours; and in hope that I should be permitted henceforth to enjoy the pleasures of retirement. I parted with my hounds, and gave up hunting; but here I am, continually on horseback, hunting up men all round the Wrekin!” The Squire then proceeded to comment in strong terms upon the conduct of those who held aloof from the movement, denouncing as “dastardly devils, all who ran with the hare, but hung with the hounds, whose patriotism, hung by such a small strand that the first success of the enemies of the country would sever it” The corps was called “The Wenlock Loyal Volunteers;” and the Squire, who was major, spared neither time, persuasion, or money to make it efficient. He always gave the members a dinner on the 4th of June, the birthday of George III., who had won his admiration and devotion by his boldness as a fox-hunter, no less than by his daring proposal, during the riots of 1780, to ride at the head of his guards into the midst of the fires of the capital. On New Year’s Day, that being the birthday of Major Forester, the officers and men invariably dined together in honour of their commander. The corps was disbanded, we believe, in 1802 for we find in a cutting from a Shrewsbury paper of the 12th of January, 1803, that about that time a [278]

subscription was entered into for the purchase of a handsome punch-bowl. The newspaper states that "On New Year's Day, 1803, the members of the late corps of Wenlock Loyal Volunteers, commanded by Major Forester dined at the Raven Inn, Much Wenlock, in honour of their much
[279] respected major's birthday, when the evening was spent with that cheerful hilarity and orderly conduct which always characterised this respectable corps, when embodied for the service of their king and country. In the morning of the day the officers, deputed by the whole corps, waited on the Major, at Willey, and presented him, in an appropriate speech, with a most elegant bowl, of one hundred guineas value, engraved with his arms, and the following inscription, which the Major was pleased to accept:-

'To George Forester, of Willey, Esq., Major Commander of the Wenlock Loyal Volunteers, for his sedulous attention and unbounded liberality to his corps, raised and disciplined under his command without any expense to Government, and rendered essentially serviceable during times of unprecedented difficulty and danger; this humble token of their gratitude and esteem is most respectfully presented to him by his truly faithful and very obedient servants,

'THE WENLOCK VOLUNTEERS.'

'Major Forester.'

This was succeeded by a letter the following week, in the same paper, in which Mr. Forester expressed his unbounded gratitude to his late corps for the handsome present they had made him.

The second corps consisted of a hundred and twenty men raised at Broseley, a hundred and twenty at Much Wenlock, and eighty at Little Wenlock; making three hundred and twenty in all.

[280] The uniform, which is, or was till recently, treasured up by some of the old members, was a very handsome one, consisting of scarlet coat turned up with yellow, white trousers and waist-coat, a hat with white and red feathers for the grenadiers, and green ones for the light company. Beacons were erected, and watch-fires lighted, as Macaulay wrote –

Till twelve fair counties saw the blaze on Malvern's lonely height, –

Till streamed in crimson on the wind the Wrekin's crest of light.

Mr. Forester died on the 13th of July, 1811, in the seventy-third year of his age. He made provision in his will for the ladies and their offspring – the result of numerous amours, who lived on Shirlett, and left his estates to his cousin Cecil Forester. In his will, made the 3rd day of November, 1805, he left instructions that his body should be interred near the Communion table in the parish, church at Willey, "as near thereto as may be, in plain and decent manner." He also willed that eight of his servants or workmen, to whom he bequeathed the sum of one guinea each, should be employed as bearers of his body to the grave, that his cousin Cecil Forester, should appoint six of his friends and companions in the neighbourhood of Willey to be bearers of the pall, and that his body may be carried to its burial-place in the dusk of the evening. He also directed that his chestnut horse should be shot by two persons, and put to death as expeditiously
[281] as possible after his decease, that he should be buried with his hide on, and that a flat stone, without inscription, should be placed over him.

These instructions form the text of the following song written for us by J. P. Douglas, Esq., of Shrewsbury.

THE SQUIRE'S CHESTNUT MARE.

A HUNTING SONG.

AWAY we go! my mare and I,
Over fallow and lea:
She's carried me twenty years or nigh–
The best of friends are we.
With steady stride she sweeps along,
The old Squire on her back:
While echoes far, earth's sweetest sound,
The music of the pack.
Ah! how they stare, both high and low,
To see the "Willey chestnut" go.
Full many a time, from dewy morn
Untill the day was done,
We've follow'd the huntsman's ringing horn,

Proud of a gallant run.
 Well in the front, my mare and I—
 A good 'un to lead is she;
 For'ard, hark for'ard! still the cry—
 In at the death are we.
 My brave old mare — when I'm laid low
 Shall never another master know.
 The sailor fondly loves his ship,
 The gallant loves his lass;
 The toper drains with fever'd lip,
 His deep, full-bottom'd glass.
 Away! such hollow joys I scorn,
 But give to me, I pay,
 The cry of the hounds, the sounding horn,
 For'ard! hark, hark away!
 And this our burial chant shall be,
 For the chestnut mare shall die with me!

We need scarcely say that his wishes were carried out; he was buried by torch-light in the vault [282] near the family pew, and near to the steps leading to the church shown in our engraving. Near the tomb is a marble tablet erected in 1821 by Cecil Weld Forester, Esq., with the simple record:— To the memory of my late cousin and benefactor, George Forester, Esq.”

THE FIRST LORD FORESTER.

We have already said that George Forester, Esq. left the Willey estates to his cousin Cecil Weld Forester, Esq., of Ross Hall, in this county, and, we believe, money to build a new hall. Like the Squire of Willey, he was a great sportsman; his eagerness for the chase was happily characterised by the late Mr. Meynell, who used to say, “First out of cover came Cecil Forester, next the fox, and then my hounds.” A famous leap of his, thirty feet across a stream, on his famous horse Bernardo, has been recorded in some lines now at Willey, which accompany the portrait of the horse. He is supposed to have been one of the first who instituted the present system of hard riding to hounds, and a horse, known to have been ridden by him, it was said, would fetch twenty pounds more than the ordinary price. Colonel Apperley, a great authority, spoke of him as a very fine rider, and added:— “On one occasion he disregarded the good old English custom of ‘looking before you leap,’ and landed in the middle of a deep pool. ‘Hold, on,’ a countryman who saw him shouted to others coming in the same direction. ‘Hold your tongue — say nothing, we shall have it full in a minute,’ said Lord Forester.” The Colonel added, “In [283] consequence of residing in Shropshire, a country which has been so long famous for its breed of horses, he had a good opportunity of mounting himself well. He always insisted on the necessity of lengthy shoulders, good fetlocks, well formed hind legs and open feet; and knowing better than to confound strength and size, his horses seldom exceeded fifteen hands. On anything relating to a hunter his authority had long been considered classic, and if Forester said so it was enough. Lord Forester will always stand pre-eminent in the field, whilst in private life he is a very friendly man, and has ever adhered to those principles of honour and integrity which characterise the gentleman.” He was the friend of George the Fourth, who, when Prince of Wales honoured him with a visit at Ross Hall. This, we believe, was when the Prince professed to visit the country from which he derived his title; he went no farther however than a mile beyond Loton Hall, and returned, but the people were so gratified with this small favour that a tree from which he plucked a branch had a brass plate affixed to record the visit for the benefit of posterity. About this time Mr. Forester became enamoured of Katherine Manners, daughter of his Grace the Fourth Duke of Rutland, of whom there is a portrait at Willey (in Lady Forester’s Morning Room) by Sir Joshua Reynolds, who painted her when a lovely little girl. It is a singular fact that Sir Joshua painted her mother when about the same age, which portrait is at Badminton; she was [284] daughter of the Fourth Duke of Beaufort, and is said to have carried an election by her beauty and fascination. Both pictures have been engraved. The Duke of Rutland did not look favourably, it is said, upon the suit, on account of want of title and of wealth. The Prince of Wales on hearing this declared that he would ennoble him when he came to the throne, whilst the objection on the score of wealth was removed by his cousin, George Forester, leaving him the Willey estates. He was raised to the peerage in 1821 and allowed to add the name of Weld, by George the Fourth, who was godfather to two of his children, both of whom were christened George. He died on the

23rd of May, 1828, in his 61st year, in London. The body was brought to the Tontine, Ironbridge, where it lay in state, and then was removed to Willey and interred in the family vault.

He had eleven children, of whom the present Right Honourable Lord Forester, the Hon. and Rev. Orlando W. W. Forester, Canon of York, the Hon. Emilius John Weld Forester, the Hon. Henry Townsend Forester, the Countess of Chesterfield, and the Countess of Bradford are survivors.

The second Lord Forester, who died Saturday October 10, 1874, was of course the eldest son of the first Lord. He was equally distinguished as a sportsman, and for those qualities of honour and integrity which were ascribed to his father.

For many years he was the centre of a large and brilliant circle of noble sportsmen who followed the Belvoir pack of his uncle, the Duke of Rutland.

[285] Upon his retirement from the mastership of these hounds a magnificent piece of plate, which is not only costly in itself, but a splendid work of art, in which is represented a fox in a tree with full length figures of the more distinguished members of the hunt grouped around, each a striking likeness of the original, was presented to him. It occupies or did occupy a conspicuous place in the entrance hall at Willey, and has the following inscription:- "This testimonial, descriptive of an event which occurred in Croxton²³ Park, in the middle of a famous run, on the 15th day of Jan., 1851, is presented to John George Weld Forester, on his marriage, by the members of the Belvoir Hunt, as a mark of their esteem and regard, and as some acknowledgment of the sport shewn throughout the period of 27 years, during which he hunted the Belvoir Hounds, 1857." On the opposite side are grouped the names of the subscribers, the list including that of his Grace the Duke of Rutland, the Marquis of Granby, Earl Winchelsea, Lord John Manners, Lord George Manners, Lord Willoughby de Eresby, Lady Marian Alford, Right Hon R.A.C. Nisbet Hamilton, Sir J. C. Thorold, Bart., Sir T. Whichcote, Bart., Sir M. J. Cholmondeley, Bart, M.P., Sir Glynne Earle Welby, Bart., Sir H. Bromley, Bart., Sir H. C. H. Clarges Bart., General Reeve, General Mildmay Fane, Colonel J. Reeve, Colonel H. Fane, Colonel P. Dundas, John Litchford, Esq., A. Wilton, Esq., M.P., W. F. Norton, Esq., and 28 others. This, as stated in the inscription, was presented to his lordship on the occasion of his marriage with Lady Melbourne, – widow of the [286] Hon. Frederick Lamb (created Lord Beauvale), formerly ambassador at the Court of Munich, and who, afterwards, on the death of the elder brother, Lord Viscount Melbourne, Premier of England, succeeded to the title and estates – a lady who, by her distinguished goodness, consideration, sympathy, grace and amiability, endeared herself to the tenantry of Willey. The fruit of the marriage was a son, who died, and there was no further issue.

His lordship conferred great benefit upon that portion of the southern division of the country where his estates lay by lending not only the influence of his name, but even more substantial and material support, to the construction of the Severn Valley Railway, which has done so much to develop the resources of the district bordering on the Severn. His lordship also very much added to the estate of Willey by the purchase of those of Benthall, Tickwood, Linley, Caughley, The Tuckies, Rhode Farm, and others. He was especially careful of the fine old trees on the estate, particularly of such as are known to have been the descendants or patriarchal contemporaries of those which flourished when the forests of Shirlett and Willey extended their green mantles to the Severn. With most delicate care and state these were preserved from violation, and, however old, left to perpetuate their race, and to carry down to other generations associations connected with past times.

[287] Like old trees, too, old tenants were not disturbed or interfered with. None lived under a fear of having to leave; whilst all, with or without a lease, knew from experience that they might improve their holdings as they pleased: they would not be interfered with, neither would their rents be raised, but their sons and daughters might succeed them, and gather round the roof-trees of their homesteads when they were dead and gone.

Like other noblemen in whom a love of old English sports prevailed, his lordship prided himself upon his preserves; but the pleasures of the sport associated therewith he shared with a very wide circle of those less favourably situated than himself, and he distributed with a lavish hand the fruits of his covers for miles around. In this, as in other respects, the Sixth Shropshire Rifle Corps were wont to share his bounty, for as duly as Christmas came round a goodly stock of game found its way in the form of prizes to the homes of officers and privates.

THE PRESENT RIGHT HON. LORD FORESTER.

The Right Honourable George Cecil Weld Forester, third Baron, second son of the first Lord, member of the Privy Council, was born 1807, and is in the 72nd year of his age. He succeeded his brother in the representation of Wenlock, when the latter, the late Lord, was raised to the peerage in 1828, and sat for the same till the death of his brother, October, 1874. He was the oldest *member* of the House, and was designated "The Father of the house of Commons." Whether out-door exercises, associated with the pleasures of the chase, to which the ancestors of the Foresters have devoted themselves for so many centuries, have anything to do with it or not we cannot say; but the Foresters are remarkable for masculine and feminine beauty, and the General was frequently spoken of by the press as the best looking man in the House. [288]

In politics the present Lord Forester is a Conservative. Descended from a noble ancestry, he has been zealous in his endeavours to cherish and protect institutions which have grown up along with the life of the nation, and gathered round those principles of respect and loyalty which can never hastily be planted, and which time only can develop into the full measure of their political and social influences.

As member for Wenlock, Mr. Forester several times earned and received the thanks and gratitude of his constituents by his zealous endeavours to promote their interests. As special instances we may mention the repeal of the duties on bricks and tiles, and the endeavours at various times between the years 1836, 1842, and 1849 to prevent and limit the powers asked for by the Severn Improvement Commissioners, between Stourport and Gloucester, to levy tolls on all goods from Broseley and other wharves of the middle basin of the Severn within the limits of their improvement. Also his further exertions to obtain railway communication for the district, when such scheme was severely threatened by the promoters of rival schemes and interested landowners. In the latter instance both the late Lord and General Forester watched with the keenest interest the progress of the scheme before opposition brought to bear upon the committees of the two Houses. As a member he was over ready to afford interviews to his constituents, to receive suggestions, or to present petitions, and to enforce them where practicable – and where the prayer did not run counter to his own convictions – by observations, suitable [289] remarks, and recommendations.

His Lordship married the Hon. Mary Anne, daughter of the second Viscount St. Vincent, and widow of David Ochterlony Dyce Sombre, Esq., through whom it may be remembered he obtained by a decision of the Privy Council a princely sum, in a suit against the Government of India. Since coming to Willey her Ladyship has taken great interest in all that relates to its noble and extensive estates, particularly as regards the Schools, and any historical or archaeological features illustrating the manners and customs of the past.

WILLEY HALL.

At Willey Hall are sculptures, pictures (ancient and modern), and china of interest and value. Among the pictures is one of the Dauphin, (Louis XVII.) begging in the streets of Paris. In faded tattered garments of bygone prosperity, pale and emaciated, with an expression of intense suffering that is painful to look at, stands the descendant of many kings, the only son of Louis the XVIth, King of France, and his lovely queen Marie Antoinette, of whom Burke exclaimed in the House "that he beheld her as the morning star." Well might the king in his last will and testament write the words, "Should my son ever have the misfortune to wear a Crown." There stands the boy, hat in hand, with outstretched arm, begging for alms; but still with the bearing and features of the Bourbon race. Underneath, in the same apartment (Lady Forester's Morning Room), is the portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds, previously mentioned, of a lovely little girl, Lady Katherine Manners afterwards wife of The First Lord Forester, and mother of the present. [290]

In the gallery is the portrait of a lady who was the heroine of a sad but interesting history. It is that of Mary, the daughter of Sir William Forester, of Dothill, near Wellington, by Lady Mary Cecil, who was daughter of the Earl of Salisbury, by the daughter of the 8th Earl of Rutland.

When fourteen or fifteen years of age, Mary Forester was solemnly betrothed to Sir George Downing, he being about the age of eighteen years. After the ceremony, he was sent to travel on the Continent, but before leaving, he exacted a promise from his betrothed, that should Queen Anne ask her to become one of her maids of honour, she would decline. Sir William Forester holding office about the Court, and the Queen liking to surround herself with young ladies of

good personal appearance, Mary Forester was selected by her Majesty for this purpose, and regardless of her promise, she accepted the offer.

On Sir George Downing's return from his travels, he, in consequence, refused to ratify the contract. Sir William Forester then sued for a divorce for his daughter, which was lost by two in the House of Lords.

[291] Sir George Downing died young, and bequeathed his property to found the College in Cambridge bearing his name. Mary Forester, Lady Downing, called "pretty mistress Mary Forester," entered into no further marriage, and lived a pious, exemplary life. Some of her prayers are transcribed in a book at Willey. Her portrait in widow's mourning, of the time of Queen Anne, represents her without a wedding ring.

Among the curiosities at Willey is a manuscript music book of the time of Queen Elizabeth, belonging to the Welds of Willey, in which there are six lines instead of five, neither time or key denoted, and the letters A.B.C. &c. placed over the notes. The old names given to the tunes are very quaint; "The Pavone," "My Ladye Mildemay's Delighte," and the "Galliard," which last recalls to mind the incident of the Spanish Ambassador of the day, who while waiting for an audience, beheld her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, dancing the Galliard, and accompanying herself on a kit, or small fiddle.

Willey Hall, like many others built at the latter end of the last and the beginning of the present centuries, was erected more for comfort and convenience than for architectural display. It has however a striking and elegant appearance. The principal front extends altogether upwards of three hundred feet; and is approached from the west or principal entrance by a portico, with handsome cupola, supported by lofty Corinthian pillars, the whole being greatly admired, alike for excellent workmanship and architectural display. It is built altogether of fine freestone.

[292] There is a spacious conservatory on the south side of the house; and the gardens and pleasure grounds are laid out with great taste. The mansion is beautifully situated upon rising ground, surrounded by fine sylvan scenery, whilst immediately below is a lake which adds considerably to the interest of the landscape.

An avenue leads to the Old Hall, and to Willey Church, to which we have previously alluded. It stands within the grounds already described, and is an ancient stone edifice in the Early English style: it has a tower, nave, aisle, small transept, chancel, three bells, clock, and monuments to the Weld and Forester families. It stands within the shadow of the Old Hall, and might from its appearance have formed the text of Gray's ivy-mantled tower, where

"The moping owl does to the moon complain;"

being covered with a luxuriant growth of this clinging evergreen to the very top. The register dates from the year 1644. The living is a rectory, with the perpetual curacy of Barrow annexed, of the joint yearly value of £200, with residence and twenty-nine acres of glebe land, in the gift of Lord Forester.

THE REV. MICHAEL PYE STEPHENS.

This gentleman, who was rector of Willey and Barrow in the time of the old Squire, and who is said to have been related to the Welds through the Slaneys, and who was therefore on familiar terms with the then owner of Willey, was a character so fitting in with the times in which he lived, and so entirely different from anything belonging to the present, in this country at least, that it would be inexcusable not to endeavour to sketch his portrait. He was not one of those of puritan type—

'Who spit their puny spite on harmless recreation.'

[293] On the contrary he held that amusements calculated to strengthen the frame and improve the health, if fitting for a gentleman, were not unfitting for a clergyman, and he was often welcomed by neighbouring squires in the field, as "Hark in! Hark in! Hark! Yoi over boys!" sounded merrily on the morning air. And as he sat mounted on the Squire's thorough-bred, it would have been difficult to have detected anything of the divine. Fond of field sports, he frequently associated with his neighbours in their pastimes and amusements; he had no objection either to take a long pipe between his lips, and moisten his own clay from a pewter tankard, round a clean-scoured table in a road-side inn, and was of importance in his own immediate neighbourhood, as a man naturally would be who received letters from the Squire daily, when the former was away attending to his parliamentary duties in London. He had a tolerable legal knowledge, which was useful to him on the bench, where he sat as Justice of the Peace, and he knew something of

medicine, which gave him the title of Dr. Stephens, from the fact that he often administered medicine to his parishioners – a service gratefully acknowledged by them. As we have said, he was in the commission of the peace; and so completely did the characters combine – so perfectly did law and divinity dovetail into each other – that he might have been taken as a personification of either.

“Mild were his doctrines, and not one discourse
But gained in softness what it lost in force.”

Without stinginess he partook of the good things heaven to man supplies; and his face shone with good humour. As a justice of peace he was no regarder of persons, providing they equally brought grist to his mill; having no objection to litigants smoothing the way to a decision by presents, such as a piece of pork, a pork pie, or a dish of fish. Once or twice, however, he found the fish to have been caught the previous night out of his own pond. Next to a weakness for fish was one for knee-breeches and top boots, which in the course of much riding required frequent renewal; and, 'tis said, that seated in the judicial chair, he has had the satisfaction of seeing a pair of new chalked tops projecting alike from plaintiff's and defendant's pockets. In which case, with spectacles raised and head thrown back, as though to look above the petty details of the plaint, after sundry hums and haws, with inquiries after the crops between, and each one telling some news about his neighbour, he would find the evidence on both sides equally balanced, and suggest a compromise! A good tale is told of the justice wanting a hare for a friend, and employing a notorious poacher to procure one. The man brought it in a bag. “You've brought a hare then?” “I have Mr. Stephens, and a fine one too,” replied the other, as he turned it out, puss flying round the room, and over the table amongst the papers like a mad thing. “Kill her! kill her!” shouted Stephens. “No, by G—,” replied the poacher, who knew that by doing so he would bring himself within the law, “you kill her; I've had enough trouble to catch her.” After two or three runs the justice succeeded in hitting her on the head with a ruler, and thus brought himself within the power of the poacher.

A well known butcher at Broseley having bought some sheep at Wenlock managed to pick up an additional one at Barrow, in driving them home. He managed to kill this one at once, but the owner was too sharp for him; and the butcher seeing him coming, and knowing he was in for it, without awaiting his arrival, made off as fast as he could to Stephens, to get him to “pull him through.” He had made a mistake, he said, and unintentionally taken up a neighbour's sheep with his own and killed it; and with promises of what he would do, both in favour of the justice and in amendment of his own conduct, he obtained the promise of Stephens to do what he could for him. The interview was no sooner over than the indignant farmer arrived, breathless, and wiping the perspiration from his brow. Stephens heard patiently what he had to say, and at once proceeded to extenuate the circumstances. “It was clearly a mistake; the man had a family, and it would be an awful thing for him, the butcher, to obtain a conviction and get the man hung; he would have it on his mind all the days of his life, which would be worse than the loss of his sheep, or indeed twenty sheep.” The result was the former consented to forego the prosecution.

On another occasion two butchers quarrelled and broke the peace. One went to Stephens to ask him to “pull him through,” and promised as good a leg of mutton as he ever put a knife into. The wife of No. 1. butcher let this out, and No.2. butcher immediately went and promised two legs. This one got the best of it; and the other remonstrated, and reminded Stephens of his promise. Ah, said he, but the other promised two legs!

He was sometimes out of temper, and his friends were wont to joke him on the following domestic little incident:— his services were suddenly in demand on one occasion when, a full clerical costume being required, he found his bands not ready, and he set to work to iron them himself. He was going on swimmingly as he thought, and had only left the iron to go to the bottom of the stairs, with a “D—n you, madam,” to his wife, who had not yet come down; “d—n you, I can do without you,” when, on returning, he found his bands scorched and discoloured. A fox-hunter's christening in which he played a part was in character both with the times and with the man. Being the guest of Squire Boycott, who hunted the Shifnal country with his own hounds, and one of a very jovial company that had assembled, it was determined to take advantage of the parson's presence to christen a recent arrival in the Squire's family. The thing was soon settled, and Stephens, taking the child in his arms, in due form asked the name, which was immediately given, as Foxhunting Moll! With this name she grew up and as Foxhunting Moll Boycott she signed all legal documents, and married Squire Harries, of Cruckton.

Stephens in his night shirt is a tale told us by a clergyman, too good to lose. He had dined at Willey, and having had his share of the good things provided, retired to rest, whilst Squire Forester and a few choice spirits continued to enjoy themselves. Stephens, waking out of his first sleep, and fancying he should like another dip into the venison pasty, groped his way to the larder, and in the dark knocked down the dish, which brought out the Squire, who perceiving the situation turned the key, and going back to his company, insisted upon having a country dance. [297] Those who had retired to rest were called up; and when all had formed sides in the Hall the Squire unkenelled his fox, and Stephens had to run the gauntlet, between ladies and gentlemen, amid an indescribable scene of merriment and confusion, in his shirt!

The Rev. William Bates who succeeded Mr. Stephens as rector of Willey and Barrow, also succeeded him as a magistrate.

BARROW.

Tumuli occur in various places in Shropshire, but no tumulus or barrow that we know of has been found here to account for the name of this large but thinly peopled parish. It has been thought however that the name of the ancient family *Do Barewe*, which occurs occasionally in old Shropshire records, might originally have been derived from the proximity of the residence to some primitive burying place or places of cremation on the high ground where the church now stands.

The church itself is a very ancient structure, and appears to have been under the jurisdiction of the Priors of the Abbey of Wenlock. Bishop Charlton mentions it as subject to the church of Holy Trinity Wenlock; whilst another statement is that its tithes went towards the sustenance of the monks of the Priory of St. Milburgh. One of the earliest Rectors known was John De [298] Wicumbe, who was presented by the Prior Jan. 17th, 1277. In 1331 too, Brother Guychord, Prior of Wenlock, whether legally or illegally, by a process of his Court made over, of course for a consideration, to Sir Hamo Corn all lands and tenements pertaining to the Chapel of Barewe, in that *Vill*, and also in Posenhall, on condition that he should serve the Chapel by one Priest and a Clerk; that he should build a new grange in the Rectory close to the chapel, at the same time maintaining all other buildings there and at Posenal in good repair. Hamo was to have *Housbote* and *Haybote* from the Prior's wood-warden, and fire-wood, when resident. He was to pay the Prior a rent of twelve Capons at Easter.

The good Prior appears to have had an eye to the festival which terminated the solemn and penitential hours of Passion Week, and to have made provision for his monks to celebrate the returning season of rejoicing, in honour of the completion of the great gospel scheme, when the whole church was wont to burst forth in one triumphant strain, a festival of which ours is but a form and shadow.

Land in Barrow at that time let at a very different figure to that at which its noble owner and his enterprising and able agent, himself a very advanced cultivator of the soil, let it at the present day, namely 3d. per acre! Dukes in his antiquities of Shropshire says that Maud, third daughter of Roger de Somery, Baron of Dudley, who became the wife of Henry de Erdington, had for her purparty the manor of Barrowe, *terrar et redditus Wadehusis*. He adds that Stephen Hadwoll, [299] Esq., 29th Eliz. sold twenty acres of wood here to Anthony Stoughton; also that, 11th James, the king gave leave to Sir Thomas Whorwood, Knt. to sell the manor of Barrow to Walter Acton, Esq. It was subsequently sold to, or exchanged with; the owners of Willey, of which estate it now forms part.

The church is a quaint and ancient structure dedicated to St. Giles, the patron saint of cripples. It consists of nave and chancel, with a turret, containing two bells. Mr. Eyton says that Lord Forester's *Register* contains a curious *memorandum* of improvements made by Roland Bruge, Prior of Wenlock, in and after the year 1521; in which the prior states that he "made the chancel of Barrow"; but the idea of a total reconstruction at that time Mr. Eyton considers at variance with existing appearances.

It was restored about 1851, through the exertions of the Hon. and Rev. G. T. O. Bridgman, who was then incumbent, when a full size painting of a knight on horseback, and several others, were discovered under the numerous thick coatings of plaster. The church consists of a nave, small transept, porch, chancel, and turret with 2 bells; it contains an antique font with a capacious basin. There is a curious but characteristic letter relating to the chancel of this church by a former patron, George Forester, Esq., which we copied from the original in our "Old Sports and

Sportsmen.” It was addressed to his agent, Mr. Pritchard, father of George and John Pritchard, Esquires, and was as follows:

“Dear Sir,—

“You must remember Parson Jones has oft been talking to me about the pews put up, [300] unfairly, I think, in the chancel of Barrow church. The whole of the chancel is mine as patron, and I am always obliged to do all the repairs to it, whenever wanted. There is a little small pew in it of very ancient date, besides these other two; and this, I suppose, it is intended to thrust poor me, the patron, into; humble and meek, and deprived of every comfort on my own spot, the chancel. The parson, you know, has been saucy on the occasion, as you know all black Toms are, and therefore I’ll now know my power from Mr. Mytton, and set the matter straight somehow or other. I can safely swear at this minute a dozen people of this parish (crowd as they will) can’t receive, the Sacrament together, and therefore, instead of there being pews of any kind therein, there ought to be none at all, but a free unencumbered chancel at this hour. Rather than be as it is, I’ll be at the expense of pulling the present chancel down, rebuilding and enlarging it, so as to make all convenient and clever, before I’ll suffer these encroachments attended with every insult upon earth. Surely upon a representation to the bishop that the present chancel is much too small, and that the patron, at his own expense, wishes to enlarge it, I cannot think but it will be comply’d with. If this is not Mr. Mytton’s opinion as the best way, what is? and how am I to manage these encroaches?

“Yours ever,

“_____

“P.S.— If the old chancel is taken down, I’ll take care that no pew shall stand in the new one. Mr. Mytton will properly turn this in his mind, and I’ll then face the old kit of them boldly. The old pew I spoke of, besides the other two in the chancel (mean and dirty as it is to a degree), yet the parson wants to let, if he does not do so now, to any person that comes to church, no matter who, so long as he gets the cash. It’s so small no one can sit with bended knees in it; and, in short, the whole chancel is not more than one-half as big as the little room I am now seated in; which must apparently show you, and on your representation, Mr. Mytton like wise, how much too small it must be for so large a parish as Barrow, and with the addition of three pews—one very large indeed; the next to hold two or three people abreast, and the latter about three sideways, always standing, and totally unable to kneel in the least comfort.” [301]

We have already said something of Barrow as the burial place of Tow Moody, who lies on the south side of the church. The grave is covered by a simple plain stone slab, which is simply inscribed with the words “Tom Moody, died 19th of November, 1796.” It is two miles south-west from Broseley, and two miles east from Much Wenlock. Old Sportsmen visiting at Willey or coming to Wenlock by rail to inspect the Abbey, often extend their journey to Barrow to see Moody’s grave.

We believe, there is no public-house or beer-shop now in this or the adjoining parish of Willey.

CAUGHLEY.

It was at Caughley in Barrow parish where the first Salopian China Works were established, a little more than a century ago. A small pottery was, first established here by Mr. Browne, of Caughley Hall, and afterwards carried on by Mr. Gallimore, a relative of his. The daughter of the latter named, who was also a niece to Mr. Brown, married Mr. Thomas Turner, son of Dr. Richard Turner, rector of Cumberton, vicar of Elmly Castle, and chaplain to the Countess of Wigtown. Mr. Turner had gained some experience at the Worcester china works: he was too a good chemist, an excellent draughtsman, and had made himself acquainted with the various processes connected with the manufacture of porcelain. He succeeded his father-in-law, Mr. Gallimore, in 1772, and greatly improved the Caughley productions. Previously, although they had obtained considerable excellence, they were not far removed from earthenware. Mr. Turner also enlarged the works; and having visited France he brought over skilled workmen, one of whom, being an architect, designed and erected for Mr. Turner an elegant residence, which was christened Caughley Place. In 1780 Mr. Turner introduced the famous “Willow Pattern,” and the Broseley Blue Dragon” pattern, which have continued in demand to the present time. There is also a very beautifully designed tea-cup and saucer, small, and without handle, fluted, called after the name of Broseley. Among famous pieces preserved is a mug, made for Francis Benbow, a barge-owner. It contains the name in front, surmounted by an anchor. It is further decorated with blue and gold flowers, and has underneath the name the date, 1776; it is now in the possession of [302]

Mr. Daniel Benbow, of Ironbridge. Another is a curious puzzle jug, made for Mr. John Geary, clerk of Broseley church, who kept the "Dog," a name now changed to the "Talbot." In the centre, within a circle is the name and date, thus:-

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"John Geary
Cleak (*sic*) of the Old Church
Brosley
1789."

On the bottom is written in blue, "Mathew th v & 16." It is in possession of the Thursfield family, Bridgnorth

Engraving and transfer printing were carried on at, these works in a very efficient manner very early in the history of the art; and were as much as possible kept secrets, so much so that engravers and printers were locked up, and kept apart from the rest of the workmen. Some of the copper plates are still at Coalport; one we have before us, a Chinese subject, is numbered 1, and has Mr. Turner's initials, "T.T.," and the "S" for Salopian. Professor Jewitt, in his excellent work on the "Ceramic Art of Great Britain," gives specimens of some admirable original engravings, from Caughley and Coalport, by Robert Hancock, who engraved for Caughley, as well as for Worcester; as also did Richard Holdship, both of whose works are now much sought after and highly prized. Speaking of some of the engravings of the former, transferred on to Chinese porcelain, Mr. Jewitt says: "the copper plate itself from which these foreign china specimens as well as many of the choicest known examples of Worcester china have been printed I had the good fortune myself to discover a few years ago at Coalport. It bears the engraver's name - R.

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Hancock, fecit. It had been engraved for Mr. Turner, and had no doubt been removed from Caughley to Coalport with a number of others when Mr. Rose took the Caughley works. Another engraver at Caughley was Edward Dyas, grandfather of Mr. W. and great grandfather of Messrs. A. B. and C. Dyas, of Madeley. Mr. Jewitt says he was apprenticed there about the year 1768, and continued at the works till his death, at the ripe age of eighty two." This is evidently a mistake, as the works were pulled down and entirely disappeared long before Mr. Dyas arrived at his 82nd year. The fact is Mr. Dyas, who was a very clever fellow, was drafted off with other able artists to Coalport. He lived at Madeley, where he became parish clerk, and engraved on wood some capital illustrations for a book printed there, entitled "Alexander's Expedition down the Hydaspes and the Indus to the Indian Ocean"; a work, through the kindness of W. H. Anstice, Esq., now in the library of the Anstice Memorial Institute. Fuller particulars of this book - the first printed, we presume, in Madeley - were given in *The Salopian and West Midland Magazine* for March 1875. The compositor was a young woman, Miss Edmunds, whose father carried on printing in Madeley, in a house now called the "Royal Exchange." It was written by Dr. Beddoes, of Shifnal, who tells us in the preface that the only assistance Mr. Dyas had in wood engraving was from Berwick's masterly productions. This was in 1795. Afterwards Mr. Dyas did a good deal of engraving for Houlston, the publisher, then of Wellington.

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But Mr. Dyas achieved greater fame than this; his name throughout the printing world is associated with a most important discovery - that of Printers' Rollers; a discovery by which he should have made his fortune, but which he innocently made known to one of Houlston's printers, and it spread through Europe.

We believe that Mr. John Walton was also an engraver here; as was also Mr. Minton, founder of the great house of Minton at Stoke, and father of the late Herbert Minton, Esq. Among the painters and gilders there, were John Parker, Thomas Fennell, Henry Boden, who were flower painters; Messrs. Muss and Silk, who painted landscapes and figures; and who afterwards gained considerable celebrity as miniature painters in enamel on copper. Martin Randall also excelled as a painter of birds; whilst among other decorators were his two brothers, and Marsh, Rutland, E. Nevett, and E. Jones. There was also Adams, and Dontil, painters; and De Vivy and Stephan, the latter of whom was a German, who were modellers.

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Caughley was admirably situated for the manufacture of china, from the fact that coal lay about twenty feet from the surface, and clay for seggers at a less depth even; at the same time there was a navigable river with barges passing up and down, then at all hours of the day, to bring other materials, or to convey goods to distant towns and cities. Much of the ware in 1788, and also at a later period, was conveyed by barges to Worcester to be decorated by Mr. Robert Chamberlain, when he first commenced business, and by Mr. Grainger, at their respective works. One of the distinguishing marks of Caughley china was the well-known C, which was used in a variety of ways, sometimes being swelled out in the centre to form a crescent, or half moon.

Another distinctive mark was the letter S, which was introduced in various ways to signify Salopian.

The first blue printing table service produced in England is said to have been made at the Caughley works for Thomas Whitmore, Esq., of Apley Park; the pattern was called *Nankin*, and was similar to the Broseley tea service of 1782.

About the year 1798 Mr. John Rose, who was a clerk to Mr. Turner, commenced the Coalport works, which so injured these at Caughley that Mr. Turner retired, and they were carried on by Messrs. Rose and Co, in connection with those at Coalport. Ultimately both men and materials were taken to Coalport, and the Caughley works ceased to exist, and the buildings were finally destroyed in 1821. Caughley Hall too has been taken down. Mr. Turner was a County Magistrate, and a freeman of the Borough of Bridgnorth and Wenlock, of which latter borough he was chosen bailiff in 1784, 1789, 1796, 1801, and again in 1803. He was also chairman of a Court of Equity for three counties, which court he was mainly instrumental in establishing. He died at Caughley, in 1809, and was buried at Barrow. After his death the Commissioners of Oldbury Court presented his widow with a memorial silver cup of large size, having on one side the Turner arms, and on the other an appropriate inscription. This and many other relics of the family are in the possession of his lineal representative Mr. Hubert Smith, whose mother was a daughter of Mr. Turner, and who was also buried in the family vault at Barrow.

BENTHALL.

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The Manor, nearly co-extensive with the parish, of Benthall (anciently written Benethall) was originally part of the parish of Much Wenlock. The Hall was built by William Benthall in 1535, on the site of the Manor House mentioned as early as 1276. The carvings in the entrance-hall, drawing-room, and a smaller sitting-room, display the arms of Benthall, impaling those of Agnes, daughter of Thomas Cassey, of Whitefield, and Cassey Compton, in Gloucestershire, the wife of Lawrence Benthall, whom we shall presently mention. The modern dining-room was erected by Thomas Harries, Esq., the late proprietor, after a partial destruction by fire, in 1818, and his arms are carved in the smaller sitting-room below those of Benthall. Edmund de Benethall, the grandfather of William, was, next to the Prior, the fourth person admitted as a burgess of the Borough of Wenlock, on the grant of the incorporating Charter 8th Edward IV., and the son, grandson, and great-grandson of the same William served the office of Bailiff in the years 1554, 1593, and 1637 respectively. Of these the last was Lawrence, whose son, Cassey, was a colonel in the Royalist army, and was killed at Stow-in-the-Wold, in 1643. His nephew Richard, who died in 1720, devised the Benthall estate, Posenall, and lands in Wyke, Atterley, and Broseley, to his first consin Elizabeth, a grand-daughter of Lawrence Benthall, and daughter of Ralph Browne,* of Caughley, and Katharine his wife.

The family of Benthall is extinct in this county, but is represented in Devon and Dorset by a younger branch, who have from time to time been registered at the Herald's College, and are thereby deduced from this and other old families of Shropshire, and of these they quarter the arms of Willey, Dudmaston, and Woolrich with their own,* and they claim the privileges of kindred to the founders of Clare and Pembroke Colleges, Cambridge. Some of the Benthall title deeds, of which notes have been preserved by the Herald visiting the county 12th Queen Elizabeth, were written in the Saxon language. Anfred de Benethall [the third in the succession shown by the Heralds] is mentioned by Mr. Eyton as attending the Viceroy's Court at Castle Holgate about A.D. 1115, and his descendants for six generations were at the same time mesne lords of Wichcote and of Benthall. Philip de Benethall (the fifth in descent from Anfred), sat at the Inquisition, A.D. 1255, as a juror for the liberty of Wenlock, and is described as lord of the vill of Benethall, which he held of the Prior of Wenlock, and as doing suit to the Prior's Court by afforciamment, whereas till the time of Richard I. his ancestors did suit to the hundred of Munslow. He died some time between 1274 and 1283, leaving his three daughters his coheiresses, of whom Margery (probably the eldest) married John Burnell, who acquired this lordship, and in course of time was called de Benethall. Bishop Burnell, Chancellor to King Edward I., held three bovates

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* The particulars which we give as to the tenure of the estate at this and subsequent dates are derived from authentic legal documents, and are confirmed by the monument to Ralph Browne and Katharine his wife in Benthall Church

* Benthall coat.—Or a lion ramp, double queued az ducally crowned gu. crest, on a ducal coronat, a leopard statant arg. spotted sa. We find the name de Benethall borne also by Philip. Henry, and Hamo, sons of John Burnell and Margery, co-heiress of Philip do Benethall.

in Benthall at his death in 1292; and his nephew and heir Philip Burnell made some addition by purchase.

[309] This Philip died in 1294, and his son Edward in 1315. The former is said to have held by service of suit to the Court of John Burnell, who died in 1317, and left Philip, his heir, and Henry, who became Abbot of Buildwas, and another son named Hamo, to whom his brother the Abbot gave an office in the Abbey, with a salary and maintenance. Subsequently the family of Benthalls are again mentioned as of Benthall, and appear to have held on the old tenure of 1255 for several generations. Philip Benthall, Esq., was buried in the nave of Benthall Church in 1713. It was the earlier Philip to whom, as Lord of Benthall in 1250, the Monks of Buildwas were indebted for their road over Benthall Edge for the carriage of their stone and coals; so that the value of this fuel having been appreciated by the Monks about the middle of the thirteenth century it does not seem unlikely that the first Philip may have worked the mines on his own account.

At any rate these collieries appear to have been so fully developed about the year 1645 as to have been the means of an important supply of coals to Bridgnorth, Worcester, and other towns along the course of the Severn. The proprietor at that time was Lawrence Benthall, who was one of the commissioners appointed to raise money for Prince Rupert's forces. This seems to have drawn down upon him the displeasure of the Parliamentarians, who took possession, planted a garrison there, cut down the wheat, destroyed the barns and stables, and imposed a sequestration fine of £290. The Parliamentary account, under date of December 10th, is as follows:—

[310] “By letters cut of Shropshire, we have this day had a full relation of the affairs (as they stand) between our forces and the enemy. Since my last, we have planted a Garrison at Benthall, to prevent the enemy from gathering contributions in their country, and to stop coles from coming thither, and to Worcester, for at this place the coles that supplied those places are digged. This Garrison doth much annoy the enemy, and at our first coming to fortify here, the enemy sent fourth severall parties from Worcester, Ludlow, and Bridgnorth, who joyned together with intent to frustrate our design here, and to that end made an attempt against us in the night, or about break of day in the morning, but were so gallantly received, that it is conceived they will not be hasty to come again, for we slew divers of them, and after about an houres fight forced them to retire to Bridgnorth, from whence they came; in which Captain Kettleby deserves much commendation. After this they threatened to put all our men to the sword, that they take carrying cole up Severn to Shrewsbury (which sometimes are endangered by the Enemies' Garrison at High Archell), but at the last, Sir Lewis Kirke, Governor of Bridgnorth, sent a drummer to this effect, viz:— That if we would permit, and suffer a free trade of coles to come to Bridgnorth from Worcester, they would not interrupt our passage to Shrewsbury; unto which message answer was returned to this effect:— That if they would pay the country for those they had already received, and would give us free passage with the cole down Severn by Worcester, to Gloucester and Teuxbury, they should have coles hereafter at the rates as formerly; but what further effect this treaty will have as yet we know not.”

A Diary or extract journal of both Houses, of December, 1645, says:— “We hear it confirmed by advised letters that Worcester, Bridgnorth, Ludlow, and High Archell, are in great distresse this winter season for want of coles, the Shrewsbury forces having seized upon the Coleries at Benthall, and about Sturbridge, and “planted two strong Garrisons not farre from High Archell, to secure the Country from the invasion of enemies.”

[311] From the above account it appears that this military occupation did not take place till towards Dec., 1645;* and it would seem, from the evidence set forth at p. 316, that the garrison had ceased

* The coal mines, which were the Object of this occupation, lay near the surface, and have become exhausted. About the year 1784 the Earl of Dundonald erected at this place and at Jackfield a number of kilns for the purpose of extracting tar from coal.

We have mentioned the Benthall ironworks at page 124, and the clay works at 134 and subsequent pages.

Potteries were established here at an early period. The articles manufactured were of the simplest kind. We have before us an ancient mug made at Pitchyard (or Pittsyard) pottery, and a drawing of another made at Haybrook, the latter of more elegant shape than the former. The Haybrook pottery was called the Mug-house, from the number of drinking mugs manufactured there, and inns on the river side, where these drinking cups were kept for the use of the bargemen who drew the vessels, were called Mug-houses. Tots and mugs were made of the same kind of clay; the former were used by men who drank in company, hence the word “totty,” signifying slightly tipsy.

In a separate publication, entitled “Clay Industries,” we have mentioned the discovery of salt glaze in 1690, and that it was soon utilized in the potteries here; old segars, in which the pottery was burnt, being often found forming walls of cottage gardens in Benthall and Broseley Wood. As we have stated at p. 134. Mr. John Thursfield took the Benthall pottery in 1729, and after his death his eldest son John had these works, as well as some at Jackfield, but the pottery at Benthall was not so finely glazed, or highly decorated, as that at Jackfield. A brother-in-law of John Thursfield, named Pierce, then carried on the works as Pierce and Co.

Three quarters of century ago the Haybrook works were carried on by Messrs. Bell and Lloyd, and afterwards in succession by Mr. John Lloyd and his nephew Mr. E. Bathurst, the latter of whom was succeeded by his son Mr. H. M. Bathurst, who disposed of

to be there, some time before the 7th May, 1649. In Sept., 1651, King Charles II., in flight from the field of Worcester, attended only by Richard Penderel, concealed himself at Madeley, in hopes of crossing the Severn by the Benthall ferry, and seeking safety in Wales; but finding that the ferry boat was in possession of the enemy, he altered his plan, and returned to Boscobel. Thomas, one of the brothers Penderel, had been in Col. Benthall's regiment at Stow. Lawrence Benthall took an active part in the king's side from the outset of the war, and was one of a list of 32 gentlemen of Shropshire, headed by the Sheriff, who in Nov., 1642 (shortly after the arrival of King Charles I. at Shrewsbury with his army), entered into a mutual undertaking to raise a troop of dragoons for the Royal Service. He died in 1652, leaving two sons surviving him, viz., Philip, whose burial in 1713 we have mentioned, and Edward, who died A.D. 1679, leaving an only child Katherine, married to Ralph Brown, of Caughley, who was High Sheriff A.D. 1667.

The estates passed from Lawrence to his eldest son Philip, and from Philip to his son Richard, [312] who, as we have stated, died in 1720, leaving them by will to his first cousin, viz., Elizabeth Brown, one of the daughters of Ralph Brown and his wife Katherine, daughter of Edward Benthall. The will, however, was disputed in Chancery by other members of the Benthall family, and from that Court there was an appeal to the House of Lords, which was decided in 1743-4 in favor of John Brown, Esq, a brother of Elizabeth, who had died pending the litigation, having devised the estates to him, and he dying in 1746, they passed to his brother Ralph Brown. On the death of Ralph's widow, Ann, a daughter of a Mr. Turner, they passed to her relative, Mr. Francis Turner Blythe, and from him Benthall passed to his daughter Lucia Blythe, who married the Rev. Edward Harries, of Cruckton, (see p. 89), and then to her son Thomas Harries.

THE CHURCH is adjacent to the Manor House, and is dedicated to St. Bartholomew; it was re- [313] built A.D. 1667, on the site of what was formerly the Manor Chapel. That chapel was standing in 1276; (its early history we have given at p. 27). It was then, and for a long time afterwards, a mere appendage to the house, the Prior and the Vicar of the parent parish (Wenlock) successively failing to provide services; and it was not until the 16th century that the township was constituted a perpetual curacy in the gift of the vicar of Wenlock. No mention is made of Benthall as a district parish till 1590. From 1638 baptisms and weddings were solemnised in the Chapel (as it was still called even after it had been re-built); but the first burial took place in 1702.*

On the north side of the altar is an ornamental monument to the memory of Ralph Brown and Katharine his wife, and on the floor are inscriptions recording the burials of some of their children (including Edward, the eldest son, who was bailiff of Wenlock in 1713 and 1720, and died in 1740, and whose wife was also buried here, and his elder sister Elizabeth, who died in 1738, and Ralph, whose widow Ann bequeathed £200 stock for the poor of the parish) and the burials of Philip and Richard Benthall. The hatchment of Richard Benthall and that of one of the family of Brown are still suspended in the church.†. On the outside of the chapel against the south wall of the chancel is a good mural monument in memory of Ralph Littlehales, of Wyke, Gent., [314] who died in 1742, aged 61. In the churchyard there are a vault, and tombstone to the memory of Sir Edward Charlton, to repair and maintain which his brother-in-law Edward Brown bequeathed £200; the surplus income to be distributed among the poor.

THE IRON BRIDGE which spans the Severn, connecting this parish with that of Madeley, was erected at the Coalbrookdale Works, AD. 1779, at time point where the ferry-boat plied in olden time, and is remarkable as being the first bridge constructed of iron in England. Its span is 100 feet, and height 40 feet, and the road-way 24 feet broad. At the time of its erection it was treated in local publications as one of the wonders of the world, amid a series of beautiful engravings, representing from different points this bridge and the picturesque scenery of the Severn between Benthall Edge and Lincoln Hill, were published about that time by Messrs. Boydell; and a copper half-penny token in commemoration was struck in 1792. (We have referred to this subject in earlier pages of this work).

A sale of the parish and manor of Benthall to the late Lord Forester was effected by Thomas Harries, Esq., in 1842; his lordship's competitor at time auction being the agent of a member of

them to Mr. Allen, and the manufactory now comprises ornamental goods in terracotta, in addition to its old one of red and yellow ware.

The pipe works of Edwin Southorn, mentioned at p. 159, as carried on in this parish, have changed hands since that page was printed, and are now in the possession of Mr. W. Southorn.

* Previously to this date the family of Benthall were interred in St. Clement's chapel in the Parish church of Much Wenlock. Edward, father-in-law of Ralph Brown, was buried there June 21st, 1679.

† This monument and the hatchments were repaired by Francis Benthall, Esq., of Buckfast Abbey, Devon, about 35 years ago.

[315] the Devonshire family of Benthall, then resident in India. At that time the place was, and still is, associated with the brother of the proprietor, a gentleman who had long resided among us, Francis Blithe Harries of Benthall Hall, whose greyhounds were frequently in request in coursing. He married in 1802 Emma Gertrude, daughter of E. Jenkins, Esq., of Charlton Hill. Thomas Harries of Cruckton died without issue, and the Benthall branch of the family removed there and sold Benthall, which like Broseley, Tickwood, Linley, Roughton, Caughley, the Tuckies, and other estates on which ancient families resided for many generations, was added to the great estate of the Foresters of Willey.

Benthall Hall is in the occupation of George Maw, Esq., F.L.S., F.G.S., F.S.A., etc., who has greatly improved the grounds, and who has stocked the gardens with rare and valuable botanical specimens, many of them the fruit of his travels in various parts of the world.

Benthall is one of the twelve parishes which constitute the Madeley Union. The old Poor House which stood near the Main or Mine Spout has on it sixteen hundred and something, but we forget the exact date. We well remember paupers *farmed* there, and a rebellion against the man who *farmed* them, Francis Hartshorne, a relative of ours, whose windows they smashed, under the impression that they were not fairly treated.

As previously remarked in the old coaching days travellers had to climb Benthall Bank, (Bonk, as natives called it), and an extra pair of horses had to be added to the team. Few remained on the vehicle as it descended, although some did so, and not a few paid the penalty of their temerity by being upset, particularly where the ginney rails crossed the road from the Benthall furnaces and foundry.

[316] The road from Ironbridge to the top of the Dunge Bank, called the New Road, was made during a period of great depression, in order to find work for men who were starving, and the first stage coach ran along it Nov. 18th, 1828.

At the eastern extremity of this parish is Benthall Edge, so well known for the magnificent views it affords along the valley of the Severn, in the direction of Shrewsbury. These limestone rocks formerly supplied a wide district with lime and limestone. Lead was formerly extensively smelted at the foot of the hill; and in later years, when traffic on the river was more extensive than at present, barges were built near the same place. The famous white brick works of the Messrs. Burton are situated here.

STEALING BAGS AT BENTHALL IN 1649

[317] “The re-examination of Katheryn Lyster, the wife of Humphrey Lyster, late of Broseley in the county of Salop, collier, taken the seventh day of May, Anno Din: 1649, before Andrew Langley, gent: Bayliffe, and Audley Bawdley, gent two of the Justices of ye Peace of ye town and lib’tes, aforesaid. Beinge examined howe she came to the Baggs found in her husband’s house, confesseth she had one of them from Benthall when the Garrison was there, wh. she bought of a soldier there about three years since for vi^d and an other her husband brought wh. him from Brystall xii months synce; but whether he bought it there or howe he came to it she knoweth not, neither did she ask him, and denyeth she had any Bagg in her house at the tyme of the Constables search thereof or any Bagg at all of John Ashwood’s of Madley, or any Bagg then before exprest.

Andrew Langley, Ball.

Katherin Lyster.

Audley Bowdler.”

“The Re-examination of Amy Cadman, wife of Morise Cadman, of Broseley, taken before the said Bayliffe and Justice.

The Examt. confesseth that site bought a strike and halfe of mislinge corne about a fortnight synce of a strainger at her house doore who tould her he lived in Stafford Shire, but she did not inquier of his name, but confesseth she bought it in a Bagg wh. John Ashwood of Madley the yonger claymeth to be his, and that she was to pay for the corne and bagg ffive shillings, wh. she paid the man when noe one was present, neither dyd any see the bargayne made. Being examined how she came to the sevall Baggs found in her house sayth three of them were her owne wh. she hath had above fower yeares, one her husband brought up Seaverne ye last yeare, but how he came to it she knoweth not; another she bought at her house she knoweth not howe longe agoe of she knoweth not who at her owne house and paid five pence. And for the Sayle found in her house she saith her husband and Humfrey Lyster found it hid in a bush wh. a rope and bottell, all which they brought home to Humfrey Lyster’s house and divided the Sayle then, and since they have used the bottell in comon betwixt the two houses.

Andrew Langley,. Ball.
Audley Bowdler.

Sigd,
XX
Anye Cadman,”

DISPUTE ABOUT A BARGE.

[318]

“Wenlock. The Examynon oft Andrewe Lewes, of the psh. of Broseley, Trowman, Baker, ye seventh day oft September, 1646, before Francis Adams and John Huxley, two oft the Kinge Ma’tys. Justices oft the Peace for the towne and lib’ties of Wenlock aforesd.

The said Andrew Lewes sayth that upon Saturday last was fortnight there was speches betwixt him and William Beard at William Okes house, concerninge a barge wh. this Examts. brother had sold the said Beard, and this Examts. wished the sd. Beard then to goe about his busyness for that he would have nothings to doe wh. him, wh. was abouts 4 or 5 oft the clock. And then this Examts. haveinge spent but one penny in the sd. Oakes house went home to his owne house. And abouts sixe oft the clock the sd. Wm. Beard came to this Examts. house to looke whether he should have the sd. barge, and this Examt. answered him then he did not buy nor sell wh. him, and thereupon ye sd. Beard went out oft the howse to one Edward Aberies house and there contynewed drynkeynge and taking 6 penny worth oft tobaccoii abouts half an hewer, and afterwards returned to this Examts. house and said to this Examts. mother that he would have the barge yft ever it came to Wosester, and that none but a, Rogue or thief would keepe it from him, and gave other bad wordes to this Examts. sd. mother. And thereupon this Examte. being then in the chamber and heareinge the sd. Beard at the sd. wordes came downe and wished the sd. Beard to goe out oft the house or to go to bedd, and pushinge the sd. Beard from him wh. his hand he offered to come upon him. And thereupon this Examte. tooke a *brosh* [brush] which was in the chymney and for his owne defence, and the sd. Wm. Beard comeinge upon him came upon the said brosh. And yft the sd. Beard were wounded wh. the sd. brosh this Examte. sayeth it was by means oft the sd. Beardes pr’senge thereupon, and not by the thrustinge oft this Examte. And this Examte further sayth that the sd. Beard had no weapon in his hand to this Exaluts. knowledg whiles he was in this Exaluts. sd. house at the sd. tyme. [319]

Andrew Lewes mk.

Capt. and som’d. cord:
Fr: Adams,
Joh: Huxley.

LINLEY.

Linley Church, or chapel rather, from its connection with Broseley, claims some notice. This annexation took place as far back as 1535; when. Edmund Michell is mentioned as rector of Broseley and Linley. The church was erected at a very much earlier period. In 1203 a Robber is reported to have taken sanctuary in the church after the commission of his crime.

It was probably a chapel attached by the Lords of Linley to their residence. The building has been renovated with judgment and skill, and the most curious and ancient architectural features have been preserved. Among these are Norman arches, and doorways, ever one of which is a. curiously sculptured device, supposed by some to represent the devil. There is also an elaborately sculptured Norman font in this church. [320]

On the side of Linley Brook are heaps of slag and some ironstone, which the late Mr. William Thursfield believed to have been the site of a very ancient iron making forge.²⁴ In a field on the high ground between Linley and Nordley are other similar remains, which the same gentleman supposed to be Roman. The situations are such as our early British ancestors or their Roman conquerors may have selected.

We may remark that the very ancient family of the Lacons who formerly held Willey, before it passed to the Welds by marriage, Kinlet, which became the property of the Childs in the same way, and West Coppice, also held Linley. Thomas Lacon died there in 1817, and in his will left a maintenance to his sister, Mrs. Atkinson, and her three daughters, one of whom married Joseph Yate, Esq., of Madeley. Ann is a Nun in France, and the third sister, Margaret, married John Eyre, Esq., of Clifden Castle, in the county of Galway, Ireland. The estate was left to Walter Lacon Atkinson, the son, a regular spendthrift, who was in debt £18,000 before he left school, a sum which the trustees, Messrs. Guest and Ash-wood, of Broseley, for some time declined to

pay. He sold the family estate in Lincolnshire, for £32,000, and the money was spent between 1817 and 1828. He had to pay £300 per annum to his wife by a marriage settlement, besides interest on a £2000 mortgage, which John Rose, Esq., had upon Linley, and other sums amounting altogether to £1900 per annum. As an instance of the way in which the money went, [321] it may be mentioned that he took an hotel at Brighton, where, between the 12th of March and the 12th of April in the same year, he ran up a bill to the extent of £500.

The property now belongs to Lord Forester; and is the residence of William Layton Lowndes, Esq., a gentleman who fills very many important offices in connection with the county, and who devotes very much of his time to the discharge of his public duties. Having had the advantage of a legal education he is enabled to render considerable service to his brother magistrates on the bench, both at Petty and Quarter Sessions.

In making a cutting in the turnpike road at Linley a few years ago, a singular bed of mica was found by the men employed in the work by Mr. William Jones, of the Dunge, to whom, as well as to the men, it proved a complete puzzle, and we were sent for to examine it. It was the washings of the waves which had disintegrated the Old Red Sandstone on which it lay.

There are pleasant spots in the parish of Linley, and between upper Linley and the Severn. We have said elsewhere, that to the lover of a quiet ramble, if he looks upon nature with an artist's eye – if he has any sympathy with the picturesque and beautiful, or delights in that which while giving rise to emotions of quiet pleasure calls forth reverence for the original, and awakens pleasing and suggestive thoughts, we commend Darley-dingle, and Linley-brook. The one has a rude and solemn aspect; the other a cultured, open, and cheerful one. The latter commences at the Wren's-nest, where, with a sprinkling of white-washed cottages, the brook before entering the [322] Severn expands into fish-ponds²⁵ that glisten like molten silver, amid luxuriant verdure, osier-beds and woods, that fringe their margin. From one of these crystal lakelets the playful waters rush over a weir-well fortified against the escape of the finny tribe-with sparkling brightness, and the roar is heard for a considerable distance along the valley. A bit of table-land close by offers a strong temptation to a picnic; and if the visitor is so inclined the cottagers, in what was formerly the Mill-house, will gladly assist him with such conveniences as their home affords. The old dame's temper was somewhat ruffled the last time we were there by meeting upon the stairs her pet lamb, dusty as a miller, having just buried itself in the meal-tub. For some distance above the upper pond the stream loses itself amid graceful segs, nodding bull-rushes, deep banks, stunted trees, and thick bushes. Presently, as the dale grows narrow, as the music of the brook and the voices of birds grow louder, a rumbling sort of sound is heard, and the measured click of wheels indicates the approach to Frog-mill.

If Frog-mill²⁶ does not satisfy your requirements, dear reader, of what an old water-mill of the true primitive kind should be, we should indeed feel surprised. It is none of your red-brick erections of modern times; its many tinted patchwork walls are the work even of a greater number of centuries than the old building has gables; and they are many. Primitive in construction, dusted with flour, and bronzed with lichens, it has that air of antiquity landscape painters love to convey to canvass, when representing rustic country life. This little wooded [323] valley has echoed to the click of its machinery for a thousand years at least. It ground wheat and rye and other grains for the Saxon Churl at Astley, and for the Norman Lords of Linley. In a valuation of the abbots's estate in 1291 it is entered as being of the annual value of 13s. 4d. Frog-mill is a secluded spot where one could linger long. Its barns and sheds, implements and fold-yard, show that agriculture is combined with the miller's avocation. Pleasant memories are linked to that rural spot; we have often listened to the dreamy sounds coming from the motion of the mill in sauntering along on pleasant sunny afternoons, to the cattle lowing in the meadows, and the notes of the wood-lark swelling sweetly on the hill, to the tinkling of sheep-hells, and the bleating of their timid bearers. The place wears a sabbath stillness. When the sun pours down long and filmy rays of light-producing "changes from grave to gay, from lively to severe" – making green spots look brighter against the darker woods in shadow, waking up into sudden joy streams that flash for a moment in its beams and then grow dark again, it is a sight to refresh the senses and invigorate the soul. You catch glimpses of orchards with stunted trees, mossy to the tips of their fruit-bearing branches, of waving hazel bushes, of lazy cows whisking their long tails as udder deep amidst the grass they are driven by the maid to the little fold-yard by the mill, whose quiet air of venerable age tells you it has witnessed the dynasties of the Normans, the Plantagenets, the Tudors, the Stuarts, and of Brunswick. Higher up the brook is a curious rent in the grim-old rocks, where water comes trickling down ever weeds and postrate trees; and still

higher up to the right and left are primitive and old-fashioned lath-and-plaster houses, belonging [324] the Hem, and Holly-tree farms.

Near Frog-mill, but high up on the hill, is the Albynes, deriving its title from a family named Albinus, who occupied it there in the thirteenth century.

This dingle possesses some of the finest and most interesting stratigraphical and palaeontological features to be found for miles round. In the bed of the brook and upon its banks are to be found members of the Silurian, Devonian, and Carboniferous formations, together with deep beds of northern drift. Below Linley Hall are the Downton series of yellowish sandstones, containing *Beyrichiae* and *Lingulae*. A little lower, in the bed of the brook, in front of some cottages, in a hard calcareous rock, numerous clusters of *Modiolopsis complanata* occur. Lower down still are to be seen Upper Ludlow and Aymestry limestone rocks; whilst all along on the right bank of the brook, on the high ground, appear members of the Old Red Sandstone or Devonian series, capped here and there by beds of northern drift. It is an extreme northern extension of that formation, which we had the good fortune to discover, and which had been previously classified and mapped as New Red Sandstone. From being thousands of feet in thickness as it approaches the Shropshire border it here dwindles down to less than a score feet, and then disappears altogether. In Flag-stones which crop out in a singularly secluded glen above Frog Mill, are the most beautiful and distinct casts of current markings we ever saw. Accompanied by Mr. Thomas Fennel, a potter and mould maker at Coalport, we took plaster and [325] clay. In the hope of being able to take an impression; but from its being on the under side in an opening in a precipitous rock the difficulties were so great that we did not succeed.

Here too in this rocky glen we were lucky enough to come upon two Bone Beds, one corresponding with that at the Paper Mill at Ludlow, and containing a Fish-Fauna which yielded larger spines than had previously been found. Some were ribs of solid bone two inches in length. The higher Bone Bed occurs on both sides the dingle higher up. Just below Frog Mill the Upper Coal Measures crop out from beneath the Permians, accompanied by the usual bed of limestone, containing its characteristic fossil, *Spirorbis carbonarius*. The coal beds consist of two seams, which have been worked at various periods, but which are of little commercial value. The following is a list, with the thickness of the beds, together with the remains they contain, in an ascending order:-

	ft. in.
Flaggy beds of impure limestones, with <i>Serpulites longissimus</i> . (True Upper Ludlow) ...	4 0
Hard calcareous shales with Fish-remains, <i>Lingulae</i> , &c.	6 0
Yellowish sandstones (Downton series) with <i>Beyrichiae</i> and <i>Lingulae</i> , and including two or more ferruginous bands, containing large quantities of the dermal studs of <i>Theleodus</i> , fragments of <i>Lingulae</i> , and minute crystals of quartz. (THE LOWER or LUDLOW BONE-BED.) Clusters of <i>Midiolopsis complanata</i> occur at the base of this rock.	8 0
Micaceous sandy clays, coloured by peroxide of iron	6 0
Grey micaceous grit	0 6 [326]
Laminated light grey micaceous and sandy shales	20 0
Hard calcareous grit with thickly disseminated greenish grains and many broken <i>Langulae</i>	1 0
Greenish, irregular laminated rock with conglomerate	1 0
Micaceous sandy grits and <i>Langulas</i>	0 11
Flagstones with beautiful current-markings	1 9
Hard micaceous grits, somewhat flaggy, and charged with fish remains. (THE UPPER BONE BED)	7 0
Light coloured grits with plant remains, - <i>Juncites?</i> , <i>Lycopodites</i> &c.	20 0
Red clays, unfossiliferous	6 0
Upper coal measures containing a band of yellow limestone	82 6

On page 247 we gave a list of public houses and beershops at present existing in Broseley. The following is a list of inns and beer houses which have ceased to exist during the last 60 years, with the names of those who kept them.

- 1 We commence with the Angel Inn, which was in High Street. It is an old English sign and is still kept up in many parts of the country, like the well known Inn in Islington, the meeting place for omnibuses, as it formerly was for coaches, which has borne the same name for 200 years or more. It originally represented the Salutation or Annunciation.
- 2 Hockley Inn, by Benj. Gough, Hockley.
- 3 The Green, by Peter Smith, Harris's Green. These took their names from the respective localities in which they were situated.
- [327] 4 White Swan, by John Davies, Hockley Road. This is another old sign, chosen, it is said because the bird is so fond of the liquid element. (The Black Swan, is a *rara avis* in England, but common in Australia, we have already mentioned as the sign of a beershop.)
- 5 Plough Inn, by Mr. Smith, Barber Street.
- 6 Red Barn, by Mrs. Williams, Barber Street.
- 7 Fox Inn, by Mr. Roberts, Barber Street. The first and last are ancient and common signs.
- 8 Delph Tavern, by Mr. Burton, Delph. The Delph like the sign has disappeared at least the Delph as a clay mud hole, so filled with filth as to become a nuisance. The there was the—
- 9 Old Red Lion, by Mr. Williams, Queen Street.
- 10 The Crown and Anchor, by John Pool, King Street.
- 11 George and Dragon, by Mr Hisket, King Street.
- 12 The Nelson Inn, by Mrs Southorn, Legg's Hill.
- 13 The Lion and Pheasant, by Mr Davies, Legg's Hill.
- 14 The Star Inn, by Jno. Jones, Fearney Bank.
- 15 The Blue Ball, by Mr. Davies, Broseley Wood.
- 16 Sycamore Tree, by Mr Dean, Broseley Wood.
- [328] 17 The Rose and Crown, by Mr Collins, Broseley Wood.
- 18 May Pole, by Jno. Morris, Woodlands Green, Broseley
- 19 Royal Oak, by Mr. Bill, Woodlands, Broseley.
- 20 Barley Mow, by Mr. Preen, Duke Street.
- 21 Ship Inn, by Jno. Jones, Werps, Jackfield.
- 22 The Britannia Inn, by Susan Oswell, Werps, Jackfield.
- 23 Tuckies Inn, by Jno. Challenor, Tuckies.
- 24 The Sun Inn, Tuckies, Jackfield.
- 25 The Royal Oak, by Robert Richards, Jackfield..
- 26 Fountain Inn, by Mr. Cullis, Lloyd Head, Jackfield.
- 27 New Inn, Ladywood, Jackfield.
- 28 The Rock, by Thos. Jones, Rock, Broseley.
- 29 Hen and Chickens, by Wm. Colley, High Street, Broseley.
- 30 The Last Inn High Street, Broseley, with a painted sign of a man with a *foaming Jug of ale* in his hand, and the following lines *underneath* :—

All the day long I have been *seeking good Ale*, and now at *The Last I have found it*.

Broseley has its Gas Co., its Market Co., and a Local Board, and we had delayed our notice of the latter in the hope of being able to record some decisive steps taken to remedy a great evil, the want of water; but at the time we write this has not been done.

In noticing the various religious bodies in Broseley we omitted to mention that associated with the "Gospel Rooms."

APPENDIX.

[i]

Since the publication of the first edition of this work we have received from Mr. W. Watkins Old, F. S. A., F.R. Hist. Soc., &c., some additional information respecting the family of Old (mentioned p. 66-73, 84), which we now give by way of Appendix.

FURTHER NOTICES OF THE OLDS, OF ROWTON HALL, BROSELEY.

The first name in the pedigree of the Olds, of Sheriffhales and Rowton, is that of Richard, said to be "4th in descent," who lived about the middle of the XIIIth century; but members of the family were living in Yorkshire as early as the XIIth century, when Roger Old of Yolthorpe is mentioned, temp. Richard I. His daughter Agnes married Godfrey, son of William Erneburg, of Flixtune, co. York; and the seal of his son William, who lived in the reign of King John and Henry III., is appended to a charter in the British Museum (Campbell I., 23).

The estate of Sheriffhales is stated to have been purchased by Roger, eldest son of the above Richard Old, the 25th Edward III. (1350), "of ye Ld. of ye manor." Richard had also another son, William, who was living at Momersifeld, co. Salop, in 1331; and a daughter, Agnes, married to Henry de Rowton, whose granddaughter and co-heiress, Alice de Rowton, married her cousin Gaifridus Olde, and brought Rowton Hall into the possession of the family.

The eldest son of this marriage, William, was living in 1410. His son Roger, who by marriage [ii] or otherwise was connected with the celebrated Sir John Talbot, is said to have gone to France in some military service in 1436. In 1461 he was Bailiff and receiver of the rents of the manor of Cowley, Coton, and Burghall.

John, son of the above Roger, married probably an Eyton, and had issue – a son, William, who also married an Eyton (this being said to be the second alliance with that family). The name of this William Olde appears in Salopian exchequer subsidies, &c., 1522 to 1545, &c. Thomas, son of the above William and Elizabeth, married Agnes, daughter of James Meeson, of Great Chatwell. She died and was buried in Rowton Church, December 9th, 1599, just six months after the decease of her husband. Richard, second son of the above William and Elizabeth, lived at Broseley, where he died the same year as his brother, 1599. He is, I imagine, the Ricus Olde in the list of Bailiffs in the Register of the Wenlock Corporation, 26th Elizabeth.

The eldest son of Thomas and Agnes Olde was also called Richard. He married Jane, daughter of William Bentley, gent., and niece to Rowland Barker, of Haughmond Abbey, Esq. He died in 1623, and in his will he desires to be buried "in the new Ile I have builded for that purpose in the church of Broseley." His widow died in June, 1642. The second son Henry lived at the Hem, in the parish of Shifnal.

The issue of Richard and Jane Old were three sons – Francis, Michael, and John – and five daughters – Martha, who married Mr. William Cutts; Mary, who married (1st) Thomas Maddock, Esq. (by whom she had a daughter, Lettice, who married Henry Davenport, Esq.), and (2ndly) [iii] Fulke Crompton (by whom she had a daughter, Frances, who married Sir Clement Throckmorton, of Hoseley, co; Warwick); Margaret, who married (1st) Lancelot Ludlow, Esq., and (2ndly) Edward Herbert, of Covington, co. Huntingdon, gent.; Isabella, who married Richard Clowes, Esq. (whose son, Robert Clowes, by will dated May 25th, 1704, left money to re-purchase certain lands of Rowton farm, which had passed out of the family); Abigail, who married Francis Walden, Gent.

Francis, the eldest son of Richard and Jane who was born in 1589, died unmarried 1622. Michael, the second son, married Mary, daughter of Leighton Owen, Esq., by whom he had issue two sons, Samuel and John, both of whom died unmarried, and one daughter, Mary, who married Richard Manning, Esq. John, the third son of Richard and Jane, married Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Jobber, Esq., by whom he had issue two sons, Richard and John, and two daughters, Mary, who married the Rev. Richard Addenbrooke, and Jane, who married Richard Edwards. Richard eldest son of John and Elizabeth, born in 1639, died unmarried December 22nd, 1692; the second son, John (born 1658, died August 24th, 1711), married Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Astley, Esq., by whom he had issue two sons, John and Richard, and two daughters, Elizabeth, unmarried, and Jane, who married Thomas Dawes, Esq.

Richard, the second son of John and Elizabeth, died unmarried January 18th, 1781. John, the elder son, married Jane, younger daughter and co-heiress of William Hardy, gent., of March, in the Isle of Ely, co. Cambridge, by whom he had issue three sons – John, William, and Robert, – [iv] and two daughters – Jane, who married John Forster Lamplow, Esq., and Elizabeth, who died unmarried October 10th, 1767.

The three sons of John and Jane all died without issue: John in 1765; William, who cut off the entail of the estates, a few years later; and Robert, the last male heir of this branch, in 1815.

◆

THE BLITHE MEMORIAL CHURCH.

On p.p. 212, 213, and three subsequent pages, we described the ruinous state of this church, a copy of which description was sent to the Bishop of Hereford, who, through his Dean, the Rev. G. Edmonds, insisted upon the agreement (p.215) being carried out. This has been done, and the church was re-opened on the 8th of May, 1881, by the Rev. E. Lloyd Edwards, who announced a service to be held there once a month during the summer and autumn. If one service once a month is only to be given it will be considered a poor return for the £70 left to this church by its pious founders, and clandestinely taken and added to the endowment of the other memorial church in the valley: it will be £5 2s. 8d., to say nothing of offertories and pew rents, for each service, even if given each month in the year, which – considering that the ordinary sermons one hears are to be bought for 6d., is rather a scanty return. There seems to be no chance of getting the money back, and it will be at the will and whim of the Jackfield Rector whether there is any service or not; so much for disendowment on a small scale by the upholders of the Church, when it suits their purposes. We trust that Mr. John Pritchard, or some other wealthy individual, will give or bequeath to this church the £70 taken away; and that the ground given by Mr. Harries, of Cruckton, will be added to the churchyard, and walled round at the expense of the ratepayers. No mining is for the future to be carried on to the injury of the church.

Notes to the 2001 edition

¹ ERRATA read Fox for Hoe (correction from P42)

² ERRATA read a further for another (correction from P42)

³ ERRATA read a secure for same (correction from P42)

⁴ ERRATA read Morse for Younge (correction from P42)

⁵ The paragraph "The selling of bread..." included at this point in the text was duplicated in the original book

⁶ On P78 Randall corrects this statement: "In speaking of the Broseley manor, on page 65, we have said that it passed by deed to John Stephens; we should have said that it descended to that gentleman who, at the date there mentioned, the 13th of June 1795, sold it in consideration of £2,100 to George Forester, Esq., of Willey. We presume that the Squire of Willey made a good bargain, as a valuation made the same year shewed the manor to be worth £2,900, including the minerals." The text is also reproduced in its original position

⁷ May 1715; No. P3 (possibly the 7th Newcomen engine built) at Burwagley, also Broseley Salop; built by stonier Parrott; Proposal by Stonier Parrott to pump 47 yards. £20 per year rent. No reference to building found. Stonier Parrott and George Bursley worked pit. *The Steam Engine of Thomas newcomen LTC Rolt*. From Randall we may read Bursley as Buckley.

⁸ Patented by John Wilkinsons father Isacc and improved by Smeaton.

⁹ Coneyburry furnace is often also referred to as Broseley Furnace leading to possible confusion!

¹⁰ Probably the Windmill shown on Plot 1104 of the Tithe Map (1838), in a field north of the furnace site, at the other side of the road to Barrow and thus not associated with blowing the furnace. Deam Mill was about ½ mile east of the works on the opposite side of the Broseley – Bridgnorth road. At this time the furnace was blown by the B&W engine.

¹¹ At this time the furnace was being blown by the Boulton & Watt engine using cylinders. The letter probably refers to blilows for the finery and chafery rahter than the furnace. Stamping refers to the Jesson and Wright potting and staping method of making wrought iron. It also suggests that at this time wrough iron manufacture has ceased and cannon boring has replaced it. This is reinforced by Randals comments on the quality of the Iron at Willey.

¹² There is no reference to a rolling mill engine in the standard published works on Watt.

¹³ The Lawns, Church Street

¹⁴ This would have been at Bradley 1795-1799. Although this appears to be mentioned in Wilkinsons correspondence it was clearly not a success.

¹⁵ Later C.R. Jones Ladywood Tileries

¹⁶ Like many of the sources used by Randall this manuscript appears to have since become lost.

¹⁷ A downdraft kiln

¹⁸ Correction printed on page 161: (THE OLD BROSELEY TILERIES. On page 154 we have said that these tileries, formerly carried on by Mr. John Onions, were on the site of those now in the hands of Messrs. G. and F. Davis. It appears however from further information that they were on the site of the present Broseley Tileries Co., limited, who continue the manufacture of roofing tiles, ridge tiles, pressed floor tiler, and all kinds of brick kiln goods, as well as encaustic and tesselated tiles &c.)

(Broseley Old Tileries are better known as the Dunge Tileries. The Broseley Tileries of Onions were situated on the opposite side of Rough Lane from the Dunge Tileries which although much larger are only mentioned in passing by Randall: BLHS)

¹⁹ At this point Randall inserts the correction for Broseley Tileries – P154

²⁰ The printer duplicated a section of text as page 245 under the heading Broseley Market. tTis has been omitted.

²¹ This section starts without title on P247. It clearly refers to the earlier section on John Wilkinson!

²² There is no engraving in 'Broseley and its Surroundings'

²³ Corrected in the original manuscript from Toxteth

²⁴ It is likely that these are from Wrens Nest Forges or an earlier smithy. We know for certain that iron working was carried on along the Linley Brook between 1765 and 1815. It is strange that, although Randall talks with some authority on the 18/19th century ironworks, he appears to be unaware of the existence of these forges.

²⁵ These ponds were the forge pools for the Wrens Nest forges. Although Randall mentions these forges earlier in the text he seems to have been unaware that this was their location. Here Randall uses the correct name for this location but by the time the 1887 O.S map was published the name had changed to Apley Forge. There is no record of

an Apley forge and as the Wrens Nest forges ceased in 1815 this has caused some confusion amongst some authors. The lower forge pool was later used to drive a ram pump which provided water to Apley Park.

²⁶ The Frog Mill is now long gone. All that remains are the fallen walls and a few rotten timbers.

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