

# Diary Dates

## Wednesday 25 May 2016

### Visit to Acton Round Hall

Built in 1714 by Smith of Warwick for the Actons of Morville, Acton Round Hall is listed Grade I, as a fine example of architecture from the Queen Anne period. It contains a fascinating personal collection and is surrounded by beautiful gardens.

**2.30pm** Acton Round Hall, Bridgnorth, WV16 6XG  
Cost: £15 including refreshments

## Sunday 26 June 2016

### Wem History Day

A day event celebrating the history of Wem in association with The Victoria County History

**10am-4pm** Wem Town Hall, High Street, Wem, SY4 5DG  
Cost: £15 with lunch, £10 without lunch

**10.30am** Why Wem? *Richard Hoyle, The Victoria County History in Shropshire.*

**11.45am** The landscape and townscape of Wem in 1631 and the 18-19<sup>th</sup> centuries, *James Bowen*

**1.15pm** Walking tours arranged by Wem Civic Society and displays. There are three options: (a) The Pubs and Brewery, (b) The High Street, (c) The Church

**3pm** The Women of Wem and a few Musketeers: The Civil War battle for Wem of October 1643, *Jonathan Worton*

## Tuesday 5 July 2016

### Old Oswestry Hill Fort followed by the Town Museum and Archives in the Guildhall

Discover 3000 years of history, from Bronze Age beginnings to World War One practice trenches and learn about the hill fort's special wildlife. Oswestry Guildhall dates from 1893 and replaced the old Guildhall which was declared unsound and demolished.

**2pm** Oswestry, SY11 1HT  
Cost: £10 including refreshments

## Wednesday 10 August 2016

### Visit to Weston Park

The tour includes the Victorian Library and the stunning Dining Room, which houses impressive paintings including works by Sir Anthony Van Dyck.

**2.30pm** Weston-under-Lizard, Shifnal, TF11 8LE  
Cost £14 (refreshments excluded, cafe at venue)

## Saturday 15 October 2016

### Shropshire History Day

**10.30am** Shirehall, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND  
Cost: Free event.

## News Extra...

Do you have any stories to tell about Shropshire's history or have any news about Shropshire Archives? If you have, the editor is waiting to hear from you now. The contact details are below and photographs are always welcome.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: The newsletter of the Friends of Shropshire Archives is edited by Andrew Pattison and designed by Nat Stevenson, Shropshire Archives' Image Services.

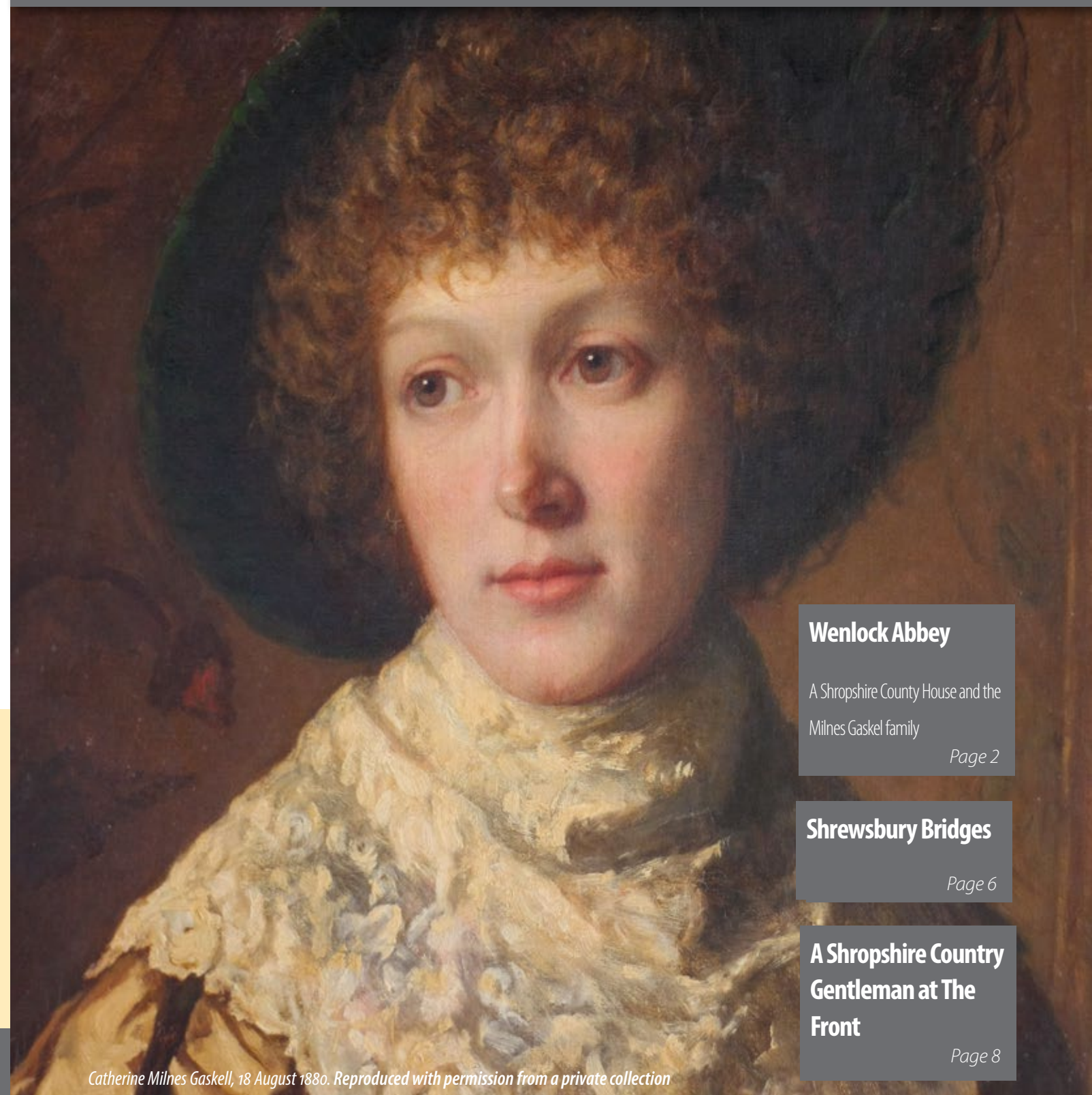
There are three issues per year, paid for by the Friends. The contents are provided by friends and well-wishers. If you would like to join the contributors, please contact the editor at the address below.

DISCLAIMER: We have made every effort to ensure that the information in this publication is correct at the time of printing. We cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions.



# Salopian Recorder

The newsletter of the Friends of Shropshire Archives,  
gateway to the history of Shropshire and Telford



*Catherine Milnes Gaskell, 18 August 1880. Reproduced with permission from a private collection*

## Wenlock Abbey

A Shropshire County House and the Milnes Gaskell family

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**Contact...** For further details or to pass on your comments, please contact:  
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Feature

Dr Cynthia Gamble,  
Honorary Research Fellow,  
University of Exeter



# Wenlock Abbey 1857-1919:

A Shropshire Country House and the Milnes Gaskell Family

The discovery of an unpublished cache of documents rescued from Wenlock Abbey marked the starting point for what became my recent book **Wenlock Abbey 1857-1919: A Shropshire Country House and the Milnes Gaskell Family (2015)**. The immediate task was to make an inventory of the materials under general headings such as letters, photographs, sketches, notebooks and other documents. The letters required most attention. First of all, deciphering the handwriting was far from easy. A system was devised with codes, based on the names of sender and addressee and dates, so that each letter could be identified and then entered into a computer. Another major task was transcribing the entire contents of the Visitors' Book — names of guests who were invited to Wenlock Abbey — that commenced on 10 November 1863 with the signature of Maria Marchioness of Ailesbury. Important historical notebooks were also transcribed.

Shropshire Archives cares for many private archives, sometimes deposited with accompanying, restrictive conditions. I had the privilege of being permitted access to one of these for the preparation of my book. I had first to obtain special written authorisation from the donor, the Trustees of the Willey Estates, and then had to make a payment and submit the text of my book for approval. I am also grateful to Shropshire Archives for permitting me to consult and use **Eddowes Shrewsbury Journal** and **Salopian Journal** of 1874 and 1877, and some of the **Much Wenlock Primary School Log Books and Registers**.

These archives, private and public, provided the solid, indispensable basis from which I constructed the narrative of my book and brought to life the stones of the medieval monastery in the Victorian and Edwardian periods in the time frame of 1857 to 1919. It was a buzzing, cultural hub in the sleepy little market town of Much Wenlock and a magnet pulling in a kaleidoscope of talent. The story begins with the purchase by James Milnes Gaskell, MP for the borough of Wenlock between 1832 and 1868, of the much neglected and vandalised Wenlock Abbey (as it is known) in 1857. He and his wife Mary, née Williams-Wynn, of the famous landowning family with a seat at Wynnstay, set about transforming their acquisition into a splendid manor house. Their eldest son, Charles, who inherited the property in 1873, continued to restore the medieval buildings. After a turbulent, secret love affair with Lady Mary Hervey who jilted her fiancé after their engagement was announced — I discovered this stunning story among the unpublished correspondence — Charles married Lady Catherine Wallop, the alluring daughter of the 5th Earl of Portsmouth on her twentieth birthday, 7 December 1876. Lady Catherine, a keen horticulturist, created a unique set of gardens, including two topiaries. Their Wenlock home became a fashionable salon with distinguished visitors, including F. T. Palgrave, Henry James, Thomas and Emma Hardy, Henry and Marian Adams, Henry Morton Stanley (of 'Dr Livingstone, I presume?' fame), intrepid explorer Isabella Bishop and Henry Irving's highly eccentric friend Hamilton Aidé, to name but a few.

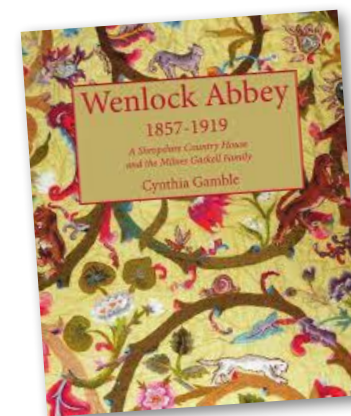
Charles Milnes Gaskell, steeped in the Arts and Crafts Movement, and much inspired by John Ruskin, William Morris and Philip Webb, was a pioneer in conservation and sensitive restoration and a founder member of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) in 1877. Like Ruskin, he was an environmentalist before his time, and not only campaigned for, but also financed, parks and fresh water

supplies in Much Wenlock and in industrial Wakefield. He was one of the first people to campaign for a National Health Service and the treatment of tuberculosis; the sanatorium at Shirlett was due to his efforts. The ruins adjoining the prior's lodging were a paradise for archaeologists and historians as excavations revealed a burial ground with skeletons, a coffin

with a bevelled lid, medieval tiles, ancient coins and a free standing Romanesque *lavatorium*, unique in Britain. Wenlock Abbey also attracted large groups of inquisitive clergymen, naturalists, geologists and architects, some from as far away as Russia and Tasmania.

In the concluding pages of the book, more drama unfolds with

Charles's refusal of a peerage, and the astonishing discovery of the quasi-disinheritance of Lady Catherine's only son Evelyn. The curtain falls in 1919 in the aftermath of World War I and its effects on Evelyn, with the death of Charles Milnes Gaskell and the much-delayed marriage of his only daughter Mary to Brigadier General HDO Ward. ■



**Wenlock Abbey 1857-1919: A Shropshire Country House and the Milnes Gaskell Family**, by Cynthia Gamble, is published by Ellingham Press, 2015, price £18.99. It is available at WH Smith and Waterstones in Shrewsbury; at Wenlock Books, Wenlock Museum and English Heritage Priory shop in Much Wenlock.

Opposite page, above left: Lady Catherine Milnes Gaskell, 18 August 1880. Reproduced with permission from a private collection. Opposite page, bottom left: South transept of Wenlock Abbey, c.1850. Detail from Shropshire Archives ref: PR/4/33.

## From the Chair

Jill Ming

wanted to find out about the Friends' activities and how we work with Shropshire Archives. I thought perhaps you would like to know as well.

We provide support to Shropshire Archives in many ways: through volunteering, fund-raising, providing funding for purchases such as documents and equipment that benefits all users of the Archives. We also promote the Archives through hosting events such as our summer visits, local history days and occasional lectures. We try to distribute these events around the county so that people do not always have to travel to Shrewsbury to participate. As our secretary Sue Cleaves pointed out, all the major towns in Shropshire apart from Shrewsbury are 'around the edge' of the county boundary.

One major output from the Friends is of course this newsletter, ably edited by Andrew Pattison, which lets you know about our activities, provides interesting

Our committee recently met representatives from the Archive Service Accreditation Panel of The National Archives as part of Shropshire Archives' application for accredited status. They

articles about research at Shropshire Archives, and is a useful marketing tool. We also have an active website on which we post our events and booking forms, present a gallery of past events, and an invitation to join.

Another aspect of our work that is particular to the committee is our participation in networking events with Friends of other archives in order to share ideas and experiences and benefit from each other's knowledge. Committee member Sheila Black represents the Friends of Shropshire Archives at the West Midlands Archive Forum and has provided us with useful input from her visits to other archives as well as sharing our experiences and ideas with other groups. Sheila reports that we are the largest Friends group in the West Midlands with our 190 members, which is very encouraging. We also have a member of Shropshire Family History Society, Christine Abrams, on our committee who provides liaison between our two groups.

You can see from all this that your contribution as a member of the Friends is really helping Shropshire Archives in many ways, and feedback from their accreditation application has been positive in respect of the Friends' support. ■



# Wenlock Borough Minute Book, 1495-1658



The Friends recently gave £2000 towards the £5000 needed to conserve the first Wenlock Borough Minute Book, *Shropshire Archives ref: WB/C/1/1*. We received the following thanks from Bob May, one of the volunteer archivists at Much Wenlock Town Council -

*I am writing to thank you and the Friends of Shropshire Archives for your very kind and helpful donation of £2000 towards the cost of the restoration of the first minute book of the Borough of Wenlock. This is very good news and will help to spur us on to reach our target.*

**Howard Horsley** (also a Volunteer Much Wenlock Town Archivist) explains the importance of this Minute Book.

In 1495 the Burgesses of Wenlock Borough bought a book to record their minutes. This may at first sight seem a minor event. However, the minute book is made of paper, which was still a remarkably new and scarce material, for it was only during 1495 that the first paper was produced in England. Any earlier records of the Borough would have been recorded on vellum (made from calf skin) or parchment (made of sheep skin). One problem with these two materials was that they did not always easily absorb ink. Forgery could be relatively easy, for it was possible to scratch out some words and replace them with others.

Paper was very expensive, but it did prevent forgery, for the ink readily sank into the paper. This, for the first time, ensured accurate records for generations. This may have been a motivating factor for the burgesses in deciding to buy paper. And the Burgesses did not buy just enough pages for a few decades, but a

massive book of 800 pages, which must have been a huge investment. It proved sufficient to record the Borough minutes for over 150 years – from 1496 until 1658. Examination of the paper and its watermarks suggests that it was produced as far away as Italy, probably in Milan. This was a city state at the centre of the great expansion of horizons now known as the Renaissance. At the time this book must have been produced, no less a genius than Leonardo da Vinci was at the height of his powers and working in Milan. Influenced by knowledge from the East all kinds of innovative industries were developing there, including paper making.

How such valuable sheaves of paper were transported from Italy to Much Wenlock will remain a matter of speculation. One could easily imagine they came by sea though the Mediterranean. However, in 1495 this would have been a perilous route. The Spanish coast was being disputed between the Muslim Moors and the Christian Spaniards as the Muslim occupation of Spain was finally coming to an end.

## Entries in the Minute Book

The earliest entries in the minute book are all in Latin, which was still the language of the educated. New pages may occasionally begin with a highly decorated word, much like the first word of any illuminated manuscript produced by monks. So in all likelihood the first clerks to the Borough were monks in the neighbouring Priory. Latin continued in use through to the Reformation and the English Civil War. What is most surprising about the minute book is its survival intact over so many centuries. In part this can be attributed to its strong vellum binding, complete with what is probably the original iron buckle, sewn

on to the binding, and which, through the centuries, kept the book secure when closed. Though the paper came from Italy, the binding was almost certainly done in England.

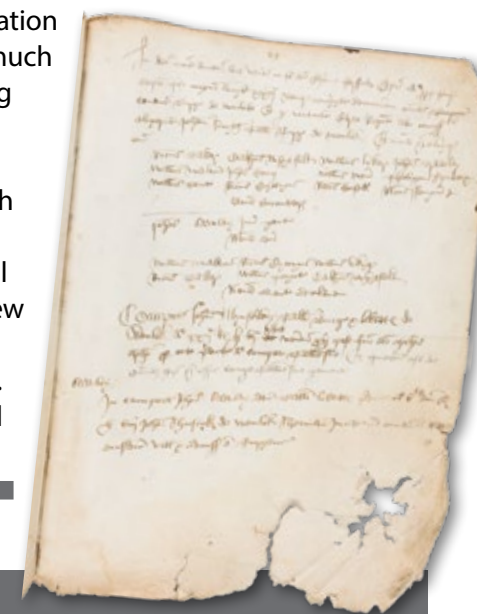
## The ink

Entries in the minute book were in black ink using a quill. The quill would usually have been cut from a goose feather whose shaft was capable of holding a reservoir of ink. The ink was usually made using the crushed gall from an oak tree and iron filings as the main ingredients. The best ink was sometimes imported to England from countries such as Spain where the galls were common and suitable chemicals were readily available. Over the decades the skills and writing styles of those making the entries varied, as did the quality of the ink. Some records have faded, but most are still clear. Some clerks seemed to find it easy to write horizontally across the blank page but others tended to wander at strange angles. Though the styles of writing did vary, there was an almost universal adoption of what are best described as elaborate curls in the lettering. What is also clear in examining the minutes of most clerks is the relative absence of either corrected mistakes or even smudges. This suggests skill and care but also that some means

was in use to dry the ink before any smudging took place. In the days before blotting paper was in use various techniques were used, including scattering fine sand or chalk dust across writing to absorb surplus ink before turning the page.

## The need for conservation

For over 500 years the minute book has survived largely intact. Damp conditions have, however, stained and weakened the paper and the vellum cover has shrunk. The text block has also been eroded at the edges. The conservation effort will remove much of the water staining and strengthen the paper. Lost paper will be replaced with similar, hand-made paper. The book will be rebound with new vellum in the same style as the original. The old binding will also be retained for its historical value. ■



## A selection of new accessions:

- Account Book of Thomas Briscoe, blacksmith, 1868-1870, **8988**
- Acton Scott Historic Working Farm records, **9021**
- Bitterley Court Farm, Ludford And Broncroft Castle Estate records, 1707-1993, **9040**
- Blessed Robert Johnson Roman Catholic Secondary School, Wellington records, 1964-2015, **9036**
- Records of the Lambart family, Earls of Cavan, 17<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century, **8975**
- Ellesmere Cemetery burial registers, 1865-1991, **9008**
- Ellesmere Primary School records, 1950s-2000s, **9089**
- Ironbridge and Coalbrookdale Buildings Preservation Trust records, 1975-1996, **8966**
- Henley Hall Estate records late 19<sup>th</sup> century, **9056**
- Home Guard Weapons Training School records, 1940-1945, **9024**
- Railways and Canals of Shropshire and Wales collection, 20<sup>th</sup> century, **9020**
- Reverend Samuel Garbet of Wem papers, 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century, **9043**
- Shrewsbury Theatre Guild records, 1972-2015, **8974**
- Shropshire (Amateur) Athletic Association records, 1947-2001, **9076**
- Silhouette (Lingerie and Swimwear Manufacturer) records, 1960s-1970s, **8985**
- The Diaries Of Emma Harding "To My Sons", 1914-1918, **8986**
- Wrockwardine Wood Secondary School records, 1933-2015, **9035**



# Shrewsbury Bridges 'Broken by the Flow', 1672

The mayor's accounts for Shrewsbury for 1672 and 1673 include over 300 bills submitted by various tradesmen for work done in maintaining the fabric of the town. Studying these in detail can sometimes give us a rare insight into the life and work of ordinary tradesmen, as the following story details.

## The Stone Bridge

Just after Christmas 1672 the river Severn was in exceptional spate, and both the Welsh and the Stone (English) bridges were damaged. The first reference to the flood is in a bill dated 27 December 1672, which is for 4s 6d to cover the wages and candles for three night watchmen to guard the Stone Bridge 'broken by the flow'. Emergency repairs seem to have been done quickly to get the bridge back into service, but further work was commenced in June, when the river levels fell, and continued for most of

the summer months. Masons, carpenters and lime burners were involved, while hauliers brought stone from Grinshill, gravel from Gravelhill, and clay from Old Heath. Boats and boatmen were hired, and blacksmiths provided various items of ironware and were kept busy sharpening the masons' tools. Richard Efferall, for example, presented a bill for sharpening 18 dozen tools at 3d per dozen. The iron available at that time was soft, and tools needed regular sharpening to be effective; during the nine months or so that work was done on the bridges 114 dozen tools were sharpened at a cost of £1 8s 6d.

## The Welsh Bridge tower 'falled down'

The Welsh Bridge was much more damaged than the Stone Bridge and on 'that night [that] the Bridge [original deletion] Tower falled Downe' half a pound of candles were bought from Margaret Owen costing 2d and a

dozen torches from Clement Owen costing 6s so that the coroners and the chamberlain could inspect the damage to the bridge. Watchmen were employed to prevent anyone crossing the bridge until it was made safe and Robert Betton was paid 9s 0d for bringing a tree from Lythwood for 'making way at the breach' of the bridge, and this, along with 22 ft of sawn timber, was used by Thomas Jones, a carpenter, and his men, to repair the breach. The road surface of the bridge had been damaged, and in January 35 yards were repaved by Isaac King and Thomas Powell at a cost of 7s 4d. Thomas Jones was at work again in February with four of his men propping up the second pier and later, in March, 'casing the piers broken by the flood', while another tree was acquired from Lythwood for 'a way at the Welsh Bridge'. In April Thomas Davies, mason, did some further propping and removed the arch. The masons were now very busy using stone from Grinshill, Nescliffe and Whiston. Some of the Grinshill stone came direct to the Welsh Bridge at 5s 6d a load whilst some was delivered to Coton Stairs, presumably an easy access to the river Severn, and finished

the journey by boat; this cost 5s a load. All the Nescliffe stone went to Montford Bridge at a cost of 3s a load, and it completed a very circuitous journey by boat at a further cost of 2s a load. Whiston stone, from just west of Ford, cost 4s per load, the lower price presumably reflecting the shorter journey. From the few occasions when the weight of a load is indicated, a load approximated to a ton. Some of the Whiston stone was 'scabbed', that is, the surface tooled to a fine finish.

## 'Extraordinary paynes'

Scaffolding was needed, much of which came from Mr Wright's coppice; Thomas Jones and his 13 men were paid £1 9s 10d for cutting, dressing and carrying 'coppey poles', and Jonathon Gibbons took 10 tons of poles by boat from the coppice to the Welsh bridge, and Richard Evans another 8 loads. Mr Wright received payment of £3 8s 6d for 108 poles and 32 ft of timber, and Widow Davies 14s 6d for another 33 poles.

Labourers were in great demand and were paid 10d per day, but got extra for 'extraordinary worke donne at the laying of the foundation of an arch at the Welsh Bridge'. The work must have been unpleasant as they were often 'loading in water' and on occasions worked nights. The perquisites however were good, and the 20 labourers working on the foundations

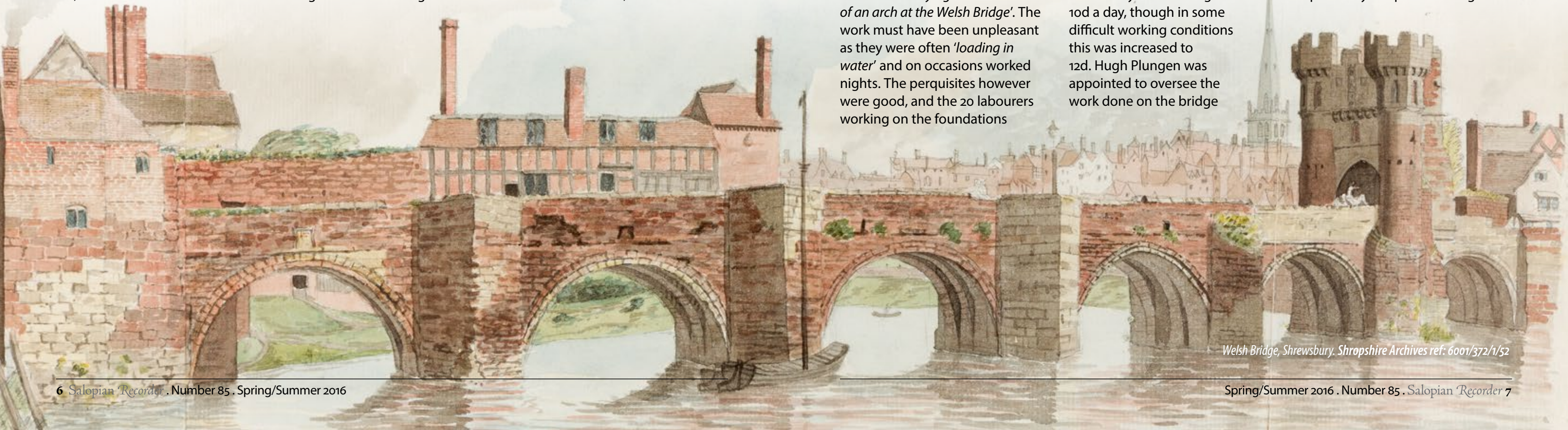
received 'beer, brandy, tobacco and bread to the value of 12s.' The town was highly appreciative of the dangerous work undertaken by Thomas Jones and gave him £2 for 'his extraordinary paynes and venteringe himselfe in propping the severall Bridges'. Quicklime was required in substantial quantities, and over the 9 months or so spent rebuilding the bridge 114 loads at a shilling a load were used. The lime was delivered in barrels to keep it dry and a barrel equated to a load; the size of the barrels is not known. Gravel was needed, most of which came from Gravelhill, and also large quantities of clay from Old Heath via Coton Stairs. This was costed by the number of days carting clay at 6s a day. There are no references to the bridges being closed during the repairs but this seems likely; any closures would have had a major impact on the town's markets and fairs and must have been minimised.

## Unwelcome extra expense

The highest paid craftsmen were the master carpenters; they got 22d a day while the master masons were paid 20d; their workmen were paid rates varying from 16d to 8d a day. Labourers got 10d a day, though in some difficult working conditions this was increased to 12d. Hugh Plungen was appointed to oversee the work done on the bridge

from May to September 1673, for which he received 6s per week, and the advice of Thomas Wright and Edward Heylinge was sought for which they were paid 4s 6d. The total cost of repairing the two bridges from December 1672 to October 1673 was £418 7s 10d which compares with £21 14s 7d spent on maintaining the bridges in the preceding year, of which about a third was spent on repaving the road surface, presumably as a result of damage caused by the heavy metal-rimmed wheels of wains and carts crossing the bridges.

No reports of how the flood affected the rest of the town and surrounding area appear to have survived, but in 1770 when the flood level reached 19ft 9½in, 2in higher than 1672, 300 houses were flooded. This was not the first time that the bridges were severely damaged by floods; in January 1546 a flood brought down the gatehouse of the Stone Bridge with prisoners still shackled to the walls, all of whom survived. Nor was it the last, and in 1770 the Welsh Bridge was damaged again. In 1791 it was decided the Welsh Bridge was becoming unsafe and it was replaced by the present bridge. ■



Welsh Bridge, Shrewsbury. Shropshire Archives ref: 6001/372/1/52





## Feature

Ina Taylor

Billy Hayes' letters written between 1915 and 1917 provide an interesting insight

into a young Shropshire officer's life during The Great War. These letters, newly deposited in the Archives, were written to his mother, so they give an 'edited version' of his experiences behind the lines and at the Front. Nevertheless, this little cache of letters complete with their hunting, shooting and fishing references, offer us a first-hand account of one young gentleman's war experiences.

# A Shropshire Country Gentleman at the Front

**W**illiam Warburton Hayes of Harcourt Stanton near Shrewsbury was born in 1894, and educated at Winchester and New College, Oxford. His late father, who had been a director of potteries and mining companies, had left the family comfortably off with a substantial house, 14 live-in servants, tenants and employees on the estate, to sustain Mrs Hayes, her son and three daughters.

As heir to a country estate, Billy was well aware of his responsibilities, but in 1914 chose King and country when he volunteered for the 16<sup>th</sup> Lancers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry Division, a regiment that could make good use of his horsemanship. Initial training for the young officer was at the Curragh Camp in County Kildare where 14,000 troops assembled at the outbreak of war and where the regiment had its headquarters. There Billy enjoyed some excellent hunting. But the surviving letters begin in March 1915, two months short of his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, when Lieutenant Hayes wrote home to say they were leaving for France to *take new servants and horses to the front*.

Not surprisingly Billy's letters give little away about his military activities. Initially he was in Rouen, a town he disliked intensely. *It is absolutely rotten... everybody round here has a dog or dogs to pull carts, grind corn and working threshing machines. They seem to be very cruel to all their animals.* A week after arriving in France he moved to within 20 miles of the front line where, he said *I can hear firing pretty distinctly from here and it's heavier than usual.*

Below Left: card to mark Coming of Age celebrations on his 25th birthday in 1919, Below Right: a telegram to inform his mother that he was 'starting for The Front', Page 10: letter referring to smoking amongst the squadron. *Shropshire Archives ref: 9051*



There are no details of military life until October 1915, when he told his mother they had returned from the trenches where they *were on a job of reversing the old German trenches and making new ones*. There are other mentions of going out to dig trenches, then taking their turn in them but the majority of his correspondence deals with the ways they passed their time whilst waiting for some action. Mornings were taken up exercising and caring for the horses but, he admitted, *there is very little to do in the afternoons when we are not in the trenches*.

An intertroop football cup was instituted, a boxing tournament and rugger matches appeared, but Billy's personal favourite was a spot of clandestine hare coursing. What became clear in the letters was that not only did Billy take his own horses out to France with him, he also took his dog. This enabled him to sneak off into the French countryside with a fellow officer on a *nice misty morning so easy to escape notice and we put up a hare almost at once and killed it after a nice course... Eating it tonight*. He also sent home for his fishing tackle to help pass the time.

Although not detailed in the letters, Billy evidently did see action, and the first indication of this in the Archives' letters is one dated May 1916 from 10 Carlton Terrace, London. In this a surgeon writes to Mrs Hayes to explain that when they operated on Billy they found the piece of shell had done more damage than expected; a rib had been grazed in transit and there were broken bits of bone inside him. *Billy was*

*rather seedy the day after the operation but quite well again in a few days*. In fact Billy underwent further operations over the following days to remove bits of metal and bone. He spent two months in London, initially at Carlton Terrace and then the Bachelor's Club in Piccadilly. As he began to feel better he enjoyed a little of the London social scene with theatre visits, the Chelsea Flower Show, sporting events at Eton and the Derby. His convalescence was rounded off with some salmon fishing and grouse shooting on the family estates in Perthshire.

Notes from the depositor give further insight to the wartime experiences of William Hayes:

*'If he was granted 72 hours leave, it was just possible - if one moved very fast! - to reach the coast, catch a boat to England, a train to London and on to Shrewsbury, enjoy seeing the family and go fishing for part of a day, then catch a train and return to the Front. He said it made all the difference to be back at home, if only for a moment.'*

*The two photographs from his sister Phyllis' album dated June 1915 show him in his plusfours fishing, and the second a memorable shot of my father reaching into the river to get a fish snared in the reeds while the gamekeeper Mr Bayley holds on to his coat tails. One can imagine what it meant at the Front to carry a happy memory of fun and companionship like that.'*

*Shropshire Archives  
ref: 9051*





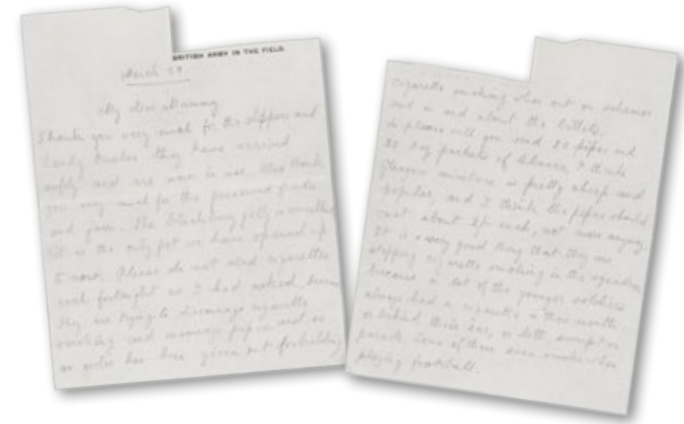
In late 1916 when he was fit, he returned to his barracks in Kildare, where he managed to fit in a bit more hunting before returning to his regiment at the Front in January 1917. *I had a very bad crossing in a cargo boat and took about 18 hours coming over. There were a lot of horses and mules and some troops on board and 143 officers with accommodation for 12 of them... They have been having very hard weather out here for 10 days and it doesn't look like changing at present... I wasn't sick on the crossing and a lot of people were so I hope I am improving in that respect. I like Rouen even less than I did when I was here before.*

What was interesting in Billy's letters was the way the paternalistic nature of life on the family's Shropshire estate reappeared in Billy's dealings with his men. Not only did he send his own washing home to be laundered in Shropshire, he also sent the men's dirty washing, asking his mother in one letter not to *send any washing for me or my troop till I write, I can get them washed while staying in the billet*. It wasn't just the troops' laundry that was catered for either, so were shortages of clothing. He requested *some socks for my troops. There are 40 men and I'd like a couple of pairs for myself and 2 vests if you still got any*. Another letter mentions receipt of *the shirts, socks, cigarettes and gazettes. I have distributed the former and they were very thankful*.

Not surprisingly, food featured in the letters with suggestions like *some preserved fruit cake and ginger biscuits would be appreciated* to supplement government rations. Mrs Williams, the family cook, regularly sent jams, jellies, mince pies, cakes and jam puffs. There were also requests for her to *make me something in the way of a pudding, ginger or treacle or similar. The golden puddings from Fortnum & Masons never arrived. Expect they went astray*.

*Pork pies which we seldom get were on the list because everyone in the mess likes them. A cooked tongue sent once a week would be very much appreciated* and the request for *a brace of partridge plucked and dressed* showed great confidence in the speed of the postal service from Shrewsbury to the Front.

Fortunately the Hayes household could well afford to equip Billy's men and their horses. Soon after arriving in France, Billy wrote for some *Clark's horse clippers and 6 dandy brushes for use in my troop, badly needed*. Six months later another consignment of clippers and a dozen dandy brushes were requested from the family's suppliers in Wem. One letter also



referred to a garment his mother had obtained. *Sorry to say, I must send the H smock back because this pattern would be no use on a horse since it only unbuttons a very short way. I asked an officer here and they are called H Smocks Cavalry Officers pattern.*

Mrs Hayes was keen to do her bit by including cigarettes for the boys in the parcels but Billy advised against it. *Don't send cigarettes each fortnight, they are trying to discourage cigarette smoking and encourage pipes, so the order was given forbidding cigarette smoking when out on schemes, and, in and about billets*. Instead he asked her for 20 pipes and 35 two ounce tobacco packets. *I think Glasgow mixture is pretty cheap and popular and pipes costs about 2/-*. *Good thing to stop smoking in squadron, lots of young soldiers always have a cigarette in mouth or behind ear or both, except on parade. Even smoking playing football.*

Fortunately Billy did survive the war and returned to take over the family estate. He served again in World War II and in 1952-3, as Colonel William Warburton-Hayes, became High Sheriff of Shropshire, but sadly died in office.

### Crossword Competition Result

1	T	E	L	F	O	R	D	5	A	6	F	7	O					
2		A						8	A	N	D	I	R	O	N			
9	T	W	I	T	T	E	R		M		I	E						
10	H	R	E					10	B	R	I	D	G	E	D			
11	E	L	D	E	R		Y		R		I	A						
12								13	H	U	S	B	A	N	D	14	R	Y
15	L	O																
16																		
17																		
18																		
19																		
20																		
21																		
22																		
23																		
24																		

*Congratulations to Margaret Hill, who won Shrewsbury – a Pictorial History by Tony Carr.*

## News

Mary McKenzie

### Opening Hours consultation

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to the public consultation which ended on 4 April. We received over 160 responses. During the consultation, serious concerns were expressed about the plans to reduce opening hours. This included feedback from the National Archives on the recent application for accredited status by Shropshire Archives, and the position of the service as a place of deposit for public records. The accreditation application was deferred with the suggestion that a further application be made later in the year if the budget position improved.

As a result, I am pleased to tell you that additional funding has been secured for Shropshire Archives to largely maintain its current opening hours, with enhanced access to original archive material.

From 1 June 2016 the opening hours will be:

Wednesday	10am - 4pm
Thursday	10am - 4pm
Friday	10am - 4pm
1st Saturday in every month	10am - 4pm

Both the reading room and the searchroom, will be open during these times though documents would need to be ordered in advance at certain times. Saturday opening was strongly supported in the consultation. We hope a full day opening will be popular with our customers, we will review this after 6 months.

Madeley Court Works  
Shropshire Archives ref. PH/M/1/8/2



As you can appreciate this has been a very difficult time for myself and all the staff, and I have very much appreciated the support of the Friends, especially the officers and committee.

### 'Telford Our New Town' and Madeley History Project

We have been working with Telford & Wrekin libraries on the Heritage Lottery funded 'Telford Our New Town' Project which is celebrating the creation and development of Telford. One of the largest collections we hold is the records of the Telford Development Corporation, and through the support of this project, we have been able to catalogue and digitise selected sections of the collection. Digitised images are now available online and on the digital table at Southwater library. A celebration event is planned at the library for 5th May.

Following the success of this project, Madeley Town Council has also bid for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. This has now been achieved, and we will be able to work on the Madeley sections of the collection, including photographs. We will keep you informed of progress with this work.

Please send any comments to:  
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