



SHROPSHIRE
ARCHIVES

Salopian Recorder



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

Salopian Recorder

The newsletter of the
Friends of Shropshire Archives

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 apattison@clara.net

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

Contact...

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Website: www.shropshirearchives.org.uk

Contents

Archives and Museums in Lockdown

Shropshire Archives

While in lockdown we want to help you unlock the potential of the image collections at Shropshire Archives.

Re-create

See if you can re-create some of the photographs! We've followed the lead of the Getty Museum Challenge. Staff have (in their own time) re-created a few of our favourite photographs and challenge you to get involved. Read more on our [Re-create: photographs blog post](#) and get ready for some more ideas on our social media

Click the images opposite to take a look!

The hermit in his cell at Hawkstone. Shropshire Archives ref: PH/H/12/3/1

Shropshire Museums

Share a Mindful Moment with Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

Shropshire Museums have launched a 'mindful museums' project and want you to take part. The museums team have produced a series of short videos offering listeners a mindful exploration of artworks and objects held in the collection of Shropshire Museums. The videos are accompanied by a restful audio track by artist & educator Lindsey Kennedy, which encourages listeners to 'look, to breathe and to be curious'.

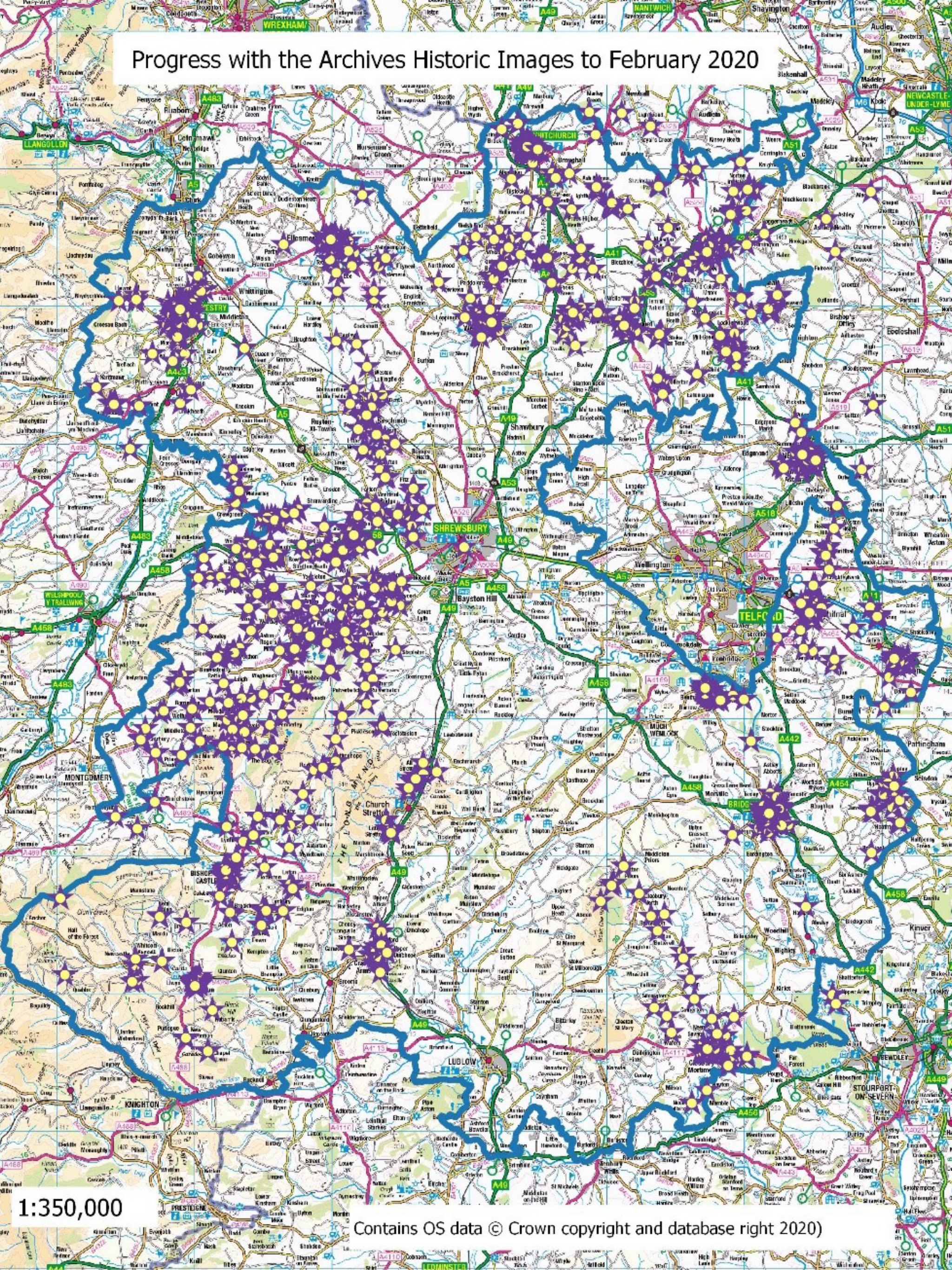
The first video of the series features a beautiful blue and white Caughley china tea pot. A selection of activity sheets to support each video have been produced to help viewers to get started with their own creative projects. All the videos and activity sheets are available on the [Shrewsbury Museums website](#).

Mrs E (Beth) Picken and boys on a picnic. Shropshire Archives ref: PH/B/34/85/388



Mr & Mrs Edward Picken. Shropshire Archives ref: PH/B/34/85/353

Progress with the Archives Historic Images to February 2020



1:350,000

Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2020)

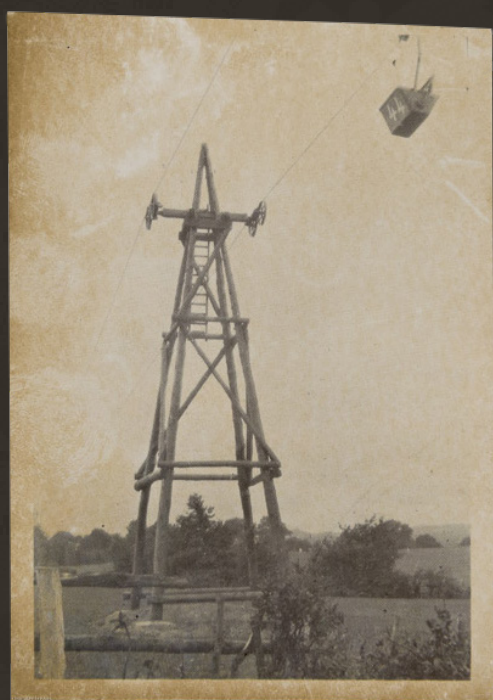
Feature

Penny Ward

Pinning Historic Photos to a Map

Since Autumn 2016 I have been engaged in a fascinating project to place the digitised Shropshire Archives historic images on online mapping. This is done by adding their National Grid Coordinates to their Catalogue entry in Shropshire Archives' CALM software. The images can then be displayed at their location on a map view. This provides users with a search mechanism that is not dependent on whatever place name or address, if any, is given in the catalogue description.

Since I started with this, Wendy Horton, and latterly Dave Greetham, have joined me in this epic task, and we have now pinned down over 8600 images. To date we have covered the area of the Stiperstones and Corndon Hill Landscape Partnership Project, most of the market towns apart from Ludlow and Much Wenlock (which we are working on at present), and more rural locations in the north of the county. The Shrewsbury photo collections will be dealt with last.



A wooden tower for an aerial cableway from The Bog mine to a siding, later the site of a barytes grindingmill, at Malehurst.
Shropshire Archives ref: PH/B/19/16

Capturing the Coordinates

The main tool we are using is the Shropshire Council's Intranet GIS system. GIS stands for Geographic Information System. This is software that combines "Raster" data (scanned maps or aerial photography), with "Vector" data which consists of points, lines or polygons drawn on the maps using coordinates, with searchable attribute data attached.¹

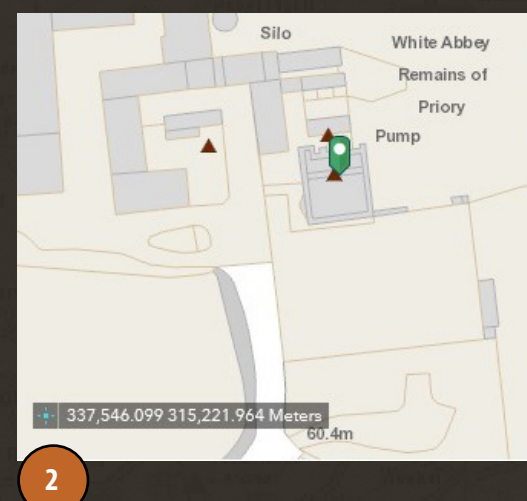
At the bottom of the map is a text box that gives the coordinates of the location of the cursor. However, if you click on the symbol to the left of the box, it changes to a tool to give the coordinates of any point on the map that you click on.²

You can then select, copy and paste the coordinates into a document or spreadsheet list of the historic images you are working on. The first value is the Easting, the second value is the Northing. 337,546.099 315,221.964 This is rounded to the nearest whole number i.e. 337546 315222.

This tool is also available on the maps available to the public on the Shropshire Council website - why not try it out? Go to the bottom of the Shropshire Council website and click on Maps and choose a Map from the Public Gallery.

The photographs are organised into collections based on the place they are associated with, but these places can vary from large towns with hundreds of images, to specific places like the Bog (PH/B/19). Sometimes photographs of a particular place have ended up in several different collections. This will not matter once they are displayed on a map at the photograph's actual location.

To date we have covered the area of the Stiperstones and Corndon Hill Landscape Partnership Project, most of the market towns apart from Ludlow and Much Wenlock (which we are working on at present), and more rural locations in the north of the county.





Our method of working is as follows:

We open CALM and carry out a search of the next collection we want to work on, and then export those records to create a checklist which can be saved as an Excel worksheet. We then add columns for CALM's "Place Status" and "Place Coordinates" fields.

We work through the checklist and add the coordinates of those photographs whose location we can identify to the Place Coordinates column. In the Place Status column we indicate which source(s) we used to locate the photo.

In general, the images fall into two types. They are either photographs of specific sites, usually buildings, and the coordinates we capture for those are of the centre of that building. The other type is a view of a streetscape or a landscape, in which case we pin its location to the point from which the photograph was taken

The version of the Shropshire Council IGIS (Internal GIS) that we use is the one maintained by the Shropshire HER (Historic Environment Record), and it contains vector data mapping of all the sites and buildings and other historic features recorded by the HER.³

*The Yew Tree Inn, All Stretton.
Shropshire Archives ref: PH/A/13/29*



We can click on the point or polygon for the feature we think is the one in the photograph, and it will take us to the HER record for the building or site it relates to, and we then read the description and decide if it the right one, as in this example, the Yew Tree Inn, All Stretton (*opposite*).⁴

For buildings for which there is no HER record, if the photograph has an address, we can use the Address Point data to pinpoint its location, although we find that sometimes addresses have changed. For identifying the location of buildings that are no longer extant, the Historic Environment IGIS has some useful scanned historic map layers, including the Second Edition 1:2500 OS mapping.

The other resource we use for identifying specific buildings that we cannot locate using the methods above, and for locating the point from which streetscapes and other general views were taken, is Google Street View. This enables us to move up and down the modern road until we match the view in the historic photo, and then we can usually work out where we are on the map.

Locating these photographs often involves quite a bit of detective work and lateral thinking, as the Title and Description are frequently quite vague, and the buildings or views have often changed considerably since the photograph was taken. However, that also means that when you identify a building or view that has been hard to place, it is extremely satisfying.

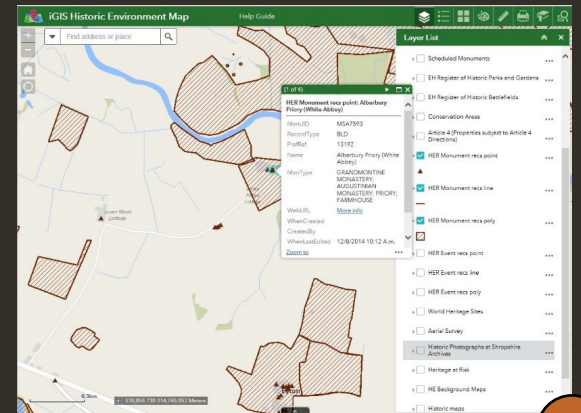
After we have located maybe 100 or so records in a collection, we copy and paste the Place Status and Place coordinate data into the CALM records.

Once these updated records are refreshed on the online database, the images should appear on the Discovering Shropshire's History (DSH) and Shropshire Archives maps. The latter is currently still not fully developed, and so for the present I would suggest zooming in on the DSH map in the location you wish to check.⁶

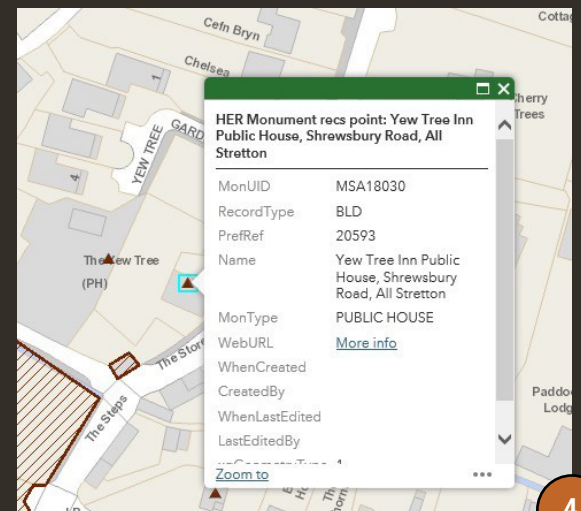
http://search.shropshirehistory.org.uk/map_v3/

Pan around to the location you are interested in, then zoom in, and the photos will appear on the map. (Switch off the "Search Results" to remove the purple points and areas.) Click on a photo and it will take you to the relevant record on the online database.

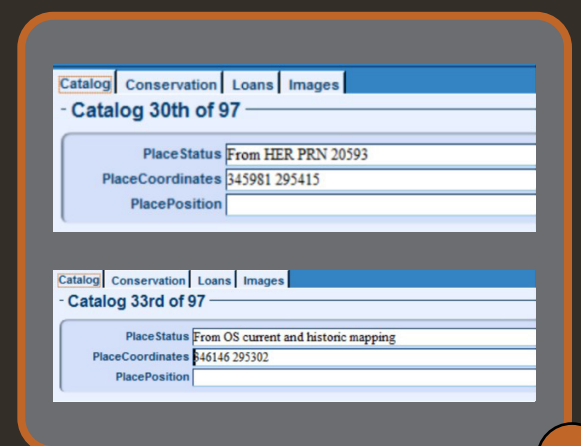
An advantage of entering the coordinates into the checklist is that the Excel file can then be converted into a vector GIS points file that can be loaded into the IGIS map. Potentially, in the future, this file could be loaded into a dedicated IGIS map on the Archives PCs, and possibly even on a Shropshire Archives Map in the Shropshire Council Public Map Gallery.



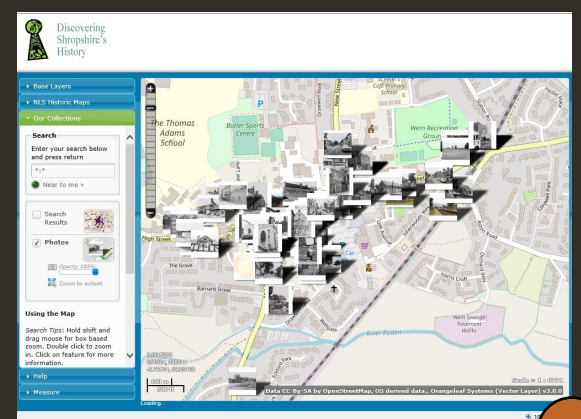
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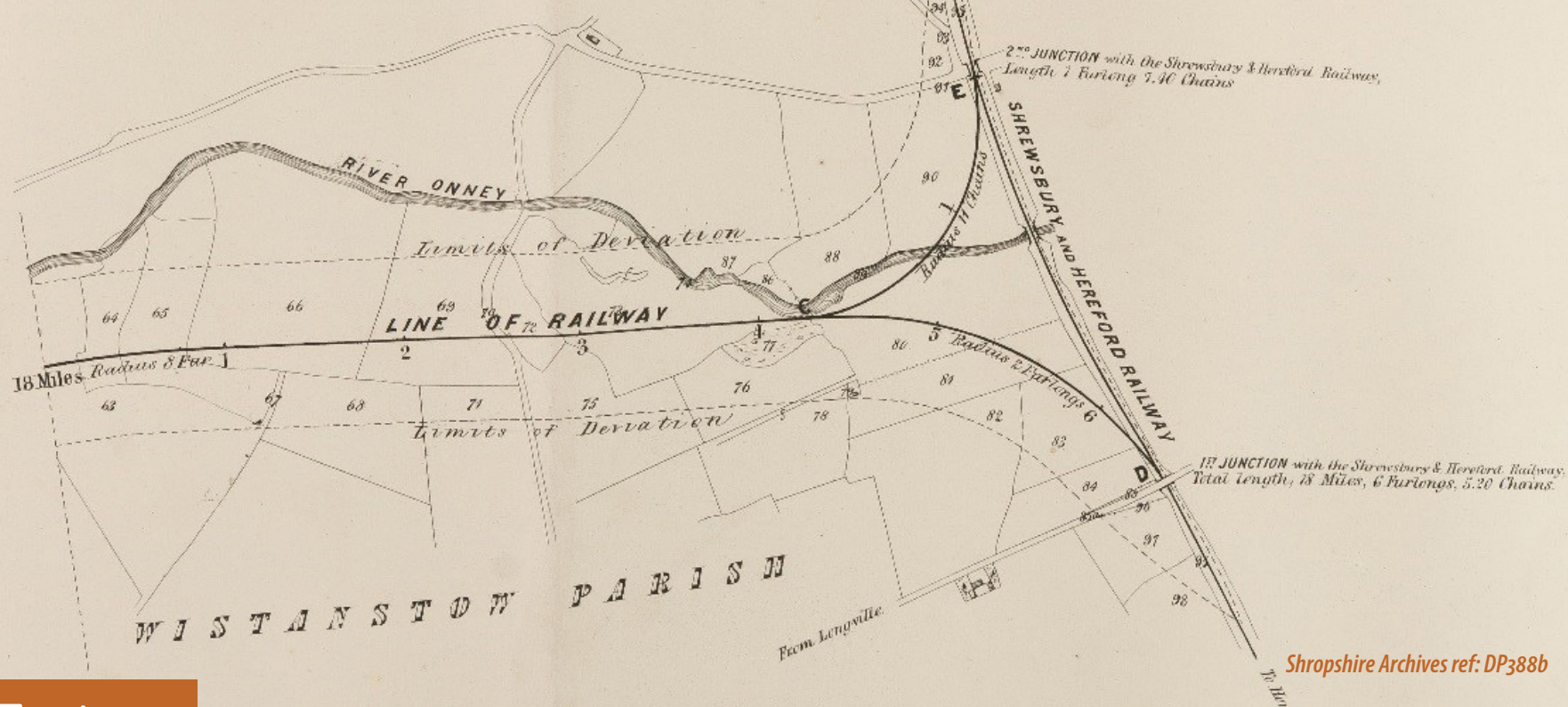


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6

COUNTY OF SALOP



Feature

Nicholas Harding

The Bishop's Castle Railways that never were

In researching proposed railway schemes centred on Bishop's Castle, I made extensive use of the Shropshire Archives collection of Deposited Plans. These documents are archived under the Quarter Sessions collection as QE/7: *Public undertakings: Plans of schemes (1792-1916)* and catalogued in the form DPXXX. These schemes were of a public utility nature and included bridges, roads, canals, railways, and utilities such as electricity, gas and water.

Parliament required that proposals for such schemes be deposited with the Clerk of the Peace of the relevant county in the form of a set of plans and reference books; for railways these documents consisted of a set of plans and sections, a map of the proposed railways drawn in red ink on a one-inch OS map, a book of reference and a copy of the notice to appear in the London Gazette. The line of the railway was drawn on the plan with deviations indicated and affected properties identified by a number. Corresponding to this number would be an entry in the reference

book. This gave a description of the property and the names of the owner, lessee and occupier.

Copies were deposited with each parish through which the railway passed, but only plans of that part of the line within the parish. It appears that most of these parish copies have not survived. One exception is the Wistanstow copy of DP388 which is in the hands of the Bishop's Castle Railway Society. If a railway traversed through another county, a complete set was submitted to the clerk of that county. In the case of the Presteign, Clun and Bishop's Castle Railway (DP456b), in addition to Shrewsbury, sets were deposited in Hereford and Presteign; both exist in the Herefordshire Archives and Powys Archives respectively.

The original Bishop's Castle Railway (BCR) proposal was submitted to the Clerk of Peace in Shrewsbury on 30 November 1860 and is to be found in DP388a; shortly thereafter deviations were made as described in DP388b. These plans show a double junction

formed with the Shrewsbury & Hereford Railway (S&H) at Stretford Bridge – see image above. The planned northern junction was soon dropped and forgotten, until brought to light in our book *The Bishop's Castle Railways that never were*.

The north junction passes through field numbered 90 as it joins the S&H at Stretford Bridge. The book of reference lists the owner/occupier as William Phillips who is noted as being 'Lord of the Manor of Wistanstow, in Purslow Hundred'. The properties listed as belonging to the S&H are said to be leased by one Thomas Brassey. Brassey was the S&H contractor who undertook to work the line at his own cost opening the line to Ludlow in 1852 and to Hereford the next year. He relinquished the lease in 1862 when the railway was taken over by the GWR and LNWR and was operated as a joint line.

As is well-known, the BCR was a failure; only the line from Craven Arms to Lydham Heath and the branch to Bishop's Castle were built and the railway was in financial

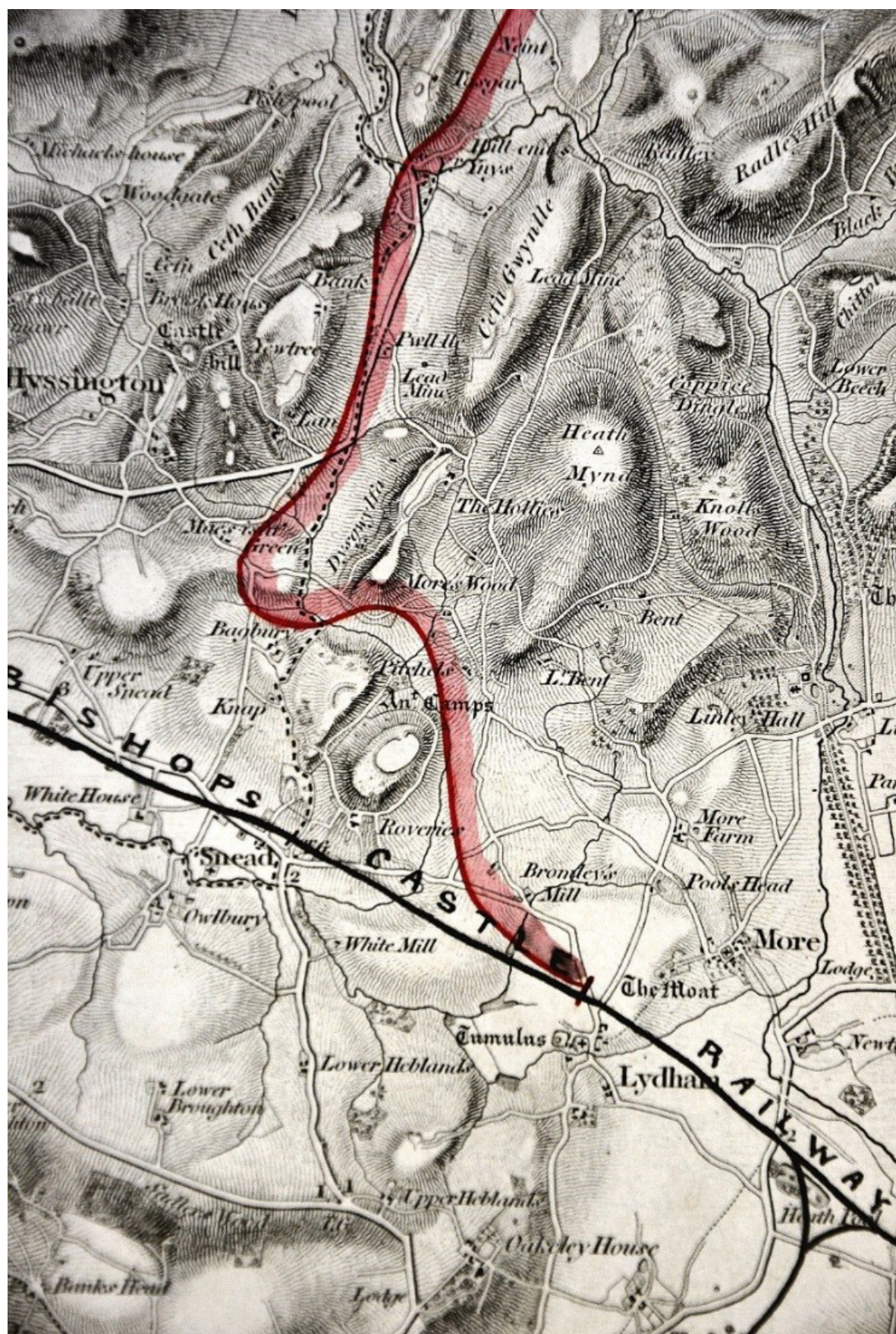
difficulties for all seventy years of its existence. The railway's main line was to connect Craven Arms on the S&H with Montgomery on the Oswestry and Newtown Railway. During the early 1860s, proposals were put forth to make other connections with the main line. One of these was the Shrewsbury and Potteries Junction Railway of 1865 (DP450). This would have provided the BCR with a connection to Shrewsbury via the Potteries Shrewsbury & North Wales Railway – the beloved 'Potts'. For much of its journey, this railway would have run parallel to the line of the future A488 making a junction with the BCR near Lydham village as seen on the map opposite; this the southern portion of the required map, shows the line of the railway in red ink on a copy of the one-inch OS map.

Those with a sharp eye and local knowledge would see that something is missing. Yes, the A488 from Bromley's Mill! This stretch of railway would have been very difficult, and expensive, to construct since it had to navigate around the quarry at Squilver (Disgwylfa Hill). This is the same reason why the A488 was so long in coming.

Aided by the Deposited Plans in the Shropshire Archives, I wrote a piece for the South West Shropshire Historical and Archaeological Society (SWSHAS) Journal (2017 issue) on road connections between Bishop's Castle and Minsterley. The journey from Bishop's Castle to Minsterley through the Hope Valley took a very circuitous route: Bishop's Castle and Churchstoke turnpike to the Minsterley and Churchstoke turnpike near the Ivy House. This latter road headed to Churchstoke from Pultheley along the road through Hyssington and is detailed in DP242. It was not until the late 19th century that the 'bypass' was constructed from Bromley's Mill to Pultheley.

This stretch of railway would have been very difficult, and expensive, to construct since it had to navigate around the quarry at Squilver... This is the same reason why the A488 was so long in coming.

DP456b of 1865 describes a very strange railway: *The Presteign Clun and Bishops Castle Railway*. Incorporated in 1866 this railway consisted of two lines: Presteign to Clun (why, on earth?) and one diverging at Hopton Heath - see plan here - to Broome and on to Craven Arms running parallel to the Central Wales Railway! At Craven Arms it



Shropshire Archives ref: DP450

would join the BCR. Very weird; covered in great detail in our book, *The Bishop's Castle Railways that never were*.

I arranged with Nat Stevenson from Shropshire Archives to have some of the railway DPs digitised. The BCR Society kindly covered the cost of digitising DP388a: *Bishop's Castle Railway* and DP396: *Shrewsbury and Welshpool Railway*. I paid for the digitisation of DP450: *Shrewsbury and Potteries Junction Railway: Minsterley and Bishop's Castle extensions* and DP456b: *Presteign, Clun and Bishop's Castle Railway*.

These have significantly enhanced the quality of the illustrations in the book.

Access to high quality copies of these four sets of documents should eliminate the need to consult the originals. This, of course, assumes that they become accessible to the public. Information on the activities of the Bishop's Castle Railway Society and its publications, including my book, can be found on their website: www.bcrailway.co.uk from which it may be purchased for £13.70 + postage. There is also a copy for reference in the Archives.



Feature

Sue Cleaves

Katherine Plymley's Journals

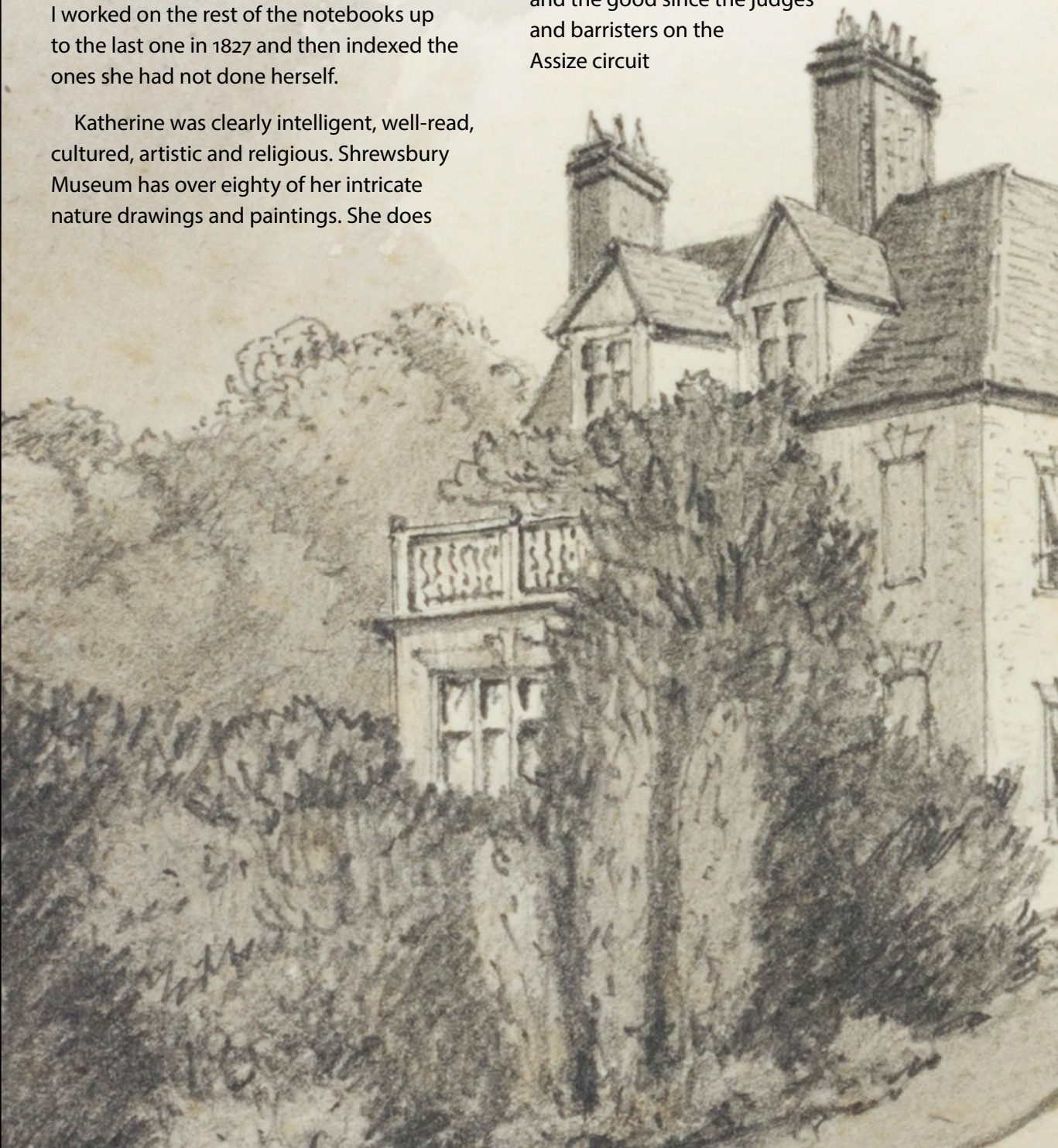
As I noted in my diary at the time, I first 'met' Katherine Plymley on 11th January 2019 when I started digitising her journals (*SA 1066/60 – 138*). By 25th January I was hooked, as my diary records! I had already 'met' her brother, Archdeacon Joseph Plymley, thanks to Dr Sylvia Watt's transcriptions of his parish visitation records. Katherine, Joseph and their sister, Ann, were the children of another Joseph Plymley, an apothecary from Longnor and Shrewsbury.

Katherine's earlier journals, which start in 1791, had already been digitised to help a professor in the United States with his studies on the Abolition of the Slave Trade. Her brother Joseph was very much involved in the campaign in this part of the country. I worked on the rest of the notebooks up to the last one in 1827 and then indexed the ones she had not done herself.

Katherine was clearly intelligent, well-read, cultured, artistic and religious. Shrewsbury Museum has over eighty of her intricate nature drawings and paintings. She does

not mention this aspect of her life at all in these journals. She and her sister Ann, who suffered from ill-health all her life, took on much of the early education of her brother's surviving twelve children, especially the girls. All bar one of the boys became barristers or clergymen. The odd one out, Robert, was very keen to go into the army but his father forbade it. He then turned to commerce and from his letters to Katherine we can follow the twists and turns of his life and the commercial life of this country.

She wrote of the day-to-day activities at home in Longnor and her frequent trips and visits around the county and the country. After 1804 when Joseph inherited Longnor Hall and the Corbett name, she came into contact with even more of the great and the good since the judges and barristers on the Assize circuit



were given hospitality on their journeys between Shrewsbury and Hereford. In later years her nephews, Panton and Uvedale were included. The journals contain transcriptions of many of the letters written and received by Joseph. The period of her writing coincides with many momentous events, including the period of the French Revolution, the rise and fall of Napoleon and the war with the French from 1793 – 1815.

Her travels were often lengthy and written up in a separate set of notebooks. A trip to London in 1795 was for eight days, but a later trip to Cornwall including the Scilly Isles, lasted ten months. She visited Plas Gwyn in Anglesey where Joseph's first wife's parents lived. This account includes many interactions en route with the local gentry or just their properties. Yes, it does bring "Pride and Prejudice" to mind, and this is how I envisage her. She notes on this trip that the

three children had their portraits painted by Moses Griffith. Locally she describes a visit to Coalbrookdale in 1794 and describes following the Reynolds walks and seeing the fires by night. Details of various means of travel are described and sometimes visits costed.

Both Joseph and Katherine were very involved in religious activities. As Archdeacon of Salop, Joseph had the care of all the Shropshire parishes in the Hereford Diocese. Longnor Church figured highly in both their lives and the baptisms of all the family appear in the registers, though burials were at Leebotwood. Both were very involved with the Church Missionary Society after its inception in 1799. Her notebooks contain press cuttings of meetings and addresses by her brother and services in which they were involved.



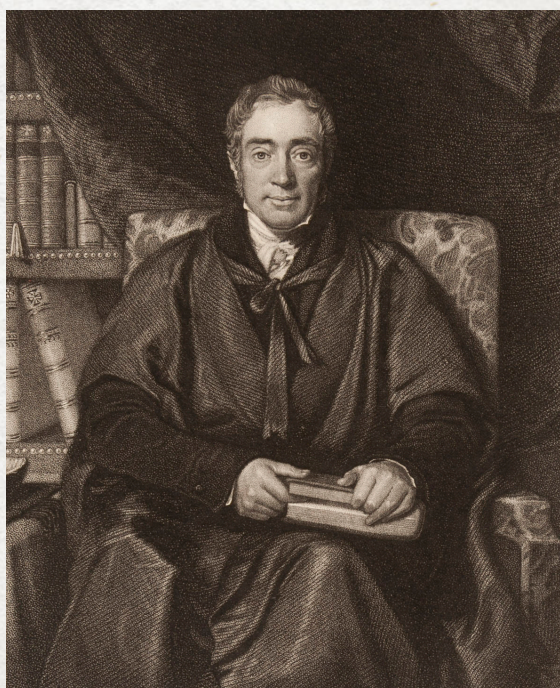
Stanley Leighton sketch of Longnor [Hall] (Edward Corbett esq), (with Bank in background), 15 Aug 1877. Shropshire Archives ref: 6805/1/25



Stanley Leighton sketch, Longnor Bank, 29 Jun 1900. Shropshire Archives ref: 6805/1/27

There are very few mentions of “ordinary” folk. There are no mentions of servants unless they were very ill or dying. Yet the household management of Bank House must have occupied a considerable amount of her time. Visitors and dinner guests were very frequent. She dined with Joseph and family at the Hall frequently where there were even more guests.

One “ordinary” person she does mention is Samuel Lee (1793 – 1853). He was born into a carpenter’s family in Longnor. He was first apprenticed to a carpenter, but then showed such an aptitude for languages that Joseph and Katherine became involved in his education. The Church Missionary Society paid for him to go to Cambridge and he became a clergyman. His languages include Arabic, Hebrew, Persian and Hindustani and he became Professor of Arabic in 1819.



*The Revd Samuel Lee B.D. &c,
Shropshire Archives ref: PR/2/594*

Nephew Panton became a barrister and later an M.P. for Shrewsbury. Katherine’s descriptions of the process and the fact that he would take no bribes are worth following. I had never heard of the “chairing” ceremony around the town before reading her accounts. I was pulled up short in a corridor at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital recently where the arms of past Treasurers are displayed and there was Panton Corbett, Treasurer 1850.

*Right: Rose Chafer Cetonia aurata. “Scarabeas auratus”, a watercolour by Katherine Plymley.
Shropshire Museums ref: sy4775*



I became very interested in the illnesses and treatment of various complaints. Dr. Darwin (Charles’ father) is mentioned, but later the physician of choice is Dr Thomas DuGard, a most interesting character. He had an unusual youth and spent some time in the United States before reaching Shrewsbury. He was too forward thinking for the existing medical circle in Shrewsbury and it took some years before he was accepted as a physician at the infirmary. Katherine’s favourite niece, Jane, was treated by him with electric shocks. He visited Longnor often to treat complaints described as: ‘the illness of Mr. Plymley’, ‘Hooping Cough’ [sic], ‘Panton’s dangerous illness’, ‘Joseph’s lumbago’ and so on. He even told her the tale of an incident on his return journey from Aberystwyth where he came across an accident and “was obliged to trepan the poor young woman” [make a hole in her skull]!

Katherine was clearly intelligent, well-read, cultured, artistic and religious. Shrewsbury Museum has over eighty of her intricate nature drawings and paintings.

More of Katherine Plymley’s drawings and paintings can be seen on the [Darwin Country website](#).

*Right: Jasmine Jasminum sp..
Flowering Plant, a watercolour by Katherine Plymley.
Shropshire Museums ref: sy4694*



From the Chair

Jill Ming

I write this in extraordinary times. The scale of the changes being forced upon us by the Covid-19 pandemic is affecting every aspect of our lives. In the face of the health, social and economic challenges we are facing, we have to stay strong and support one other as best we can.

We have followed Government advice and cancelled our Volunteer event on 21 March, our map sale on 4 April, our visit to Aldenham Park on 5 May, and our AGM on 24 June. By the time you read this, later summer events may also have been affected. The Friends are keeping in touch with you by email and posting updates on our website www.friendsofshropshirearchives.org/events.

We do have some good news. The sale of Ordnance Survey maps that we held in December raised over £600 which, together with your

generous donations, enabled us to secure the necessary funding for the Fulke Greville appeal. Thank you for all your gifts and support, they have enabled this precious volume to be conserved and saved.

The Friends have catalogued and sorted a further 350 second edition Ordnance Survey maps which will be available for sale when normal services are resumed. In the meantime, if you wish to check availability or reserve any maps you may do so by emailing friendsofshropshirearchives@gmail.com. There is a graphical map index on our website at www.friendsofshropshirearchives.org/events. As before, the second edition maps dating from the early 1900s are £3 per sheet. There are also a few first edition maps dating from the 1880s, some in colour, which are £10 per sheet.

Keep well and thank you for your continued support. ■

Feature

Sue Cleaves

Friends of Shropshire Archives Annual Lecture - November 2019

Dr Kate Croft (pictured) paid her second visit to the Archives to delight us with a talk entitled "Women of Excellent Understanding – Wives and Daughters of the Lunar Society". (The Lunar Society or Circle was a club which met in and around Birmingham between 1765 and 1813 to discuss science and technology. It never had more than fourteen core members, each noted for a particular area of expertise. They met monthly on the nearest Monday to the full moon when it was safest to travel.)

Kate concentrated firstly on Mary Priestley (1744 - 96), the sister of John Wilkinson the iron master. She went to Pennsylvania with her husband Joseph, best known as the discoverer of oxygen, in 1794 after their house in England was destroyed in riots. Mary designed their new home from scratch and managed the project so that her husband could "fulfil his potential".

Richard Lovell Edgeworth had four wives and twenty-two children. Honoria, his second wife (1753 -80), was ahead of her time and used experimental science to bring up the children. She died in Shropshire and is buried at Weston-under-Lizard. Elizabeth, her sister,

the third wife, continued on the same path. Maria, one of his daughters, was her father's writing partner and a novelist in her own right.

Josiah Wedgwood described his wife, Sally (1734 -1815) as "my chief helpmate". She sent her spinning wheel to the lumber room, approved his designs and helped with his ceramic experiments. His daughter, Sarah, did not marry but devoted herself and her money to philanthropic causes – especially Anti-Slavery.

Peggy and Ann Watt were the successive wives of James Watt, the canal surveyor, who had a depressive nature. Peggy (1736 -73) ran his shop in Glasgow and after her death Ann (1738 -1832) married him when he moved to Birmingham. Both encouraged him to "Keep Going" and be optimistic.

I thought all of these women would be even greater forces to be reckoned with in today's world. Beside all the support they gave to their husbands, most had families of their own and step-children, ran extensive households, and were forever subject to the fortunes of ill health and early death. ■



Mary designed their new home from scratch and managed the project so that her husband could "fulfil his potential".

Some notes on the archives' photographic collection

Around twelve years ago, when work was beginning on cataloguing the collection, there were thought to be some 86,000 photographs. At that time, Tony Carr, about to retire as Local Studies Librarian, had identified almost all of them, using his outstanding knowledge of the collection and of the county.

There were about half-a-dozen volunteers working on the collection, one day a week and we reckoned that we would still be at it in our late '80s! Fortunately, Mary McKenzie was able to get some lottery funding, additional volunteers were recruited who dealt with many of the rural areas, whilst the rest of us concentrated on Shrewsbury, by far the largest part of the collection.

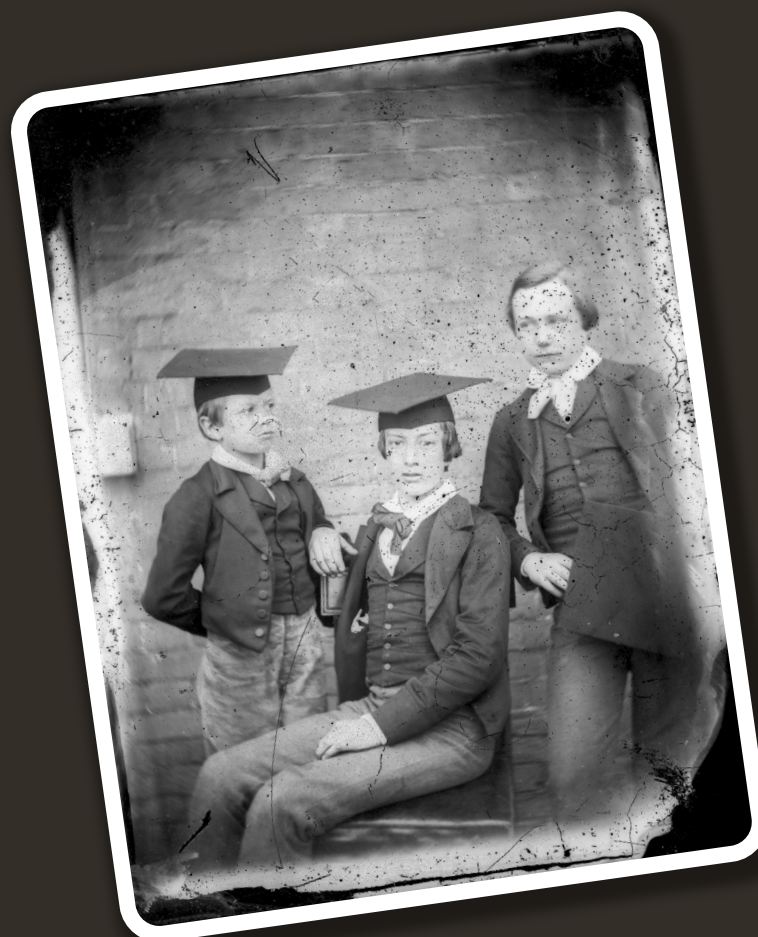
This enabled the vast majority of the collection to be made available online. This is not a simple matter and involves many people, both permanent staff and volunteers. The photographs have not only been catalogued, but also edited and copyright checked. Digital images are provided by Nat Stevenson and his team of volunteers. Only then can they be placed online. The vast majority of the collection is now available in this way, but there are still many more photographs to come.

Tony Price and I, the two remaining volunteer cataloguers, are now tackling the difficult parts of the collection. Delaine Haynes, who is presently cataloguing other collections, helps us with her knowledge of Shrewsbury. No longer spoon-fed by Tony Carr, we do our best. Lately, Tony Price has concentrated on researching the work of Mr Picken, Bucknell's remarkable photographer from before World War I until the early 1960s, and also garage owner, furniture maker, postmaster, and much else. Meanwhile, I have been struggling with the collection of some 1,500 photographs amassed by L C Lloyd, FSA, a keen member of both the Shropshire Photographic Society and the Caradoc and Severn Valley Field Club, from around 1920 to the early 1950s.

Now, one or two pleas. We would love to have photographs of present day Shropshire, especially local and national events and town and village centres. Many think we are only interested in things historical, but all our photographs were modern once! It is excellent if photographs can show shop staff and interiors as well as the shop fronts. And please date your photos, on the back, in pen and ink (pencils and biros can damage the photograph) and provide a brief description. Mr Lloyd was a horror at not doing this and descriptions such as "wall" for a photograph of a featureless wall, or "house" do not give one much to go on! Keen photographers sometimes just give us the exposure and focal length, which can be frustrating!

Some subjects, too, seem to be excessively attractive. The Iron Bridge is understandable, and we have a fine and useful collection of pictures of it over the years. However, for some reason, we have dozens of shots of the stairs leading to the hall on the site now occupied by Pret a Manger, which may or may not have been Charles I's mint, and just about every postcard manufacturer's version of Lord Hill's Column and its surroundings in the 1920s and 1930s. It might, please, be a good idea to keep further examples of the last two as family souvenirs!

Finally, here are a few random examples from the collection:



One of our oldest photographs, around 1860 - Three pupils of a predecessor of Ellesmere College. Shropshire Archives ref: PHE/8/14/8



Above: A bus attempting to travel from Cleobury Mortimer to Bewdley in winter 1947. Shropshire Archives ref: PH/C/23/2/88



Above: George V in the Square, 3 Jul 1914 - A full scale state visit with Landau, Sovereign's Escort of the Household Cavalry and the royal train. He made the Salop Infirmary 'Royal' and opened the Royal Show. Shropshire Archives ref: PH/S/13S/28/15



Circus elephants at the top of Wyle Cop, en route to the Big Top. Note children and adults walking beside the elephants. Shropshire Archives ref: PH/S/13/W/7/40



Above: Ellesmere Fire Brigade's steam operated Merryweather Fire Pump of 1885 in action. It continued in use until the advent of the National Fire Service for World War II. Shropshire Archives ref: PH/E/8/10/33



Left: - Henry Tudor House. In the 1920s and '30s an open-fronted fish shop owned by Harry Mudd. Shropshire Archives ref: PH/S/13/W/5/55

A selection of Edward Pryce Owens sketches which have recently been added to our online catalogue. You can read more about them [on our blog](#).

Since I wrote the last update it feels like everything around us has changed due to the coronavirus! We closed

Shropshire Archives to the public on Friday 20 March, which was a very sad day, and since then the staff have been largely working from home. We had to say goodbye to our volunteers and Friends, though we have been keeping in touch online. Do [sign up to our e-newsletter](#) if you haven't already. This time has also allowed us to reflect on how we deliver the services we provide, and we have all taken a big step up in terms of using a range of technologies to work from home. I am sure that many of these changes will continue long into the future.

I hope you and your families are all safe and well, and that you are managing with the new challenges we all face. I am self-isolating at home as my husband is in a high-risk category, so it may be a long time before I am back in the office. It has been inspiring to see that many people have reconnected with a huge range of cultural activities during this period – I trust Shropshire Archives can continue to be part of that.

Here is an update on our work since the last Recorder.

Join us online

In the new world Shropshire Archives staff have been exploring how we can connect with our supporters and customers without access to the building. The priority has been to make more information accessible online. We have been able to add both descriptive records to the catalogue and images of documents. We have also been working through our backlogs of partly catalogued material, and we've enjoyed the opportunity to process some of these. To date, at the end of May, we have added and amended over 70,000 records to the on-line catalogue.. Our website has also been revised to highlight what we can offer for remote users.

We have set up some challenges for people to get more involved with our wonderful collections:

Recreate: Based on the [J Paul Getty Museum project](#) we are asking you to recreate one of our photographs using whoever and whatever you have to hand. The staff have been having a go already as you can see from [page 3](#)!

Remember: Can you add some memories to our records? It might be a photograph that you can identify or fill in more information about. Or a building that triggers memories? Or indeed a mistake in the catalogue – please tell us about all of them.

Rewrite: We're looking for creative responses to our collections. Does a record or an image inspire a piece of historical fiction, a poem or a drawing?

Shropshire Coronavirus diaries

We want to hear about your experiences of Spring 2020 and the impact of the lockdown. The experience of individuals in times of national crisis will be important for future historical research. This could be a daily journal, a descriptive piece of writing, or even a poem or drawing. You might like to photograph life in lockdown – closed shops, deserted streets or unexpected wildlife. The positive as well as the unsettling would be interesting to record.

For all these projects, please send your contributions to archives@shropshire.gov.uk. We'd like to share as much as possible, but if you'd prefer us not to, then let us know.

Archives Accreditation

Shropshire Archives was successful in meeting the requirements of the mid-term Accreditation review established by the National Archives. Our accreditation has now been confirmed until we need to resubmit our application in late 2021. As part of the process we had updated our Forward plan. This will now need to be reviewed along with our 2020/2021 team plan as a result of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

Conservation projects

Funding has been secured for two important conservation projects. One, as a result of the Friends appeal, is to work on the 16th century manuscript life of Sir Philip Sidney by Fulke Greville. The other project

is to conserve a collection of large-scale cartoons we believe are by the 19th century stained glass artist David Evans. Funding for this project has been received from the National Conservation Manuscripts Trust. Seren Fisher, our senior conservator, is also currently self isolating, so work on these projects has been suspended. We will review our options to complete these projects later in the year.

Picture That, Telford's Story

Shropshire Archives is working with the Wrekin Local Studies Forum on the Picture That, Telford's Story project to make accessible over 15,000 photographs within the Telford Development Corporation Archive. The project will create an on-line resource highlighting the development and history of Telford. A very successful public consultation took place in February which reached over 400 people. Of these over 90% said they'd be interested in attending an event organised by the project, and 95% said they'd be interested in using the online resources. It was intended to seek funding from the National Heritage Fund, but the fund is currently closed to all new project applications. However, the group is continuing to work on the application, in the hope that an application can be made in future.

Looking ahead

Following government guidance, we are now planning how we can re-open the service to the public. This will be a gradual process, and the service may look rather different than before. Archive services across the country are of course all in a similar position, and we are working together with the support of the National Archives to ensure the security and safety of both our collections and our customers. We will keep you informed through the Friends and our online channels.

Please send any comments to:
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Tel: 0345 6789096
Email: mary.mckenzie@shropshire.gov.uk
Website: www.shropshirearchives.org.uk



Diary Dates

Saturday 4 July, 2020

Shropshire's Mayflower Children: History Day

We have decided to postpone this event for a whole year to give time for the corona virus to be controlled. This means we will be commemorating 400 + 1 years since the Mayflower sailed with our four children of the More family on board.

Eighty-four people bought tickets for this event and we are hoping that all of these can make the new date:

Saturday 3 July 2021

The venue, programme and afternoon visits remain the same as planned for 2020. If you are happy with the new date, there's no need to do anything; your ticket/s will be valid. Please keep them safely.

If you are unable to attend on the new date, please let me know so we can resell the tickets. In this case, you may:

- Cancel your ticket/s and obtain a refund – send me your bank account name, sort code and account number. Sorry, we can't offer a cheque.
- Cancel your ticket/s and donate the cost to Shropshire's Mayflower Children

So, fingers crossed, we look forward to an interesting day on 3 July 2021. I'll contact you in a year's time to confirm the arrangements.



Mike Brogden, Secretary
mike@brogden.info
www.shropshiresmayflowerchildren.com

Future Friends Events

It has been agreed that the Friends will postpone the visit to Pitchford Hall, that had been scheduled for Thursday 20 August 2020, until next year.

This year's annual lecture is planned to be delivered by Louisa Yates, Director of Collections and Research at Gladstone's Library on 31 October, with the title 'Gladstone's Library: its history and its present role'. This event will be reviewed in early September and any further details will be announced as soon as they become available.