

MALPAS HISTORY

A magazine for the history of the ancient Parish of Malpas, including the townships of Agden, Bickerton, Bickley, Bradley, Broxton, Bulkeley, Chidlow, Cholmondeley, Chorlton, Cuddington, Duckington, Edge, Egerton, Hampton, Iscoyd, Larkton, Macefen, Malpas, Newton, Oldcastle, Overton, Stockton, Threapwood, Tushingam-cum-Grindley, Wigland and Wychough.

NUMBER ONE

DECEMBER 1983

CONTENTS OF ISSUE NO.1 DECEMBER 1983

PAGE

FRONT COVER

(OUTSIDE & INSIDE)

MALPAS CELEBRATES

3	MALPAS CELEBRATIONS FOR QUEEN VICTORIA'S DIAMOND JUBILEE 1897
4/5	EDITORIAL
5	ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE LION HOTEL, MALPAS, 1864
6-11	MARY DRAKE: MEMORIES OF THE ALPORT (ILLUSTRATED)
11	MALPAS IN THE 18 TH CENTURY: EXTRACT FROM COWDROY'S DIRECTORY 1789
12-17	MARGARET BARKER & NOEL EDWARDS: BRADLEY – A SHRUNKEN SETTLEMENT?
17	19 TH CENTURY POEM ABOUT LEGEND OF KING JAMES (OR JOHN) AT THE RED LION AND THE CREATION OF THE DUAL RECTORY
18-22	GERRARD BARNES: MALPAS IN THE CIVIL WARS
22	'HOMEWATCH' – VICTORIAN STYLE
23-24	F MOORE DUTTON: THE HISTORY OF TUSHINGHAM HALL
25-26	MRS A H BARNETT: ALPORTIANA
BACK COVER	(INSIDE) POEM: THE MALPAS BLACKSMITHS & COCKFIGHTING IN MALPAS
BACK COVER	(OUTSIDE) 19 TH CENTURY DRAWING OF MALPAS CHURCH

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MALPAS CELEBRATES.....

Communal celebrations in general seem to be a thing of the past, although we remember with pleasure the local festivities to celebrate our present Queen's Silver Jubilee in 1977.

Our cover picture shows the tired but jubilant Malpas yeomanry returning in 1902 from the Boer War campaign. The vehicle on which they ride is the Malpas fire engine, known as "The Speedwell", which had been to collect them from the station at Whitchurch. We are grateful to Mrs Dolly Mercer, of Rock Terrace, for the loan of this photograph from her family album. The three members of the yeomanry are seated in the middle, the one on the right being Mrs Mercer's father-in-law, Mr W. O. Mercer, who was born in 1876. The left hand soldier is Thomas Chesworth, known as "The King", but we await identification of the gentleman in the centre. Mrs Mercer's present house can be seen in the background.

Continued

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MALPAS CELEBRATES

Queen Victoria had died the previous year (1901), after a reign of 64 years. Both her Golden and Diamond Jubilees were celebrated with great festivities in Malpas. The photograph below, from Mrs Norah Chesworth's collection, shows the ceremonial arch erected over the High Street for the Golden Jubilee celebrations in 1887. It is this occasion which the Jubilee Hall commemorates. Note the house on the front left of the picture, where the Hall now stands. On the right is the workshop of Mr Callcott, the clock and watch maker.



Ten years later, Malpas celebrated the Diamond Jubilee, as described in the account opposite. This comes from "The Diamond Jubilee in Cheshire: A Descriptive Account of how the Sixtieth Year of the Glorious Reign of Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, Empress of India, was celebrated in the County of Chester". A copy of this book, published in 1899, has been handed down in the Vernon family of Broxton. We are grateful to Mr and Mrs John Vernon for allowing us to copy this extract.

Victoria was succeeded by Edward VII. Our final photograph, also from Mrs Mercer's album, shows the procession at the 1901 Coronation celebrations, swinging from High Street into Church Street, with the Town Band at its head.



PARISH OF MALPAS

(WHITCHURCH UNION).

NAMES OF COUNCILLORS AND OFFICIALS IN OFFICE ON JUBILEE DAY, 1897.

PARISH COUNCILLORS.

Danily, Matthew Henry (Chairman)
Ankers, William
Battarbee, Frederick
Bussey, Joseph
Callcott, Arthur Drummond
Chesworth, Charles
Huxley, Wm. Penlington

Morgan, George Samuel (Rural District Councillor
and Guardian)
Parsonage, Thomas
Reeves, Joseph
Tomlinson, John

OFFICIAL.

Bentley, William, Clerk to Parish Council

[Extracted from MALPAS DEANERY MAGAZINE.]

COMMEMORATION OF THE DIAMOND JUBILEE OF HER MAJESTY AT MALPAS.

Malpas has ever been conspicuous for her loyalty when occasions presented themselves, and we are pleased to note that on this, what may be considered an exceptionally unique occasion, she has exceeded herself and eclipsed her former performances. Some time since an energetic Committee was formed to commemorate the occasion. Subscriptions were solicited and liberally responded to, and the work set in order to make the Diamond Jubilee of her Majesty, as the opportunity merited, a most decided success.

It would perhaps be invidious to particularize the individual efforts energized. The town was particularly noticeable for its display of bunting. Several very artistic arches were erected, and nearly every house was conspicuous by some display of loyalty.

The keynote to the Celebrations was given by the arrival of the Chester Band, playing very lively airs. Then an exodus to the School ground, where a large number of the children were ready for the procession, which took place about two o'clock. The School children (about 500) presented an extremely interesting sight with their medals, display of flowers, and neat apparel, followed by the representatives of the Clergy, Magistracy, Rural District and Parish Councils, wearing loyal colours, together with a large array of the inhabitants of Malpas and district. At

the Cross, the procession halted, and encircling the Cross the children and people were massed, when accompanied by the Band, a whole chorus of voices blending in harmony, rendered in a very hearty manner "God save the Queen." This scene was very impressive, and a local photographer hurriedly endeavoured to place this spectacle on record, but we have not heard what success attended his efforts. Next, advance was made to the fine old Parish Church, where perhaps one of the largest congregations ever assembled to return thanks, we trust sincerely, to the great Disposer of all events for His providential care bestowed on our beloved Queen and nation. This concourse of people next proceeded to the Oxbayes, kindly lent by the Rector and Mr. Dodd for tea, &c. The tea was supplied in three tents to the children (about 500) by Mrs. Taylor. We understand that this was her first attempt at catering for a number, and we congratulate her on the success of this effort. The other two tents supplied the bodily necessities of a large number (over 1,000), and our thanks are due to Mrs. Williams and Mr. Hesketh for their excellent provision. A wise arrangement on the part of the Executive Committee was evinced by ladies waiting on the children and carvers assisting, chiefly farmers and tradesmen, and ably administering to the comforts of the general public. Sports were next the order of the day, and these were ably carried out under the supervision of the Rector, S. H. Sandbach, Esq., Messrs. Done, G. Lewis, J. Wycherley, G. S. Morgan, J. Tomlinson, F. Battarbee, R. Reeves, A. D. Calicott, and

232

H. Mercer. The greasy pole created amusement, though only one competitor presented himself. This adventure from the pole to hot pond resulting in the general public subscribing about £1 7s. 6d. in order to equip him in a new suit, this together with the leg of mutton would repay him for his efforts. Dancing engaged the attention of a good few until about 9-30, when the National Anthem closed the proceedings. Miss Collins catered for those of the public desirous of participating in this particular kind of amusement. We congratulate the executive Committee whose names are appended for the success attending their onerous efforts, and much praise is worthily due to the indefatigable Secretary, Mr. Charles Tomlinson, who by his ubiquitous attendance, and when necessary, exuberant eloquence, stimulated the flagging efforts of any portion of the proceedings. We cannot omit to speak of the illuminations of the town, and shall be pardoned by referring specially to the successful efforts in this respect of Dr. Leigh, Mr. Morgan for the Committee at the Cross, Mr. W. P. Huxley, Mr. Morgan, Mr. Mercer, Mr. Bussey, Mr. G. Bonghey, and cottagers adjacent, Mr. John McCaffery with his eloquent poetry. We are unable to speak about the eloquent speech of one of our worthy Parish Councillors, being of early habits, having retired without the pleasure of listening; no doubt our shorthand writer would perpetuate this episode. The Committee wish to thank the inhabitants for decorating and illuminating their houses, and for the trouble they exercised in order to render the

Jubilee so marked a success; they also tender their thanks to Mr. W. Huxley, who kindly lent the timber for decorating purposes.

We understand as worthy of note that the daughter of our respected Chemist, Mr. Shuttlewood, wore the sash and neck-lace worn by her grandmother at the coronation of Her Majesty.

In conclusion we sincerely trust and pray that the King of kings may yet spare our beloved Queen some time to rule over such an extensive, powerful, and united empire.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

General Committee: Hon. and Rev. A. R. Parker, Hon. G. O. Gore, H. Sandbach, Esq., R. L. Greenshields, Esq., Lieutenant-Colonel Barnston, J. H. Hartley, Esq., W. Jones, Esq., Rev. C. W. Dodd, Dr. Jordison, Messrs. Gerrard, Done, W. P. Huxley, Battarbee, Danily (Chairman), Morgan (Hon. Treasurer), Salt, Callcott, Wycherley, Weaver, W. E. Shuttlewood, J. Tomlinson, Mercer, Cornes, R. Reeves, Barnes, Lewis, Parry, Price, Broad, Clutton, Blantern, Davies, Eardley, Jones, Penk, Evans, Shone, R. Davies, G. White, H. L. Weaver, T. Bevin, J. Jones, and C. Tomlinson (Hon. Secretary).

Executive Committee of Management: Messrs. Wycherley, Mercer, Weaver, R. Reeves, S. Price, J. Broad, H. Bebbington, W. Penk, W. Evans, M. Shone, T. Bevin, G. White, with Chairman, Treasurer, and Secretary, who very ably discharged their duties.

CONTENTS

MALPAS CELEBRATES	Front cover
MEMORIES OF THE ALPORT	Page 6
MALPAS IN 1789	11
BRADLEY - A SHRUNKEN SETTLEMENT?	12
DID KING JOHN COME TO MALPAS TOWN?	17
MALPAS IN THE CIVIL WARS	18
"HOMEWATCH" - VICTORIAN STYLE	22
THE HISTORY OF TUSHINGHAM HALL	23
ALPORTIANA	25
MALPAS BLACKSMITHS	27
COCKFIGHTING	27
MALPAS CHURCH - PICTURE	Back cover

EDITORIAL

"It's about time someone wrote a History of Malpas."

Many are the times we have heard it said and no-one has really attempted the task since Rector Kenyon wrote his short "Malpas: Parish, Town and Church", in the 1890s.

But can anyone write the history of any place? Really it is an impossible task. We can attempt to write a history, based on the evidence we have been fortunate enough to find.

In this magazine we shall attempt neither task. We want it to provide a meeting point for all of those, natives and incomers, who share a love of our old Town and Parish and an interest in its fascinating history. Similar stories to those told in these pages could, no doubt, be told for many towns and villages around the country. What is special about our particular stories is that they concern Malpas, the place where we live and many of us work, so that they relate to the people and places with which we are familiar.

The story of our past can be sought in many places. It can be looked for in the somewhat unexciting pages of George Ormerod's massive "History of Cheshire"; it is handed down by word of mouth in the bar of the Red Lion (perhaps becoming rather fanciful after a few pints!); it can be seen on the ground as the plough crosses the old Roman road over Chidlow Hill; it can be sought among the archives in the County and City Record Offices in Chester. In these, and many other places, we can look for evidence of our local history. Each piece of evidence represents a tiny strand in the web of our past. We hope you will appreciate the way in which we have attempted to bring some of these strands together, in the pages of this magazine, and look forward to receiving your comments and contributions.

In this first issue we have a variety of contributions. Central to the life of the town for over 200 years has been the Alport School. "Memories of the Alport" looks at its recent history, particularly during the headship of the legendary Herbert Yates. Background to the family of the school's founder will be found in Mrs Barnett's "Alportiana" and Gerard Barnes' article on Malpas in the Civil Wars. Those of you who are following the current BBC-TV Sunday serial, "By the Sword divided", will be able to appreciate more fully the tensions caused by the split between King and Parliament. If you saw the vividly reconstructed episode about the siege of Arnescote Castle you will have some idea of the suffering and carnage that may have taken place at Oldcastle Heath and Cholmondeley House. Musket balls may have been replaced by nuclear warheads, but man's inhumanity to man seems to be an ever

recurring theme in our history. In future issues we hope to look at the local effects of other national conflicts, as hinted at by our Boer War picture on the cover of this issue.

Mr Moore Dutton has kindly contributed an article about his beautiful home at Tushingham Hall, greatly appreciated by all who visit it, perhaps for the annual St. Chad's Garden Party.

Many people have collections of old photographs and postcards which have come to light at various exhibitions in the area. A large number of these have been carefully copied by the Heber Library for its reference collection and Pamela Johnson, the librarian, is always pleased to hear of others. We hope to exploit some of these collections and make a start in this issue, with "Malpas Celebrates", using photographs kindly lent by Mrs Dolly Mercer and our ex-postmistress-in-exile, Mrs Norah Chesworth. Mrs Pat Stones, who lives between the Jubilee Hall and the Post Office, is undertaking the "exploitation".

As many of you will know, Cheshire has its own archaeologist, Mr Rhys Williams, employed in the County Council Planning Department. Rhys has flown frequently over this area and identified many archaeological sites through aerial photography. One of these sites is a possible deserted settlement at Bradley, which has now been surveyed on the ground by members of the Malpas Field Club. The survey was under the supervision of Noel Edwards, of Church Street. Noel and his wife Jane are professional archaeologists who have worked for some years on the excavations at Beeston Castle. Margaret Barker, who lives on Bradley Common, has collaborated with Noel to write a background article on Bradley. We would like to thank the Rector for permission to reproduce the entries from the Parish Register, used to illustrate this article and Mrs Barnett's "Alportiana".

We also offer our thanks to the many others who have contributed in many ways, to make this first issue of "Malpas History" possible. We hope it will be the first of many.

David Hayns

JOHN BOSTOCK,

LION HOTEL,

MALPAS, CHESHIRE.

GENUINE WINES AND SPIRITS, SUPERIOR WELL-AIRED BEDS,

FINE ALE, BOTTLED & DRAUGHT PORTER.

LOCK-UP COACH HOUSES, STALLING, &C.

POSTING IN ALL ITS BRANCHES.

ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE LION INN, FROM MORRIS'S 1864
"DIRECTORY OF CHESHIRE"
Reproduced by courtesy of the Cheshire Record Office

MEMORIES OF THE ALPORT

Interviews by Mary Drake

It was in 1719 that Richard Alport of Overton Hall bequeathed £500 for the support of a day school in Malpas, to which an infant school (now the Alport School annexe) was added by public subscription in 1833, on land given by the Drake family. The original school erected by Richard Alport still stands now converted to private houses. It seems very likely that the original school was founded as a Bluecoat charity school, with the pupils wearing the distinctive type of uniform still to be seen on the statue over the entrance to the old Chester Bluecoat School, in Northgate Street.

The present Alport School building was opened in 19 . Until 1942 this housed separate boys' and girls' departments under their own headmaster and headmistress. These were, of course, "all-age" schools and the Alport School remained so until the County Secondary School (now the Heber High School) was opened in the late 1950s.

Perhaps the headmaster who will live longest in Malpas memories was Mr Herbert Yates, headmaster until about 1957. Another well-remembered headmaster, largely it seems because of his strong right arm, was Mr Billy Smith, in the early years of this century.

One of Mr Smith's pupils was Mr Charlie Barlow who, in his adult life, has served the schools of Malpas in many ways, latterly as the "lollipop man" on the crossing patrol outside the Alport School. Mr Barlow can remember being summoned to school by the bell on the school roof. The girls were called by hand bell. Dressed in breeches, shirt with a stiff collar, jersey and strong boots, he would hurry off to school carrying lunch in his "bass". The bass, made by his cobbler father, contained a pie, usually damson, made by his mother to fit the bass.



THE ORIGINAL ALPORT SCHOOL BUILDING, EARLY THIS CENTURY

Postcard kindly donated by Miss Jones, Old Alport School House

The curriculum, when Mr Barlow was at school, was centred on the "3 R's", with occasional diversions in the form of singing lessons or a passing funeral, when the boys would have to line up outside in the playground. During the first World War, the troops billeted at The Bolling, in Church Street, would come up to school, to entertain and to play football with the boys in the school yard.

Another of Mr Smith's pupils was Mr Alf Gillott, who says that he was given the cane every morning, in anticipation of the mischief he would do during the day! All of the boys had nick-names - Mr Gillott was "Kipper". He recalls the gardens which used to be where the top playground now is. These were kept under the watchful eye of Miss Jones, the infant headmistress, who would have the children cutting the grass with scissors. A strict disciplinarian, she would call for the children's attention by means of a clicker held in her hand.

There was a sandy bottomed pit behind The Lodge, where the boys used to swim at lunchtimes - always returning late for afternoon school! When their activity was finally discovered, someone came along and took all of their clothes, as they were enjoying themselves in the water. They looked a sorry sight as they struggled over Overton Common, back to school - wearing only their towels!

There was strict segregation between boys and girls. Mr Barlow even remembers being caned for talking to girls in the playground. One of the girl pupils was Mrs Madge Huxley (nee Davies) of Chorlton, who used to ride to school on a donkey, up through the fields from Chorlton Lane.

The two halves of the school were finally amalgamated, under Mr Yates. On the day when "union" was declared, he lined the boys up on one side of the playground and the girls on the other. At the drop of his hand, the two sides ran towards each other and collided in the middle!

It would be optimistic to suggest that this resulted in perfect harmony thereafter. However, Mr Yates certainly achieved harmony in other areas. He is well remembered for the incredible amount of musical activity he encouraged, both in the school and in the town generally. Most of the instruments used were made by the pupils and included bamboo pipes, xylophones, 'cellos, banjos, bottles and saws. Star performers on this last instrument were Joe and George Roberts. George remembers his debut:

"I remember the first time I played was at Mold, in the W.I., and there must have been two or three hundred people there. And our Joe always played the saw and he played 'Now is the hour'. It was Joe's last performance, because he was leaving school, and my first and he puts me in front of the stage and he goes through the usual patter, Herbert does, he says, "Now this is Joe's younger brother George, he's leaving school so we've got to have an apprentice. Now," he said, "he's going to play 'John Peel'." So he gives me the saw. We had the big drum stick to knock it with, not a bow. You had the handle between your knees and you pinched the end and you bent it. The further you bent it down, the higher the note. What tickled me was that the first time I put the teeth towards me. Herbert was just about to play the piano, saw me like that and he came across, took the saw from between my legs and said, "I think we'd better turn that round." And he turned to the audience. "We don't want any accidents." He brought the house down! Because it went down so well he said, "We'll do that every night you're on" and that was in the act. Every time I sat down to play the saw I had the teeth towards me and he had to come across and explain to me that he didn't want any accidents!"

The school's various ensembles became nationally famous, appearing on television's "All Your Own", presented by Macdonald Hopley, and Uncle Mac's radio "Children's Hour", as well as at music festivals and concerts over a wide area. Mr Yates is now dead but many of his former musicians are still among us, no doubt with many of their instruments hidden away.

Another of Mr Yates' many talents was photography and film-making. Fortunately many of his films of local events have been saved and are being re-shown in the area, thanks to the efforts of Joe Roberts, Don Allen and others.



ONE OF MR YATES' INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLES - A free copy of the next "Malpas History" to anyone who can identify all the performers! Photo: Mr Don Allen



ANOTHER ENSEMBLE, AFTER THE BOYS' AND GIRLS' SCHOOLS HAD BEEN COMBINED.
 More names, please! Another free "Malpas History" on offer. Photo: Mr Don Allen

Magazines come, and magazines go, as no doubt will "Malpas History". During Mr Yates' time the Rector, Mr Hapher, published "The Weathercock - A Malpas Quarterly". The following extracts from the Spring 1947 issue cast interesting sidelights on the life of the Alport School at that time:

THE SCHOOL, ALPORT.

At the time of writing we are in the grip of winter, and our mountainous front playground is a centre for winter sports.

The Scholarships Examination, both Shropshire and Cheshire, will be on us shortly. Our candidates have to take both exams. The test for the 13 year olds, again both Cheshire and Shropshire, will come in June. We wish all our pupils who will benefit by a Grammar School education the best of luck. And to those who don't pass—well, Mr. Churchill was mostly at the bottom of his class all the time, remember.

It is hoped that it may be possible to take a choir and instrumentalists from the School to the South Cheshire Musical Festival at Crewe, on March 1st.

If we do, we shall sing our own Cheshire Folk Songs as our choice pieces, which will probably be a new departure for Festival entries.

Chester Festival is this year in May, and we shall make our annual trip to that.

The Prefect System is now working well in the School. Our present Prefects are Jim Price (Head Boy), Bob Brown, John Moulton and Raymond Peacock, with Mary Barlow (Head Girl), Margaret James, Winnie Corbett and Doreen Cornes.

The sense of responsibility and service to the School which our Prefects show is ample proof of the value of the system, especially in respect of training for after life.

The Headmaster would like some social event, possibly with a school bias, in connection with our Parent Teacher Association, formed two years ago. We don't seem to have made much use of it, but Parents are asked to speak up and say what they would like, Whist Drive, Dance, Quiz, Brains Trust, etc. We do want our Association to be a live one, and the School is ready to play its part.

Savings are going well. Do parents all realise that money saved

now by the children will come in very handy for them when they start out in the world in earnest? So do encourage that old habit on Monday mornings. Class II. under Miss Hughes, holds the laurels at present, and it isn't going to be easy to wrest them from them, for they just make 100 per cent. every time. Now and then Class I. gets a look in, but it isn't often. The Junior Classes are to have their own Competition Shield shortly, and this will be a great stimulus, as it has been in the Senior Department.

We are indebted to Mr. W. Corbett for his interest in the School by allowing our Senior Girls to play hockey on his field.

Football matches will be arranged for the boys during March and April.

We hope to have a real good go at Whitchurch this time, as last year.

Finally, to make reference to the inner man (and woman), the School Dinner Service, under Miss Shone's expert guidance, goes from strength to strength. Nowhere in Cheshire are there better dinners than ours. Parents might like to take a walk up to School any day at 12 noon to come to see the children getting on the right side of roast beef, fish, pie, vegetables, and boiled puddings, to say nothing of occasional treats in the way of apples and oranges as dessert.

OUR SCHOOL CANTEEN.

(Eileen Davies. Class II.)

Our School Canteen is "Type A." Most Schools have "Type B." "Type A" is best because the dinners are cooked on the premises, but "Type B" are cooked at a centre and are brought to the Schools in big containers.

Doctors and dentists who visit our School say that our Canteen is the best in Cheshire.

The dinners are cooked on a gas stove, and dumplings in a gas boiler. The gas stove is a very large one. In the Cook House we have three people who cook dinners; the Cook, Mrs. Dodd, and her two assistants, Miss Purcell and Miss Cartwright. They come at 8.30 in the morning and leave at 3.30 in the afternoon.

The dinners cost 2s. a week, which, I think, is very cheap. Though they are cheap they are very well cooked dinners. There is plenty of variety and we never have two dinners the same in a week.

I always stay at School for my dinner, and I like fish pie, followed by milk pudding, with jelly, best.

We would like to thank the following who have kindly shared their memories of Alport Schooldays:

Mrs E. Baker, Mrs M. Huxley, Mr D. Allen, Mr C. Barlow, Mr C.F.B. Blann, Mr G. Driver, Mr A. Gillott, Mr T. Gillott, Mr G. Roberts, Mr D. James.

There must be many others who have memories of their happy (or otherwise!) days at the Alport and we would like to hear from them, perhaps with a view to including some of them in future issues of "Malpas History".

What better way could there be to finish than with the words of the Alport School song, with words by M. Downey and music by Mr Yates, as remembered by George Roberts and Den James?

1. We boys are proud that we belong
To Malpas Alport School,
Where we are taught to play the game,
When danger's near, keep cool.
As scholars come and scholars go
Our minds will be the fresher,
As we look back upon the scene
Of this small part of Cheshire.
2. Our fine old church that stands serene,
With quaint old town surrounded,
And our majestic chestnut tree,
The old boys' pride unbounded.
When in this world we take our place
Our memories we pool,
'Tis then our love and pride's most felt
For Malpas Alport School!
For Malpas Alport School!

THE ALPORT SCHOOL SONG

Music by H.C. Yates

M A L P A S

IS called, in Latin, *Malus Passus*, a name derived from the road to it not having been very pleasant or agreeable. It is in the South corner of the county, within three miles of Shropshire, Denbighshire, and Flintshire. It hath three streets paved, a grammar school, and a charitable foundation, both erected by Sir Ranulph Breton. Here is a weekly market, and a fair yearly on the 8th of December. Here is an excellent church, the princely revenues of which afford a very handsome endowment to two rectors and two curates: the present incumbents are gentlemen not less eminent for their learning than their piety. In this church is a vault belonging to Earl Cholmondeley, where a long race of the remains of that nobleman's ancestry are entombed.

About nine miles East of Malpas, and six South of Nantwich, stands Combermere abbey (by a lake of the same

same name) founded by the Malbans, barons of Nantwich, and now the pleasant and hospitable seat of Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton, baronet, one of the representatives in parliament for this county.

Malpas Directory.

Rev. Tho. Townson, D. D. rector	Mr. Skerratt, surgeon
Rev. Reginald Heber, M. A. rector	Mr. Rowe, jun. ditto
Rev. Mr. Bridge, curate	Mr. Philips, ditto
Rev. Mr. Eaton, curate	Mr. R. Parry, wheelwright
Rev. Mr. Evans	Mrs. Lowe, inn-keeper
— Nicklon, gent.	Mr. Owen Vaughan, glazier
Richard Clutton, gent.	Mr. Hampton, maltster
— Welch, sen. gent.	Mr. Robert Williams, ditto
— Stubbs, gent.	Mr. Joseph Clark, mercer
— Rowe, sen. gent.	Mr. John Jones, saddler
— Holford, gent.	Mr. Welch, jun. mercer
Mr. Large, iron-monger	Mr. Taylor, ditto
Mr. Samuel Ellis, inn-keeper	Mr. Thomas Rowe, butcher
Mr. Beckett, maltster	Mr. D. Probert, inn-keeper
Mr. Watburton, breeches-maker	Mr. Moyle, school-master
Mr. Joseph Reeves, butcher	Mr. John Vaughan, baker
Mr. Joseph Johnson, ditto	Mrs. Roylance
Mr. Edward Jones, saddler	Mr. James Crump, cooper
Mr. Peter Barlow, cooper	Mr. George Dean, reed mak.
Mr. J. Highway, inn-keeper	Mr. Brown, breeches-maker
	Mr. James Ahley, saddler
	Mr. Thomas Orton, maltster.

MALPAS IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
 An extract from William Cowdroy's
 "Directory of Chester", 1789

BRADLEY - A SHRUNKEN SETTLEMENT?

Margaret Barker & Noel Edwards

Bradley is one of the twenty-six townships which form the ancient parish of Malpas and lies about two miles south-east of the town itself. Its area is about 887 acres (4 sq. km.), with a small detached portion lying on the north-east side of Wychough township, connected to the main part of Bradley by the brook. Today Bradley has about 27 households, all of them farms or private dwellings, since there is no non-agricultural industry in the township.

Bradley retains its old common, divided by a road. Part of the common, which has no recorded owner, appears on a 1725 map of Malpas, Ebnal and Chidlow. Reference to the area is made in the Tyrwhit-Drake records (Cheshire Record Office) for 1720, when a John Cardenson, who lived 52 years in Bradley, says, that "untill very lately John Leigh never turned cattell on the common and that tho' he stands now presented continues to do so." There was evidently a dispute over grazing rights on the common, since Mr Drake's agent, Ambrose Nixon, states that "Mr Leigh's Easons* and Barnes stand in Agden except 4 or 5 (acres) are all in Bradley." * Easements (i.e. means of access)?

According to the 1663 Hearth Tax Returns, a record of the rate levied on each household according to the number of fireplaces in the house, there were eleven households in Bradley with taxable hearths. George Cantwell had five, Samuel Catherall had three and the other householders had one or two hearths.

The list of "rack rents" for 1789, in the Drake records, provides details of some farms. Humpstone Farm, tenanted by Richard Simpson, was described as "a farm house, barn, stable, cart house with a capital corn house, cheese chamber over it and 35 pieces of land". Bickerton Bathers tenement was rented by Richard Bickerton and is described as "two cottages and a miserable range of cattle sheds and sundry pieces of land". The 1838 Tithe Apportionment lists 16 houses, all tenanted. The main landowners were Mr Drake, Lord Cholmondeley, Godwin Maxwell and Lord Kenyon. A small piece of land was held in trust by Thomas Bostock, for the poor of Bradley.

The earliest detailed Census records for Bradley are those of 1851 (unfortunately those for 1841 are missing). The 1851 returns show 20 households in Bradley, containing 123 people, including servants. The main farmers at that time were Richard Simpson, Hannah Simpson, John Simpson and Simon Faulkener.

It seems that Bradley has changed very little in the past 150 years or so, remaining a dispersed township of scattered farms and houses. The main change has been in a change of ownership of the land, with the result that most of it is now owner-occupied rather than tenanted.

THE BRADLEY "DESERTED VILLAGE" SITE

In an article in "Cheshire Life" (July 1979), Mr Rhys Williams, our County Archaeologist, suggested that the field between Bradley Hall and the brook might be the site of a deserted settlement, possibly abandoned in the late Middle Ages. His evidence came from an aerial photograph he had taken - the photograph was reproduced in "Cheshire Life" and we are grateful to Mr Williams for supplying the enlarged copy of the original, reproduced here. Deserted villages are common in other parts of the country, particularly the Midlands and other areas of stone building, where decayed houses leave more visual evidence than in a traditionally timber building area such as South Cheshire. Depopulation has been the result of various factors at work. Many villages lost a high proportion of their population as a result of the Black Death in the 13th century; some villages were obliterated by landowners around Tudor times, to make way for sheep runs; from the 16th to the 19th century, settlements were 'removed' to new sites, to make way for the landscaping of parks around large country houses. Where villages have been "deserted", evidence for their former existence often survives in the form of earthworks,

showing such features as "house platforms", hollow ways denoting the courses of former roads and windmill mounds. The classic site, open to visitors, is the deserted medieval village of Wharram Percy in North Yorkshire, which has been extensively excavated by Professor Maurice Beresford and John Hurst, two pioneers of the study of deserted villages.

At Bradley, Mr Rhys Williams observed a series of regular earthworks on the south side of Bradley Hall and suggested that they could be building platforms, representing the site of a former settlement.

A survey carried out by Malpas History Group members identified two main features - a straight upper scarp and six mounds forming a lower scarp along the north side of the brook. The two most easterly mounds look complete but the others, to the west, could represent two or three large mounds which have been cut through by natural and artificial drainage. These platforms are substantial and could have accommodated dwellings or barns. There is the suggestion of a track at the base of the upper scarp. Bradley Hall and the Common are nearby. Although the present Hall is a Victorian building, there is evidence for an earlier building, which Mr Williams thinks could have been Elizabethan or Jacobean. On the Tithe Map of 1838 the previous house is shown, in a different position to the present one. The field containing the earthworks is referred to as "Paddock" and the map shows no buildings in it.

Adjacent fields are referred to as Near Town Field, Town Field and Far Town Field. Although these could be 19th century names for the fields, it is possible that they may have a deeper significance. They could be the successors of old "open fields", jointly farmed by the community, and seem to be in a position where they can reasonably be related to a former settlement in the vicinity of Bradley Hall. "Town" should be thought of in terms of a township and not in terms of what we normally associate the word with nowadays. There are also remnants of old strip fields to the south-east and north of the site.

Mr Williams identifies "an old road winding across the field past the Hall, and running beside ridge and furrow strips to Bradley Common." There is no evidence for the road on the Tithe Map but there are numerous "roads" running into the area. Although it is not the centre of the township, it could be regarded as a focal point.

BRADLEY AND THE PLAGUE

Assuming that the earthworks at Bradley Hall do represent a former settlement site, no documentary evidence has yet been discovered to suggest a reason for depopulation on any scale. However, it is worth drawing attention to the evidence found in the Malpas Parish Register which, referring to Bradley, suggests how an epidemic can substantially affect the population of an area. Remember that in the 14th century the Black Death carried off up to half the population of England. Rural areas did not necessarily suffer as much as urban areas but the loss of half the population had disastrous effects on the agricultural economy.

Many readers will know the story of Richard Dawson (5) of Bradley, who dug his own grave when he was ill with the plague. However, that is only part of the story because, from other entries in the Parish Register at the same time, we find that his entire household died (numbers in brackets refer to the entries on the page from the Malpas Parish Register, reproduced on the next page).

It seems that the infection was brought from London by Raffe (1), a son of Thomas Dawson (2), brother of Richard Dawson (5). Raffe arrived home on the 25th July, 1625, and "being sicke of the plague died in his fathers howse and soe infected the sayde howse and was buryed ... neare unto his fathers howse". On 10th August Thomas Jeffrey, servant, was buried, and on 13th August Richard, son of Thomas

LADY
MARYE
CHOLMONDELEY

- 1 B Raffe Dawson some of the above named
and was buried at the church of St. Marye
the Virgin in London, on the 25th day of
August 1625. He was buried at the church of
St. Marye the Virgin in London, on the 25th
day of August 1625.
- 2 B Thomas Dawson of Bradley died of the plague
and was buried at the church of St. Marye
the Virgin in London, on the 25th day of
August 1625.
- 3 B Elyzabeth the daughter of the above named
Thomas Dawson died of the plague and
was buried at the church of St. Marye
the Virgin in London, on the 25th day of
August 1625.
- 4 B Anne the wife of John Dawson some of
the above named died of the plague and
was buried at the church of St. Marye
the Virgin in London, on the 25th day of
August 1625.
- 5 B Richard Dawson brother to the above named
Thomas Dawson of Bradley being sicke of
the plague and perceyving he must die at
that time, arose out of his bed and made
his grave and caused his nefew John Dawson
to cast strawe into the grave, which was
not farre from the howse, and went and
layd him downe in the sayd grave and
caused clothes to be layd upon and soe
departed out of this world, this he did,
because he was a stronge man and heavier
than his sayd nefew and [he and] another
wench were able to bury [him]. He died
about the xviiith of August 1625 this
much I was credibly told he did.
- 6 B John Dawson some of the above named
died of the plague and was buried at the
church of St. Marye the Virgin in London,
on the 25th day of August 1625.
- 7 B Rose Smyth the wife of the above named
John Dawson died of the plague and was
buried at the church of St. Marye the
Virgin in London, on the 25th day of
August 1625.

ENTRIES FROM THE MALPAS BURIAL REGISTER FOR 1625

1. Raffe Dawson 2. Thomas Dawson 3. Elyzabeth Dawson 4. Anne Dawson
5. Richarde Dawson 6. John Dawson 7. Rose Smyth

No. 5 reads: "Richarde Dawson (brother to the above named Thomas Dawson of Bradley) being sicke of the plague and perceyving he must die at that time, arose out of his bed and made his grave and caused his nefew John Dawson to cast strawe into the grave, which was not farre from the howse, and went and layd him downe in the sayd grave and caused clothes to be layd upon and soe departed out of this world, this he did, because he was a stronge man and heavier than his sayd nefew and [he and] another wench were able to bury [him]. He died about the xviiith of August 1625 this much I was credibly told he did."

Dawson (2) was buried "in the night". On 16th August Thomas Dawson was buried at 3 o'clock in the morning.

Further burials recorded are those of Elizabeth (3) and Anne (4) Dawson, the daughter and daughter-in-law (wife of John) respectively of Thomas Dawson.

On 29th August John Dawson (6) "came unto his father when his father sent for him being sick and having laid him down in a ditch died in it". From this it seems that he did not live in his father's house and that the plague affected more than one household.

On 5th September, Rose Smyth (7), servant to Thomas Dawson, the "last of the household died of the plague and was buried near unto the said house". She was buried by William Good. A daughter of Thomas Dawson had died previously but "not of the sickness as it was thought".

From the evidence in the parish registers there was plague also in Malpas town itself and in the Shocklach area. For Malpas there are entries for the deaths of several children of one Henry Clutton. In total, 9 people died of plague in Bradley. Raffe, Richard, John and Rose Smyth were all buried near their houses, the others, we think, in the churchyard.

In an area of low population this outbreak may have had marked effects. 9 people could have been about 5% of the population of Bradley and all of them died within one month. There is certainly plenty of scope here for further research.

Please note that the site at Bradley Hall is on private property, owned by Mr and Mrs J. Mullock. They have very kindly allowed us to survey the site and we are extremely grateful for their help. However, they would not appreciate trespassers.

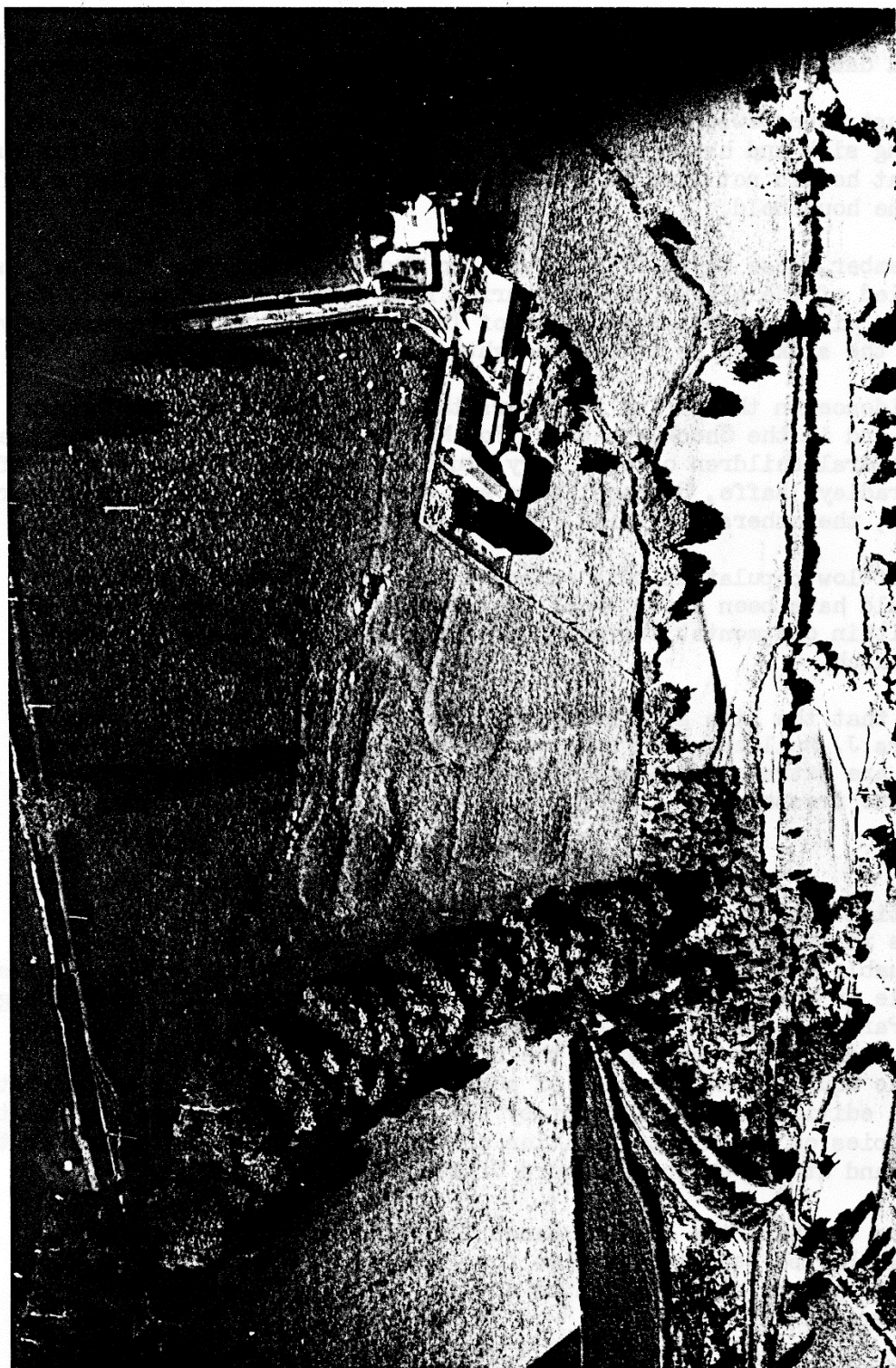
REFERENCES

The information used in this article has come from various sources, most of which are in the Cheshire Record Office. The Tyrwhit-Drake collection is an invaluable source, as is the 1838 Tithe Award. The Hearth Tax Returns are available in the Office, on microfilm. The mammoth task of transcribing the Malpas Parish Registers was undertaken by the late Mr J.C. Wolley-Dod, of Edge, to whom anyone working on the history of Malpas must ever be grateful. The equally mammoth task of publishing Mr Wolley-Dod's transcription, in a limited edition, was carried out by the late Major John James and Janet, his wife. Copies of the limited edition are available for consultation in the Malpas area and at the Cheshire Record Office.

We would like to thank the Rector, Canon T.M. Rylands, for permission to reproduce the Parish Register entries for 1625, and Mr Rhys Williams, for all the encouragement he has given us and for allowing us to reproduce his aerial photograph.

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THE AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH AND SURVEY PLAN WILL BE FOUND ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES.

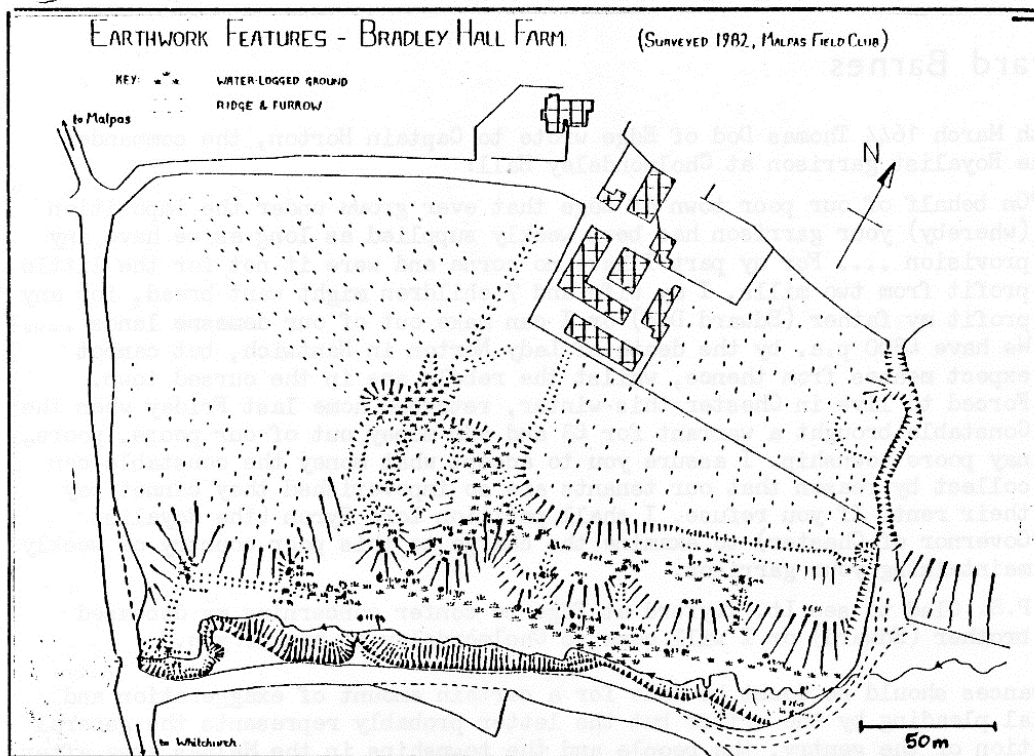


BRADLEY HALL FARM, NEAR MALPAS, CHESHIRE

Photograph taken in low sunlight to show up earthwork features in the field next to the Hall. We have reproduced it this way round so that it can be compared directly with the survey plan reproduced opposite.

Photograph: Copyright Mr S. Rhys Williams.

Survey Plan: Copyright Malpas Field Club History Group.



My peculiar interest, however, in the records of Malpas lies naturally in the history of the rectorate. Let me give once more (for however absurd, it is archæologically interesting) the local tradition accounting for the fact of the Double Rectorate:—

A tale I will tell you, and though it be long,
 I trust it will prove an excuse for my song,
 How the parish of Malpas two Rectors can boast,
 One of whom claims the honour of being your host.

One day as King John was proceeding at leisure,
 To view the Welsh mountains from this side of Cheshire,
 To the Lion at Malpas in. cog. he came down,
 With a travelling cap on instead of his crown.

The landlady curtsied, the landlord he bowed,
 As the monarch, dismounting, advanced through the crowd,
 For he looked just like one of those men of renown
 Who bring samples from London to each country town.

To a neat little parlour they straightway repair,
 And place in due order the great elbow chair,
 Which chair at this day is in mighty request,
 And a penny is paid by each down-sitting guest.

Odds fish, quoth the King, since to mirth I incline,
 And am loth to sit down by myself here to dine,
 In this populous town is their ne'er a brave chief
 To partake of a chop or a collop of beef?

The landlord replied, there's the apothecary,
 Who oft cracks a joke o'er a glass of old sherry;
 And, besides, there's the Rector and Curate also,
 Who enjoy a good dinner wherever they go.

The doctor was gone out to visit a patient,
 The Curate was young, the Rector was ancient,
 So the one to the Lion tripped down in a canter
 And announced that the other would presently enter.

They ate and they drank, and were merry and gay,
 Till the twilight of evening succeeded the day,
 And when of good cheer they had all had their fill,
 The rubicund landlord stepped in with his bill.

The Curate proposed, in the joy of his heart,
 That himself and the Rector should each pay their part,
 And because their strange guest had promoted such glee,
 To permit him to pass on his journey scot free.

FROM: "Malpas: Parish, Town
 and Church" (1895),
 by Rector W. Kenyon.

It fits very well to the tune
 of "Toorelaye-ay", if
 Mrs Lever will permit it in
 the bar of the Lion!

DID KING JOHN COME TO
 MALPAS TOWN?

But the Rector exclaimed, I'll ne'er pay for such knaves,
 For 'tis fit that each tub should stand on its own staves,
 So divide the account, not by two, but by three,
 And we'll rub off the score in an equal degree.

Half asleep with his eyes, wide awake with his ears,
 The King what the clergy had said overhears,
 And discovering himself to the utter dismay
 Of the Rector, he thus to the Curate did say:—

Kind sir, whilst I rule o'er this land, your regard
 For a stranger like me shall not lose its reward;
 But whene'er with a traveller you sit cheek by jowl,
 You shall have wherewithal to replenish the bowl.

Now the King loved a pun, so he added in jest,
 Whilst they listened with care to the Royal bequest,
 If I were to share my possessions with you,
 It is plain half a crown would be all that's your due.

I therefore desire, and do it with pride,
 That you with his reverence the tithes will divide,
 And thus though old Troy could ne'er boast of two Hectors,
 The parish of Malpas may boast of two Rectors.

And now my tale's ended, before I retire,
 As your minstrel this boon in return I require,
 That each British Bowman in chorus will sing,
 Here's a long happy reign to our patron the King.

The above lines are attributed to the Reverend Philip Egerton,
 who became Sir Philip de Grey-Egerton while yet Rector of
 Malpas; but soon after vacated the benefice.

MALPAS IN THE CIVIL WARS

Gerard Barnes

On 8th March 1644 Thomas Dod of Edge wrote to Captain Horton, the commander of the Royalist garrison at Cholmondeley Hall:

"On behalf of our poor town of Edge that ever groans under the imposition (whereby) your garrison has been weekly supplied as long as we have any provision For my part I have no corne and were it not for the little profit from two mills, I my wife and 7 children might want bread, for any profit my father (Edward Dod) or I can make out of our demesne lands We have £300 p.a. by the death of Lady Norton in Nantwich, but cannot expect meanes from thence, whilst the rebels are in the cursed town. Forced to live in Chester this winter, returned home last Friday when the Constable brought a warrant for £3 and odd money out of our poore, poore, nay poore township. I assure you to accept what money the constable can collect by reason that our tenants are so impoverished they cannot pay their rent. If you refuse, I shall petition Lord Byron (the Royalist Governour of Chester) to examine the charge to this poor country of weekly maintaining your garrison.

P.S. Glad to see Lt. Twyford at Edge to confer concerning my deceased brother (Edward) or I will come to Cholmondeley to him or you."

Allowances should no doubt be made for a certain amount of exaggeration and special pleading by the writer but the letter probably represents the general condition of the gentry, the people and the townships in the Malpas area after 15 months of war.

Sandwiched between the Royalist stronghold of Chester and the Parliamentary base of Nantwich with, in addition to Cholmondeley, other strong points at Beeston and Holt Castles, the role of the parish of Malpas in the Civil War was mainly one of providing money, supplies and plunder for whichever army happened to be in control or in transit through the area.

As to the sympathies of the inhabitants, the majority probably tried to avoid any involvement at all. For the mass of the ordinary people, this would not be difficult, unless the local landlord happened to regard enlistment in the regiment he himself was raising or favouring as incumbent on his tenants or employees. Thus one of the charges made against Thomas Dod at the hearing before the Committee for Compounding with Delinquents in 1646 was that he "discharged Randle Stockton because he would not serve as a soldier under Col. Egerton."

Among the gentry too, the most common attitude would seem to have been either that of Robert Elcocke who, living midway between Nantwich and Royalist-held Beeston, contributed to both sides "a demeanour necessary for his preservation", or that of Thomas Bromley of Hampton, who claimed "he could do no other (than side with the King's party), having their garrisons all round him."

Such arguments failed to save either from being brought before the same Committee for Compounding at the end of the war, when Parliament was investigating those who had supported the King, nor a dozen or so other gentlemen from Malpas parish who were similarly arraigned.

A few were more demonstrably active in the King's cause, most notably Lord Cholmondeley. A Commissioner of Array for the King and, in the words of the Committee for Compounding, "a great malignant", he raised a regiment of his tenants under the captaincy of his steward, Stanley Burrows of Bickley. In October 1642 they were said to number 200 foot and 20 horse and, although their full part in the fighting is not known, they seemingly were not restricted to the garrison of Cholmondeley House, since they were blamed for "unsoldierly conduct" in violating the terms under which Hawarden Castle surrendered in November 1643. Edward Dod, the brother of Thomas referred to in the postscript to his letter to Captain Horton, held a commission in the regiment and was

killed in the defence of Chester in February 1644. Sir Thomas Cholmondeley also was commissioned in the regiment and a Captain Cholmondeley "base son to the Lord Cholmondeley" was amongst prisoners taken by Parliament at the Battle of Nantwich in January 1643. Another to suffer for openly supporting the King was Richard Alport of Overton, having mortgaged his land and being imprisoned in the Fleet for four years.

Also active but, as befitted his profession, giving help to both sides where needed, was James Banks, a surgeon of Cholmondeley, who at the end of the war is found addressing a petition to Sir William Brereton.. In this he asks for recompense for the labour and materials he had expended on "the curing of many soldiers under the command of King and Parliament at Nantwich, Cholmondeley and Beeston and diverse other places."

The course of the war in Chester and the fighting which took place in Malpas parish was dictated by the strategic significance of Chester as the port for Ireland and the gateway to North Wales, both vital for the King as sources of men and money. From their base at Nantwich, the Parliamentary forces gradually won control of most of the county but, until late 1645, were never strong enough to maintain a permanent siege of Chester. Sir William Brereton's tactics were to mount a succession of raiding parties against the Royalist garrisons and supply centres in the surrounding areas. The Royalists for their part too lacked the strength to take the initiative, except when reinforced by relieving armies from outside the area. Such support however was invariably too short-lived to make any real impression, or so badly led as to leave them worse off than before.

So far as the parish of Malpas was concerned, the Royalist garrison at Cholmondeley House was a prime target for Nantwich's Parliamentary commanders. A determined attack was made on 11th April 1643 when, according to Thomas Malbon in his "Memories of the Civil War in Cheshire", the garrison of 400 men was driven into the house and booty of 600 horses taken for the loss of three men killed. Malbon puts the garrison's losses at 52 killed but the Malpas Burial Register records only two burials of soldiers "slain at Cholmley" on 22nd April, with a third recorded as "died about Cholmley" on 11th May.

No further attempts on Cholmondeley are known for more than twelve months. In May 1644 there was an attack which resulted, says Malbon, in the capture of 100 sheep and lambs and then, on 7th July, a much more serious effort was made. A large force under the Earl of Denbigh, including two volunteer companies from Nantwich, 200 Staffordshire volunteers and eight pieces of artillery, marched out from Nantwich in the evening. Malbon continues the story thus: "The following evening they planted the greatest piece of ordnance within pistol shot of the house. About 3/4 o'clock in the morning (of 8th July) after they had summoned the house, they played upon it with ordnance. Those in the house replied with muskets" Eventually, the garrison under Captain Horton, which numbered only some 66, compared with the 400 in 1643, were driven into the house where they continued to resist bravely until 1 p.m., when quarter was asked for and granted. Despite the bombardment, the garrison suffered no casualties but the Nantwich Burial Register records the burial of eight Parliamentary soldiers and, in addition, there were some 20 wounded. The house itself, and its contents, were given over to plunder.

An important commercial target in the parish were the salt works at Dirtwich (the Wyches), which were the King's main source for the supply of salt. Two attempts, at least, were made by Parliament to destroy them, being described by Malbon. The first occasion was in August 1643 and the second in September 1644, when six of the iron pans in which the salt was boiled and other equipment were taken away. On this latter raid, it is recorded,

the Parliamentary forces on their march to Dirtwich "lay in Malpas Church all night, having but sorry quarters."

Three weeks prior to the raid, the one battle of any consequence in the parish had been fought at Oldcastle Heath, on 25th August 1644. Prince Rupert had withdrawn to Chester, following his defeat at Marston Moor, and quartered his troops over a wide area including Malpas. A force of 2,000 men under Sir Marmaduke Langdale, whilst seeking to join up with Rupert's main body, were brought to battle by Sir William Brereton. He had marched from Nantwich with 800/900 horse and foot and, despite the disparity in numbers, completely routed the Royalists, killing over 60 of them and taking 25 prisoners. Brereton's casualties totalled only 8 wounded.

Henceforth Brereton began to increase the pressure on Chester and this, although temporarily relieved from time to time, was to last until the City's surrender in February 1646. Forward detachments were established in Tattenhall, Aldford, Christleton, etc., and with similar close watches being kept on Holt and Beeston the major effect on the countryside was the problem of supplying the several thousand men engaged in those various sieges.

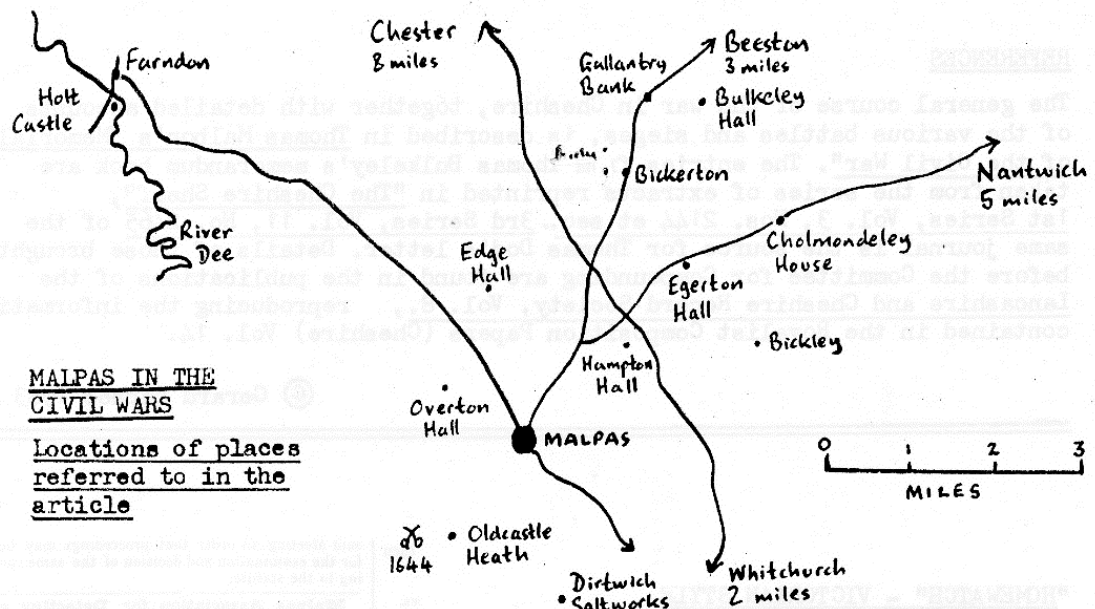
One source of supply had been in operation since 1644, with the sequestration of the property of the King's supporters and the establishment of committees in each hundred to administer this. This was now reinforced by measures affecting all classes, as taxation, free quartering, plunder and the seizure of animals and household goods were practised increasingly by both sides.

Thus, for example, when Princes Rupert and Maurice came to relieve Chester in February 1645, Maurice's forces lay for three weeks between Chester and Maelor "plundering and impoverishing the country extremely." As they moved on to the relief of Beeston as well, Thomas Bulkeley of Bulkeley Hall recorded in his memorandum book that "they plundered all before them they took from my house £20 and the day after they took from the towne (of Bickerton) all they did lay hands on and out of my house goods to the value of £16." Bulkeley also states that at this time they had 12 men hanged "on a crabtree at the Widow Fisher's house" - presumably the gallows tree from which Gallantry Bank is said to derive its name.

Later entries in Bulkeley's book illustrate the continual - and continuing - demands for financial and material support made on the local people by the Parliamentary forces, now in the ascendant, though in Bulkeley's case, since his son seems to have been a captain in the detachment at Tattenhall, this may not have been so much of an imposition. He lists payments to the constable to help meet "the pay of a trained soldier" and "the cost of a horse which the town (of Bickerton) was charged to send to Farndon" to help in the siege of Holt Castle. There are contributions also to the Parliamentary garrisons at Stretton and Christleton. In February 1645 he notes the township was seized to pay "two mizes weekly" to maintain the garrison at Christleton, a total of 25s 8d, and later in that year seven of his cattle were taken to Holt Castle but he only received payment for three.

Holt Castle continued to hold out for the King until January 1647 and Bulkeley's diary describes the effect on the local people. For example, in February 1646, three measures of malt, a 14lb loaf of bread and 10d in money are given to the constable, Richard Okes, for "the siege of Farndon." In succeeding months he had soldiers billeted on him twice and there were regular payments of 21d on his own behalf and contributions to the warrant for 50s which the town was required to find for the hire of two soldiers.

By this time, Parliament was raising revenue from fines imposed on those of the King's supporters who had surrendered. As mentioned earlier, the Committee for Compounding with delinquents had been set up in 1646 to receive a



confession of delinquency, a pledge of adherence to Parliamentary government and an account of their estates and personal possessions from those such as royalists, papists and recusants judged to be delinquents. The accused were allowed to compound their offence by payment of a fine in proportion to their guilt.

Some twelve names can be identified as Malpas parish residents appearing among those dealt with by this Committee. These included Lord Cholmondeley, his steward (Stanley Burrowes of Bickley), Edward and Thomas Dod of Edge, Thomas Bromley of Hampton, Richard Heath of Egerton, William Edge of Larkton and, the only one from Malpas town itself, the Rev. Thomas Bridge, Rector of the Higher Mediety.

By far the heaviest punishment fell on Lord Cholmondeley, a fine of £7,742 being imposed on him in December 1646. Stanley Burrowes was fined £298 and Thomas Bromley had to pay 320. Thomas Bridge, although his fine was only £26, was ejected from his living at Malpas and replaced by the Rev. George Mainwaring. Even Edward Dod, who had submitted to Parliament in December 1644, when he was already over 80 and very sickly, was not spared and was required to pay £93 6s 8d.

Nor did things return immediately to normal with the end of the war. Cholmondeley House, in addition to the damage done to it during the siege, suffered at the hands of the tenants to whom it had been leased, after being sequestered so much so that the Committee for Sequestration found that "they had converted it into a hogsty and rendered it unuseful and unfit for a place of residence for a person of such quality." Even when in September 1648 the sequestration was ordered to be discharged and the Agent for Sequestration for the Hundred of Broxton ordered to do nothing to prejudice the quiet enjoyment of his estates, Lord Cholmondeley, without the money to restore the house, remained living at Bickley Hall until his death in 1659.

Richard Alport too, after being released from prison and returning to Overton Hall in June 1648, found, according to the wife he had married whilst in prison, "a pitiful ruined house for want of living in and plundered besides."

The quartering of soldiers also continued to distress the people generally, as shown by a petition from the inhabitants of Malpas and other local parishes to the Deputy Lieutenants in January 1648, against the continuation of the practice "contrary to the ordinances of Parliament."

REFERENCES

The general course of the war in Cheshire, together with detailed accounts of the various battles and sieges, is described in Thomas Malbon's "Memorials of the Civil War". The entries from Thomas Bulkeley's memorandum book are taken from the series of extracts reprinted in "The Cheshire Sheaf", 1st Series, Vol. 3, Nos. 2144 et seq.. 3rd Series, Vol. 11, No. 2465 of the same journal is the source for Thomas Dod's letter. Details of those brought before the Committee for Compounding are found in the publications of the Lancashire and Cheshire Record Society, Vol. 8., reproducing the information contained in the Royalist Composition Papers (Cheshire) Vol. 14.

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"HOMEWATCH" - VICTORIAN STYLE

A RECENT spate of crime in Upton has led a former police inspector to recruit a "vigilante team" to keep watch in the village.

Now Upton Heath residents anxious to protect their property will help the police by reporting any suspicious movements in their area.

Last week villagers met Chester's Crime Prevention Officer, Det. Sgt. Grahame Andrews, who outlined the "Homewatch" scheme devised by Cheshire Police.

The village has joined the growing band of neighbourhoods around Chester who are worried about rising crime figures and impressed by the success of the pilot scheme in Mollington.

"Chester Express"
October 12th 1983

SO WHAT'S NEW?

"Chester Chronicle"
February 16th 1838

With acknowledgements to the "Chester Express" and the "Chester Chronicle".

1838 copy of the "Chester Chronicle" kindly lent by Mrs A.H. Barnett.

then said Meeting, in order that proceedings may be had for the examination and decision of the same according to the statute.

Malpas Association for Detecting and Prosecuting Felons.

WHEREAS divers Burglaries, Felonies, and other Misdoings are frequently committed, whereby the injured person is put to great expense in seeking after his property and prosecuting the offenders, most of whom, for want of speedy assistance, escape from and elude justice, to the encouragement of such crimes, and to the great injury and vexation of the country.

Now in order to prevent the like offences for the future, and for the most effectual and expeditious pursuit, apprehension, and vigorous prosecution of all such offenders, we whose names are hereunto subscribed, have entered into a bond to prosecute at our joint expense such offender or offenders who may be guilty of any of the following offences against any of our persons or properties, and to allow the Rewards to be paid by the Treasurer of this Society to any person who shall inform, on the conviction of every offender, viz. ---

For Burglary, Highway or Foot-pad Robbery, stealing any Horse, Mare, or Gelding, or breaking into any Cheese-room, and stealing Cheese thereout.....	£10 10 0
For stealing Cow, Calf, or Sheep.....	5 5 0
For stealing Corn or Grain out of any Field or Barn, thrashed or unthrashed.....	3 3 0
For stealing Pigs or Poultry, or robbing any Orchard, Garden, or Fish-pond, or stealing any Grass or Hay growing or standing in cocks or otherwise, Straw, or any Potatoes or Turnips, or for stealing or damaging any Wagons, Caris, Ploughs, or other Implements in Husbandry, or for breaking or stealing any Gates, Fences, Pails, Rails or Posts, or any Iron Works belonging thereto, and for discovering any person trespassing by making Bye Paths or Roads over any Land or Ground.....	1 1 0
For concealing or compounding any felony Or any other felonious crime or act not above mentioned, such a Reward as the Association shall think proper to allow.	5 5 0

- | | |
|---|---|
| MALPAS.
Rev. G. T. Drake
Rev. J. A. Partridge
Rev. H. Wigfield
James Large
John Vaughan
Hugh Chesters
James Peach
John Moyle
Thomas Davies
Richard Thelwell
Daniel Lanuely
Mr. Hooper
EDGE.
Miss C. and A. Dod
HAMPTON.
Robert Blantern
WIGLAND.
Charles Price
CHIDLAW.
Richard Lee
AGDEN.
Peter Brown | BRADLEY.
John Simpson, sen.
CHORLTON.
Thos. Chorlton Clutton
Thomas Vaughan
OVERTON.
Thomas Taylor
Thomas Roberts
Ellis Roberts
SHOCKLACH OVIATT.
Thomas Lewis
OLDCASTLE.
John Overton
John Lee
CUDDINGTON.
Richard Kerrison
Thomas Morris
WIGLAND.
Sarah Lowe
WIGLAND.
Thomas Duckers |
|---|---|

THOMAS DANILY, Secretary.
N.B.—The Annual Meeting will be held at the Red Lion Inn, Malpas, on Saturday, the 17th inst: Dinner on the table at Two o'clock.

Disorders of the Stomach.
WONES'S Antibilious and mild American

THE HISTORY OF TUSHINGHAM HALL

F. Moore Dutton

The Domesday Book states: "The same Robert holds Tusigeham, and Humphrey of of him. Ernium, a free man, held it. There is i hide rateable to the Gilt. The land is ii carucates. One is in the demesne, with one bordar."

Archdeacon R.H.V. Burne has pointed out that "the ravages of the Normans were much more severe in Cheshire than in Staffordshire. But although most of the fighting took place in the north east of the county, if a journey was taken from Chester to Whitchurch the villages in this area which were laid waste lay for two miles on either side of the main road. These were: Christleton, Aldford, Lee-cum-Newbold, Hatton, Beeston, Coddington, Tattenhall, Chowley, Burwardsley, Spurstow, Crewe (near Farndon), Bickerton, Bickley, Tilston, Duckington, Edge, Malpas, Cuddington and Tushingham. For some reason nine other manors in the same area were spared." Probably the demesne was destroyed at this time.

In Ormerod's "History of Cheshire", many families who held land in Tushingham are named, but the first mention of the Manor reads: "Inquisition Post Mortem (i.e. "enquiry after death") 22 Eliz. Thomas Grosvenor, of Eaton, Esq., and Alicia Corbett, as their barony of Malpas, in socage, by fealty. On 14th July 1636 Sir Richard Grosvenor conveys to Thomas Nevitt, Goldsmith and citizen of London, all that Manor or Lordship of Tushingham and Chapel of Tushingham called Chad Chapel with one yard thereunto, and all that waste land called Willey Moor, and also one annual rent of fourpence or one pair of gloves yearly issuing out of and payable from the lands of William Gwinde of Tushingham Yeoman, for £600."

In 1715 Edward Halsey, Gentleman, seised of a portion of this Manor, as devisee of John Nevett, and purchased the residue of the Manor from other heirs and devisees of the said John Nevett for £1100, by two successive purchases, in which the Chapel was included. The said Edward Halsey, in 1716, conveyed his right to the Manor to Thomas Churton of Whitchurch, Gentleman, from whom it devolved to Susanna Churton, who in 1778 set up, but afterwards relinquished, the claim to the chapel of Tushingham, which has been noticed under the ecclesiastical department of the Parish.

Miss Churton devised the Manor to her cousin William Churton, and died in 1779. Churton's mortgages, in 1789, conveyed it to Josiah Boydell, Gentleman.

Daniel Vawdrey (born 1771, died 1844) became Lord of the Manor of Tushingham in 1814. It was he who built the present Hall, enlarging what had been the old moated farmhouse, making two fine reception rooms, a study and a small morning room, which was enlarged in 1920. The one remaining side of the old moat separates garden from meadow. At that time he lived at Plasgwynant, Caernarvonshire, for which county he was High Sheriff in 1829.

The yard and out buildings were on the east side opposite the study.

The ancient oak tree, 25 feet in girth, pollarded in 1837, guards the house and the hollow interior formed the goose crew to the farm. Beyond the oak stretches the pool, converted from a meadow by Daniel, banked by an oak wood, famed for its bluebells, on its southern side; while rising on a gentle green hill lies the small park.

The old oak staircase came from Darnford Hall, near Whitchurch.

Daniel's eldest son, also Daniel, M.A., while he was Rector of Stepney, then a village suburb of London, married a widow, which for some unknown reason displeased his father who disinherited him in favour of the younger son.

Benjamin Llewellyn (born 1809, died 1892) succeeded to the Tushingam Estate in 1844, the same year in which the iron gates, still standing, were erected outside the parish church of St. Dunstan's, Stepney, bearing the names of Daniel Vawdrey, the Rector, and the Churchwardens. St. Dunstan's is the "Church of the High Seas" and any child born at sea used to be entitled to be entered in the church registers.

In 1892 Benjamin's son, the Reverend Llewellyn Brookes Vawdrey, B.A., M.A. (born 1845, died 1916), Vicar of Tushingam 1891-1912, succeeded him.

His son, Lieutenant Gilbert Lloyd (born 1897) was killed in action in 1917 and then his daughter, Mary Darrell, succeeded. Her husband, Lieutenant Samuel Worthington, R.H.A., was killed in action on 28th November, 1917. He was a B.A. and a Barrister at Law of the Inner Temple. The property was left to the only daughter, Margaret Marian, who died in 1980. Her husband, Francis Moore Dutton (High Sheriff of Cheshire 1968) is the present owner.

Daniel was descended from the Vawdreys of The Riddings in Timperley, who held land here in the reign of Elizabeth I. In 1911 The Riddings, Tushingam, was built as a dower house but it has since been sold.

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Rev. Tom Hearn, recently retired from the living of Tushingam with Whitewell, is a keen amateur historian in addition to his talents as a poet. His "Brief history of Old St Chad, Tushingam" tells the story of the elder of Tushingam's two churches.

Photograph by courtesy of the "Whitchurch Herald".

ALPORTIANA

Mrs A. H. Barnett

The family of Alport had considerable influence in the history of Malpas for some 250 years. Hailing from Derbyshire, they claimed descent from the oldest British race, "The Little People of the Hills", the Fairy Folk of English legend.

The family started to spread out from their native ramparts of bleak hills and moorlands in the 13th century. There are records of them all over the world, particularly in 1242 in the Lichfield, Cannock and London areas. The branch which established itself in Malpas came via Staffordshire to Shropshire. Richard Alport was settled at Cheswardine near Market Drayton in the 15th century. His grandson, another Richard Alport, was very prosperous. His eldest son, who died young, was sent to Shrewsbury School. As his second wife he married Theisa, heiress to the Overton Hall Estates. Through her the Hall came into the possession of the Alport family and here Richard came to live, taking his place as a man of standing in the County. As already mentioned, his eldest son, Thomas, died young, as did his wife Theisa. Four or five years later, after her death in 1606, he married for the third time, to Ellen, daughter of Ralph Povey of Shocklach, gentleman.

Gaiety returned to the old Hall in 1614 with the birth of a son, to whom the old family name of Richard was given at his christening. He was the apple of his father's eye and, as age began to creep on, the father decided, when the lad was seven years old, to make his property secure for his use by putting it all in Trust in the event of his own death. Among the trustees was his old friend and neighbour Sir Richard Egerton of Ridley, as well as the boy's mother, Ellen. The property included the Overton estates and other land in Cheshire, his old estate in Cheswardine and a coal mine. After young Richard, the next of kin was his Uncle Thomas, a merchant in London, descended from another line of the family. In 1624 old Richard died and for some years the affairs of the Hall were directed by his widow on behalf of her son. She later married a Leche of Carden, which must have helped. By the time he was fourteen, young Richard was old enough to look after himself and in his eighteenth year he was betrothed to Joyce, daughter and co-heir of Dr John Rawlinson, the parson of Whitchurch, who was a very eminent scholar and preacher of the time. He was Head of St Edmunds Hall, Oxford, and a Fellow of St John's College, as well as being Chaplain to Lord Ellesmere, the Lord Chancellor, and Chaplain in Ordinary to King James. On 23rd January, 1631, Joyce and Richard were married at Whitchurch. The same day, the Rector and his wife gave the young couple, in marriage settlement, land and a house north-east of the town. Thus began the Malpas connection with Whitchurch.

*Mr Richard Alport of Overton gentleman
buried ye xiith daye of August*

MALPAS BURIAL REGISTER 1624: "Mr Richard Alport of Overton gentleman buried ye xiith daye of August"

Although now a married man, settled on his own estates, it seems that Richard must have felt that his education was not complete, for in 1635, when he was twenty-one, he entered himself as a student at St Edmunds Hall in Oxford, over which his father-in-law had presided. While there he became acquainted with Edmund Verney, a younger son of the Buckinghamshire knight, Sir Edmund Verney. Sir Edmund was a faithful servant of King Charles and his standard bearer at Edgehill, the first battle of the Civil War, where he fell, still grasping the flag with his severed hand. Young Edmund too was destined for an adventurous career in the service of his country but it was through another son of old Sir Edmund that Richard Alport became involved in the fortunes of the Verney family.

By 1640 he was back at Overton and well pleased with life. A return of that year shows that he was possessed of the Manor House of Overton with its appurtenances, six other houses and five cottages, with a dovecote and lands in Overton. In addition he had lands in Chorlton, Horton, Shocklach and Edge. He owned also Lowcross House in Tylston with lands in Lowcross and Edge. Further south he had lands in Cuddington, Malpas and Oldcastle, while in the family's old county of Shropshire he still retained his father's lands in Cheswardine, Soudley and Chippenhall. Wuite a comfortable estate, with a pleasant moated house and garden in which to make a home for a twenty-six year old married country gentleman and his wife, although denied the blessing of children since Katherine, their daughter, had died in early youth. Life, however, had much more in store for Richard than pleasant uneventfulness of existence in such a place as Overton Hall. In that very year of 1640 the Long Parliament was assembling at Westminster and fierce antagonisms were showing themselves in the country, where the landed squires and gentry were lining themselves up on the great questions which divided King Charles and his Parliament. Even in remote Cheshire where most people were King's men, some influential families such as the Breretons of Handforth and Malpas were hot for the Parliament. There must have been anxious discussion as to what the future held in Overton Hall. In August 1642 Joyce Alport died and Richard was left to face life alone.

A month later, civil war had actually broken out and Verney's father had fallen, fighting for the King at Edgehill. Even the Verney family was divided. Ralph, the eldest son, was to his brother's grief a Parliamentarian. The younger Edmund, Richard's friend, was appointed Deputy Governor of Chester Castle. The War came into the county and in 1644 Roundheads and Cavaliers had joined battle at sundry places, including Oldcastle Heath, on Richard's own land. It appears that he must have pledged all available funds to Sir Hugh Calveley, the Royalist leader, and the Royalist cause suffered a serious setback in Cheshire at the hands of the able and vigorous Parliamentarian, Sir William Brereton.

In the beginning of the next year, Chester Castle had fallen, Verney had fled to Ireland and shortly the rest of the county, except Beeston Castle, was in Puritan hands. Young Richard Alport had his estates sequestered and found himself in the Fleet Prison in London. Some letters in the possession of the Verney family give a tragic picture of life at the time for those whose loyalty to the throne had cost them the loss of all their possessions. Richard Alport was allowed out of the Fleet on parole. He had fallen in with Tom Verney, his friend's brother, and was introduced by him to his sister Susan. In November 1644 Susan wrote to her brother Ralph, in France, saying, "My brother Thomas has wished me to a gentleman which has a very good fortune for me. He is of my own opinion otherwise I should not think of it. All that knows the man gives him good commendations. He is a widower but has no child; his fortune is in his own hands; he has seen me, vows that it is the first time ever he thought of marrying since his wife died, and if he fail of me it shall be the last. Uncle Leeke is coming to town about it. For my portion he never asked what I had; he is a prisoner for his Sovereign."

Susan was at this time twenty-five and Richard thirty. Uncle Leeke favoured the match.

TO BE CONTINUED

REFERENCES

For a comprehensive account of the conflict, see "The Civil Wars in Cheshire" by R.N. Dore (Cheshire Community Council, 1966). The story of Overton Hall and the links between the Alport and Verney families is told also in Chapters 14 and 15 of "Cheshire and its Welsh Border" by Herbert Hughes (Dennis Dobson,).

MORE "GOINGS-ON" IN THE LION!

Reproduced from the "Whitchurch Herald" for April 1872, with acknowledgements.

MALPAS.

The following lines have reference to the recent meeting of blacksmiths, held at the Lion Hotel, Malpas, when it was proposed and decided to raise the scale of charges in consequence of the increase of the prices of iron, coals, &c. —

Eighteen blacksmiths, strong and mighty,

Met in famous Malpas town,
And they sang their little ditty,
Let the flowing bowl go round.

Malpas Harry in the chair, sir,

Clutton Charley in the "vice,"

Burwardsley Sammy at the anvil,
Let us hamper up the price.

Stretton Billy, loud in laughter,

Shouts of glee he can't restrain,

Bravo! Harry; go it, Charley,
Now we'll play our little game.

Next in order is Edge Barlow,

Then comes Johnny of Threspwood,

With portentous Joey Iscoyd,
Wondrous wise and very good.

Bradley John and Broxton Tommy,

Then in solemn silence came;

Tilston Jimmy says but little,
But something sure there must be done.

Then the chairman rises gaily,
And his little tale unfolds

On the mighty rise in iron,
And the awful price of coals.

Hark! ye "Harmonious Blacksmiths,"

To my sad and solemn lay,
Coal and iron both have risen,

And our work it does not pay.

Then the list of futuro prices
From his sable pocket brings,

And the dirge of hourly jobbing,
Soft and sweet the blacksmiths sing.

Twenty-five per cent. for light work;

Extra, lads, we must be paid,
Shooting contracts all abolished,

Who won't comply he must be made.

All the rest they said but little,
But you know they thought the more,

And at length they all skiddled,
Never to be heard of more.



Another picture from Mrs Mercer's album - brothers Tom and Jack Mercer with their old English game cocks. The picture was taken in the back garden of the old Mercer home, between the Jubilee Hall and the Post Office.

"MALPAS HISTORY" is published by the Malpas Field Club History Group.
All correspondence should be addressed to the editor, c/o Stoke Cottage,
Church Street, Malpas, Cheshire SY14 8PD.

BACK COVER: A view of St Oswald's Church, Malpas, from a pencil drawing made at the beginning of last century, by W. Briscombe Gardner of Surrey.

