

MALPAS HISTORY

NUMBER 9

MARCH 1988

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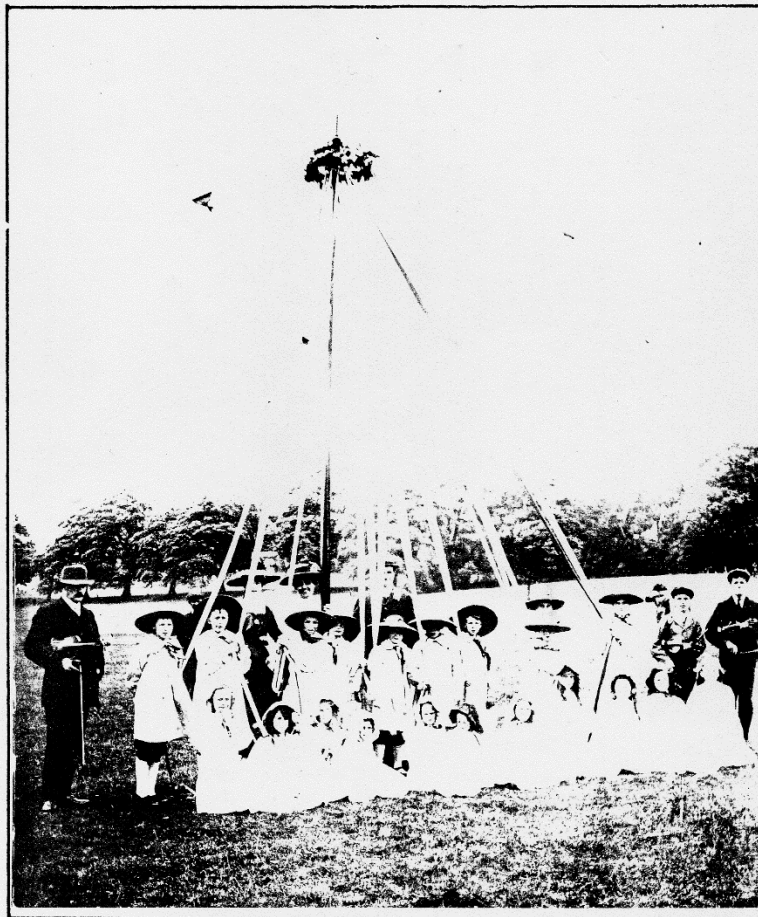
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BACK COVER COVER OF THE PROGRAMME FOR SPORTS ON THE OXHAYES TO CELEBRATE
THE CORONATION OF EDWARD VIII 1902

MALPAS HISTORY

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A magazine for the Malpas area 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 Tushingam-cum-Grindley Wigland and Wychough (all in the ancient Parish of Malpas) and Threapwood

PRICE: £1.00

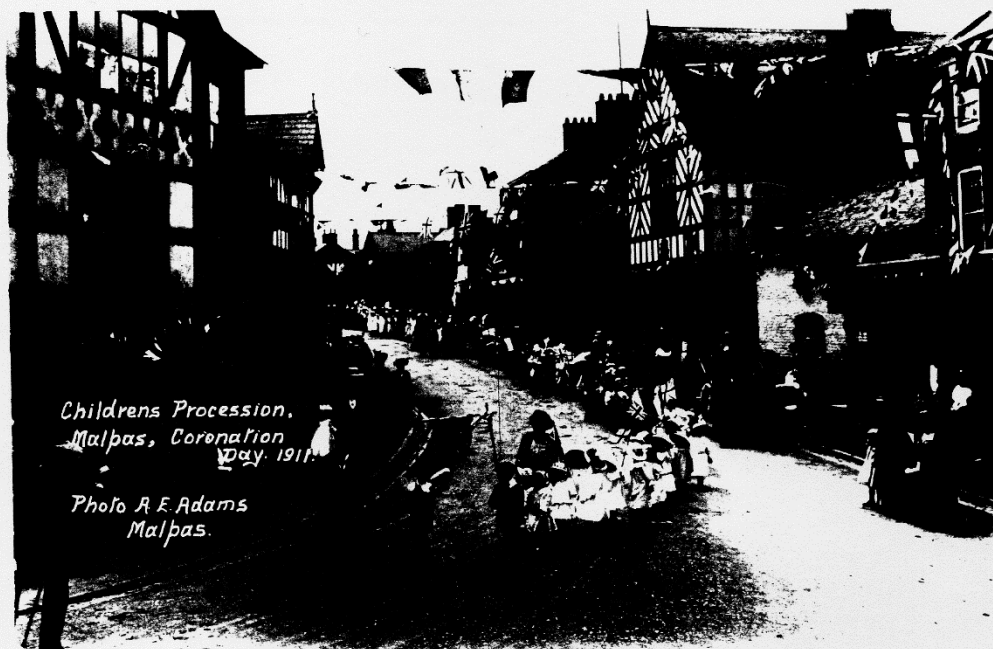
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COVER PHOTOGRAPH

Maypole dancing on the Oxhays during the celebrations for the Coronation of King George V in 1911. Mr John Cornes, of Oldcastle, identifies the seventh boy dancer from the left as himself, aged eleven. Can readers identify any others of those present - presumably they are all Alport School pupils and teachers?

BELOW

The 1911 Coronation again, as the Malpas Infants school turns from High Street into Church Street. The pupils would have been on their way to either the parish church or the Oxhays.



BACK COVER

The cover to the Sports Programme for the Malpas celebrations during the Coronation of King Edward VII in 1902. There were fifteen events, including flat races, long and high jumps, sack races, a 'Firemen's Race' ("Run 50 yards, put on Tunic, Cap, Belt, and Axe correctly and return") and pole climbing (first prize a leg of mutton!). Programme lent by Mr Bill Coffin.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS FOR ILLUSTRATIONS

Miss J Moulton (front cover), Mr L Boughey (above, bottom page 3, page 5, page 19), Mr F Moore-Dutton (page 6), Mrs A Laing (Chapel, page 11), Mr P S G Jones (Reginald Heber, page 11)

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EDITORIAL

'Malpas History' No. 1 appeared just over four years ago, in December 1983, when the theme for the cover story was 'Malpas Celebrates'. The theme is repeated on the covers of this issue, which marks the end of the present run of 'Malpas History'. In the Editorial for the first issue I expressed the hope that the magazine would provide a meeting point for all those who share a love of Malpas and an interest in its fascinating history. In the nine issues to date we have been able to cover a fascinating variety of topics - deserted settlements, Malpas in time of war, the Oddfellows, Domesday Book, the Postal Service, old trades and crafts, Bickerton Coppermines, personal reminiscences, the Fire Service, the Town Band, the Wesleyan Chapel, farming, Maiden Castle, the Alport School and clockmakers, to name but a sample. However, the time seems to have come when the supply of articles has temporarily 'dried up' and the Field Club has decided that it is a sensible point at which to give the magazine a rest, while it concentrates on other publishing ventures. Profits accumulated from the sale of the magazine are to be used to assist the production of a book of old photographs of Malpas and district. From the comments received on the many photographs that have been reproduced in 'Malpas History', we feel sure that this will be a popular publication. The Field Club local history publications are seen as being complementary to the full-scale history of the area which is being researched currently by members of the Malpas and District Local History Group, under the expert guidance of Paul Booth of the University of Liverpool.

Because of the lack of articles from elsewhere, this issue has been based on my own researches. Although I do not consider it a good thing for an editor to write the articles as well as to edit, I hope that the contents will be found interesting and acceptable.

I would like to record the thanks of myself and the Malpas Field Club for the very encouraging support that you, the readers, have given to the magazine and to our many contributors who have supplied articles, photographs and other items for publication. Thanks are due also to all those who have so kindly provided facilities for selling the magazine, at no profit to themselves.

The formula for 'Malpas History' seems to have been a successful one and it may well be that more issues will be published when further articles are forthcoming - so if you have a potential contribution buzzing around in your head, we would still like to know about it!

David Hayns

THE EMPRESS AND SIR WATKIN

The following report appears under the Malpas news in the 'Chester Chronicle' for 5 March 1881:

The Empress of Austria - On the occasion of the visits of the Empress of Austria to Macefen and Carden the inhabitants were highly honoured by her Majesty, as on both occasions she visited the Lion Hotel before returning to Combermere, and lunching there. On the first visit, too, she paid Mrs Large a call, and partook of refreshments. A goodly number of persons assembled to witness the departure of her Majesty from the Lion Hotel.

JOHN BOSTOCK,

LION HOTEL,

MALPAS, CHESHIRE.

GENUINE WINES AND SPIRITS,

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'

So what was the Empress of Austria doing in Malpas?

Elizabeth, who became empress consort of Austria when she married her cousin Franz Joseph in 1854, was born in 1837, daughter of the Bavarian Duke Maximilian Joseph. The Emperor, who was eight years older than Elizabeth, turned out to be a serious and conscientious ruler, spending long hours at his desk on affairs of state.

On the other hand, the Empress was passionately fond of riding and hunting and took to travelling around Europe, without her husband, to indulge these interests. In February 1881 she arrived in England to stay at Combermere Abbey, home of Lord Combermere, accompanied by her lady-in-waiting Countess Marie Festetics. According to Count Corti's biography of the Empress, which draws heavily on the detailed diary kept by Marie Festetics:

The house had originally been an old abbey, built in the year 1132 and altered for William of Orange in 1682, the room in which he had slept being painted orange in his honour. This room was



THE EMPEROR FRANZ JOSEPH



THE WYNNSTAY HUNT AT MALPAS CROSS
EARLY THIS CENTURY

allotted to Marie Festetics. Even the furniture was orange, and the bed in which the Prince of Orange had slept was hung with curtains of the same shade. The bed was so high that, to Elizabeth's great amusement, the Countess had to climb on a chair and jump up at the risk of her neck. She felt as if she were living in an orange rind turned inside out.

It would seem that she came to Malpas to follow the hounds with the Wynnstay Hunt, when:

...it amused Elizabeth to see how the children of the Master of Hounds - 'Sir Whyn', as she called him, nicknamed the 'Prince in Wales' - two dear little girls of the ages of eight and fourteen, joined in the hunt. When the Countess Festetics asked them in alarm "But who looks after the children?" the Master replied quite calmly "Oh, everybody does."

The master referred to was, of course, Sir Watkin Williams Wynn of Wynnstay, who was descended from the Princes of North Wales.

Macefen Hall (see Malpas History 5) and Carden Hall, which the Empress visited, were the homes respectively of the Kenyon and Leche families. Both Halls have now vanished, Macefen being demolished in 1960 and Carden burning down in the famous fire of 1912.



THE EMPRESS HUNTING
From an oil-painting by Emil Adam



OLDHALL STREET, MALPAS, CHESHIRE.



"The Unique Series."

OLDHALL STREET WITH THE LION INN (LEFT OF CENTRE)
AS IT WOULD HAVE LOOKED IN 1881



CARDEN HALL
DESTROYED BY FIRE IN 1912

According to Count Corti:

The English gentry vied with one another in their hospitality, but she no longer found so much pleasure in riding as in past years, and became more and more difficult to please in the matter of horses. Her fondness for hunting was severely judged by many people. A certain Herr Friedrich of Rotterdam, for instance, wrote her an ironical letter, requesting her to advance him the cost of one day's hunting in England to enable him to carry on his business "The only thing that surprises me now," she wrote from Combermere Abbey, "is when anybody says or writes anything nice about me".



Maesfen Hall

Presumably the hunt had met at Macefen and Carden respectively on the two occasions that she visited Malpas and probably her visits to the Lion Hotel were for the purposes of 'freshening up' before returning to Combermere for lunch.

The Mrs Large whom the Empress is reported to have visited 'to partake of refreshments' on the first visit was almost certainly Miss Mary Large, who lived at 'The Lodge' in Wrexham Road.

Elizabeth seems to have enjoyed her stay in Cheshire, so much so that she returned for a second short visit in February of the following year. After that her interest seems to have waned and the rest of her life became a rather sad story. The death of her only son the crown prince Rudolf in 1889, apparently in a suicide pact with his mistress, was a shock from which Elizabeth never fully recovered. She herself died a tragic death, sixteen years after her visit to Malpas. On a visit to Switzerland in 1898 she was mortally stabbed by Luigi Lucheni, an Italian anarchist who bore her no personal grudge but sought publicity for his cause.

So died the Empress who had been described as the most beautiful woman in Europe, whose beauty for a short time graced the streets of Malpas.

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THE EMPRESS ELIZABETH AS A YOUNG WOMAN
From a lithograph by A. Dausbage after the portrait by Einsle, 1838. National Library, Vienna

MALPAS HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

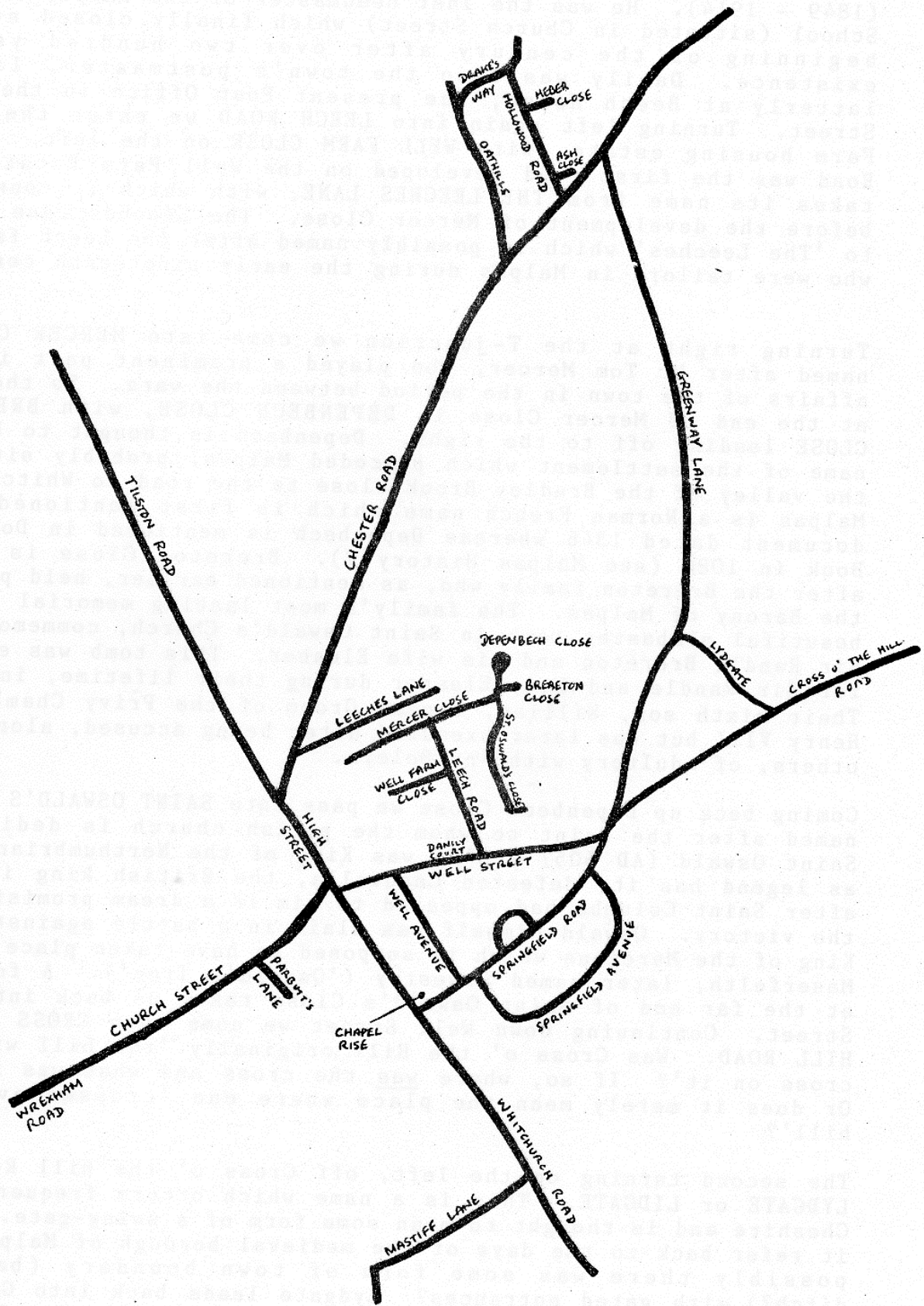
All the names of streets, roads and lanes in the area of Malpas town have some historical significance. Fortunately the Parish Council, which is usually asked to comment on suggested names for newly developed roads, has a sense of history and has opposed inappropriate names put forward by developers, such as 'Foxley Grove' (for what is now Depenbech Close).

As with most places, the main roads leading out of Malpas are named after the next major places to which they lead - therefore we have Wrexham Road, Whitchurch Road, Tilston Road and Chester Road. However, it is significant that once these roads enter the town itself they become 'streets' and this is a clue that they have been paved for many centuries. The name 'street' comes from the Latin 'strata', hence the Saxon word 'straet', meaning a paved road. The word appears in the names of places such as Stretford, Stretton, etc. and these are almost certain indications that the place lies on or near the line of a former Roman road. Stretton near Tilston is on the line of the Roman road ('Watling Street') which ran from Deva (Chester) through Mediolanum (Whitchurch) to Wroxeter and thence to London.

In this article I shall take an imaginary walk around the town, starting from my own home in CHURCH STREET, named after the parish church of Saint Oswald. Opposite the church, leading down between the Old Printing House and the dentist's surgery, is PARBUTT'S LANE. Hugh Parbutt (Parbert) was a shoemaker whose workshop was on the site of the present dentist's. Continuing along Church Street we reach the Cross and turn right into OLD HALL STREET. The present Old Hall, now a retirement home, was built to replace a medieval timber framed hall destroyed by fire in 1760. It is possible that the original hall was sited further down the street, towards Whitchurch. By Tudor times it was occupied by the Brereton family, who held part of the Barony of Malpas for about four hundred years.

On the left as we walk down the street is CHAPEL RISE, a group of houses built in 1986 on the site of the Wesleyan Chapel (built in 1892 and demolished in 1985. See Malpas History 4). Just past the new doctor's surgery a lane leads off to the right, for Oldcastle. This became known as MASTIFF LANE, a corruption of the original MASTY LANE mentioned in the Malpas Highway Surveyors' accounts for 1737. 'Masty' is an old form of the word 'mastiff'. Does the name of the lane perhaps refer to a particularly notorious hound that used to inhabit the area? Or was it originally 'masty' in its other meaning, a place where there was a considerable amount of beech mast lying around in the autumn?

Returning back up Old Hall Street we turn right into SPRINGFIELD ROAD. With SPRINGFIELD AVENUE this is laid out over the former Springfields which, as their name implies, helped to provide Malpas with its water supply in times past. Turn left into WELL AVENUE then right into WELL STREET which between them commemorate the former Town Well, situated right at the bottom of WELL STREET. In the past this has also been known as Well Lane

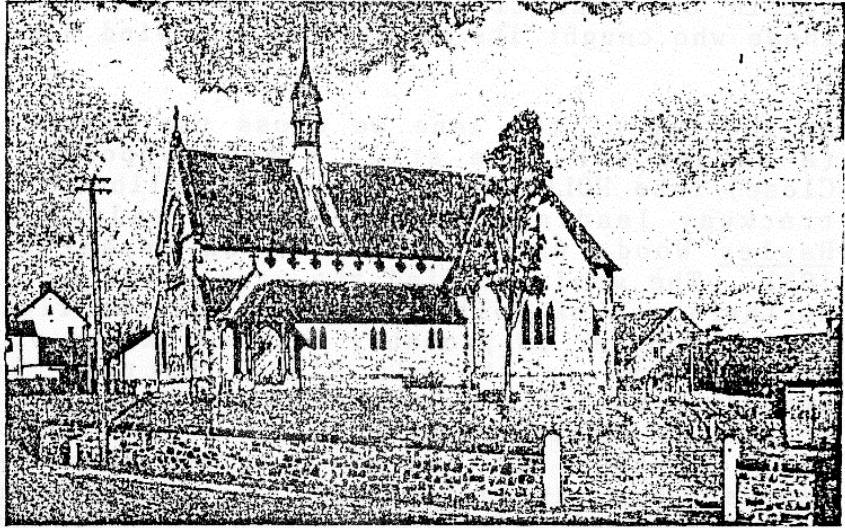


and Well Way. Just before the first turning left there is a terrace of houses named DANILY COURT, after Matthew Henry Danily (1849 - 1914). He was the last headmaster of the Malpas Grammar School (situated in Church Street) which finally closed at the beginning of the century after over two hundred years' existence. Danily was also the town's postmaster, living latterly at Beech House, the present Post Office in the High Street. Turning left again into LEECH ROAD we enter the Well Farm housing estate, with WELL FARM CLOSE on the left. Leech Road was the first road developed on the Well Farm Estate and takes its name from THE LEECHES LANE, with which it connected before the development of Mercer Close. The Leeches Lane leads to 'The Leeches' which is possibly named after the Leech family, who were tailors in Malpas during the early nineteenth century.

Turning right at the T-junction we come into MERCER CLOSE, named after Mr Tom Mercer, who played a prominent part in the affairs of the town in the period between the wars. To the left at the end of Mercer Close is DEPENBECH CLOSE, with BRERETON CLOSE leading off to the right. Depenbech is thought to be the name of the settlement which preceded Malpas, probably sited in the valley of the Bradley Brook close to the road to Whitchurch. Malpas is a Norman French name which is first mentioned in a document dated 1346 whereas Depenbech is mentioned in Domesday Book in 1086 (see Malpas History 7). Brereton Close is named after the Brereton family who, as mentioned earlier, held part of the Barony of Malpas. The family's most lasting memorial is the beautiful alabaster tomb in Saint Oswald's Church, commemorating Sir Randle Brereton and his wife Eleanor. This tomb was erected for Sir Randle and Lady Eleanor during their lifetime, in 1552. Their sixth son, William, became Groom of the Privy Chamber to Henry VIII but was later executed after being accused, along with others, of adultery with Ann Boleyn.

Coming back up Depenbech Close we pass into SAINT OSWALD'S CLOSE, named after the saint to whom the parish church is dedicated. Saint Oswald (AD 605? - 642) was King of the Northumbrians and, as legend has it, defeated Caedwalla, the British king in 634, after Saint Columba had appeared to him in a dream promising him the victory. Oswald himself was slain in a battle against Penda King of the Mercians which is supposed to have taken place at Maserfelth, later named Oswestry ('Oswald's Tree'). A footpath at the far end of Saint Oswald's Close takes us back into Well Street. Continuing down Well Street we come into CROSS O' THE HILL ROAD. Was Cross o' the Hill originally 'the hill with the cross on it'? If so, where was the cross and what was it for? Or does it merely mean the place where one 'crosses over the hill'?

The second turning on the left, off Cross o' the Hill Road, is LYDGATE or LIDGATE. This is a name which occurs frequently in Cheshire and is thought to mean some form of a swing-gate. Could it refer back to the days of the medieval borough of Malpas when possibly there was some form of town boundary (bank and ditch?) with gated entrances? Lydgate leads back into GREENWAY LANE, also known in more recent times as LOGAN'S LANE. Greenway reminds us of the days before tarmacadam surfacing (not so long ago) when it would have been a grassy, or muddy, lane. Logan's Lane refers to Logan's animal by-products factory which stood



METHODIST CHURCH, WHITCHURCH ROAD, MALPAS

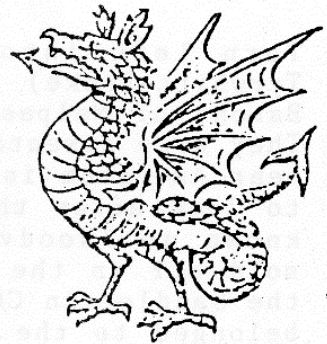
From a photograph taken around 1961

TOP RIGHT: Malpas Wesleyan Church (1892-1985)
in Old Hall Street ('Chapel Rise')

RIGHT: The Wyvern, crest from the arms of
the Drake family ('Drake's Way')

BELOW LEFT: The Brereton family arms
('Brereton Close')

BELOW RIGHT: Reginald Heber, born in Malpas
in 1783 ('Heber's Close')



beside the footpath going off to Hampton. The factory has closed within the last fifteen years but will be well remembered by those who caught its smell when the wind blew in their direction!

At the top of the lane we cross the Chester Road and ASH CLOSE (a mature ash tree still stands opposite the entrance to the Close) into HOLLOWOOD ROAD. This follows the line of an ancient trackway leading towards Edge. Hollowood is a corruption of Hawley Wood, which is marked on Bryant's map of Cheshire in 1831. The wood occupied the area which is now fields beyond the northern end of Hollowood Road. On the right is HEBER'S CLOSE. Reginald Heber is probably the best known of the sons of Malpas. He was born in the old Higher Rectory in 1783 and, after attending Whitchurch Grammar School and Oxford University, became Rector of Hodnet in Shropshire (where the Heber-Percy family still lives). It was while there that he wrote many of his famous hymns, including 'Holy, Holy, Holy' and 'From Greenland's Icy Mountains'. In 1823 he went to India as Bishop of Calcutta but after three exhausting years died of a stroke at Trichinopoly. He is commemorated in Malpas by the magnificent east window in the parish church and by the Bishop Heber High School.

Turn left into DRAKE'S WAY, named after the Drake (later Tyrwhitt-Drake) family who purchased the Brereton share of the Barony of Malpas in the second half of the seventeenth century. They were absentee landlords whose family seat was at Shardeloes, near Amersham in Buckinghamshire. They kept a steward in Malpas to look after their Cheshire lands and he lived at the house known as 'Woodville', in Tilston Road, until the estates were sold off in the 1920s. The building now occupied by Wycherley the Saddler in Church Street was formerly the 'Wyvern' inn. This belonged to the Drakes, the mythical wyvern being the crest on the family's coat of arms. Another former Drake property stands next door to Wycherley's, the Market House built around 1762. Drake's Way leads into OATHILLS DRIVE. Despite the name there is no evidence that oats were regularly grown here. Instead the name is probably derived from the name 'hothul' ('hot hill') which appears in a document dated 1321, referring to warm ground in a sheltered and sunny situation.

At the end of Oathills Drive we turn right, back into Chester Road and, following the hill down, reach HIGH STREET. It is only during the last hundred years or so that it has had this name, being formerly known as WINDMILL STREET from the days when it led to Lord Cholmondeley's windmills. These were the older type of mills, known as post mills, and stood in the field alongside Tilston Road opposite the entrance to Overton Lane. High Street is probably the oldest of the Malpas roads and almost certainly lies on the line of the Roman road from Chester to Whitchurch, referred to earlier in this article.

No doubt Malpas will see other new roads developing in the future - I hope that this article will help to encourage those responsible for their development to continue to choose names that serve as reminders of the town's history.

AN EARLY SPANISH SETTLER IN MALPAS?

It has long been claimed that there was a Roman settlement at Malpas, alongside the Roman road from Deva (Chester) to Mediolanum (Whitchurch). The evidence for this is that earlier writers have claimed that Roman objects were found in the area around the Norman castle mound in the churchyard, as well as tessellated pavements. However, no details survive and it is possible that what were once identified as Roman may well have been medieval objects.

Nevertheless, one of the most important Roman finds in Cheshire was discovered in the old Parish of Malpas, at Bickley in 1812. This is a bronze diploma or military discharge certificate which is now kept in the British Museum, with a facsimile copy on display at the Grosvenor Museum in Chester. According to the author F H Thompson, in his 'Roman Cheshire':

Such certificates were issued to auxiliary soldiers of the Roman army on completion of twenty five years' service and granted to them and their descendants citizenship and legalised their marriages (i.e. with native women). These privileges were generally conferred by Imperial edict on a group of auxiliary regiments in a province and published on a bronze tablet set up at Rome; it was possible for an individual soldier to obtain a copy of this, with the addition of his name and unit, and these are the diplomas which have been found from time to time, as at Malpas. The complete documents are in the form of two bronze plates, hinged together by bronze rings.

The Malpas diploma was issued in January of AD 103 to a Spaniard named Reburus. He was a decurio, or junior officer, in the first Pannonian Regiment, a cavalry regiment serving in Britain. Possibly Reburus lived in or near Malpas, or maybe at Mediolanum (Whitchurch). Fragments of similar diplomas have been found at Middlewich, dated AD 105, and Viroconium (Wroxeter), dated AD 135. It may be that Reburus, once discharged, settled in the area, possibly as a farmer.

The illustrations of the Malpas Diploma, or Tabula, reproduced here are taken from W Thompson Watkin's 'Roman Cheshire', published in 1886. F H Thompson gives the following translation of the Latin text:

The Emperor Caesar Nerva Trajan Augustus Germanicus Dacicus, son of the deified Nerva, high priest, in his seventh year of tribunician power, three times acclaimed Emperor and five times consul, father of his country:

To the cavalry and infantry serving in four cavalry regiments and eleven infantry regiments called (1) I Thracum (2) I Pannoniorum Tampiana (3) Gallorum Sebosiana (4) Hispanorum Vettonum, Roman citizens (1) I Hispanorum (2) I Vangionum milliaria (3) I Alpinorum (4) I Morinorum (5) I Cugernorum (6) I Baetasiorum (7) I Tungrorum milliaria (8) II Thracum (9) III Bracaraugustanorum (10) IIII Lingonum (11) IIII Delmatarum and stationed in Britain under Lucius Neratius Marcellus, who have served twenty-five years or more and are named below,



THE MALPAS TABULA. INSIDE OF PLATE NO. I.



THE MALPAS TABULA. OUTSIDE OF PLATE NO. I.



THE MALPAS TABULA. INSIDE OF PLATE NO. II.



THE MALPAS TABULA. OUTSIDE OF PLATE NO. II.

Has given Roman citizenship to themselves, their children and descendants, and recognition of their marriage with those who are their wives at the time of this grant, or if any are unmarried, with those they should marry subsequently, provided that they only have one each.

On the 14th day before the Kalends of February in the second consulship of Manius Laberius Maximus and Quintus Atilius Agricola (19 January, A.D. 103).

Addressed to Reburus the Spaniard, son of Severus, decurion in the First *ala* of Pannonians Tampiana, commanded by Gaius Valerius Celsus.

Copied and checked from the bronze tablet set up at Rome on the wall behind the temple built by the deified Augustus to Minerva, and witnessed by:

Quintus Pompeius Homerus, Gaius Papius Eusebes, Titus Flavius Secundus, Publius Caulius Vitalis, Gaius Vettienus Modestus, Publius Atinius Hedonicus, and Tiberius Claudius Menander.

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'MOST NEGLECTED INHABITED SPOT'

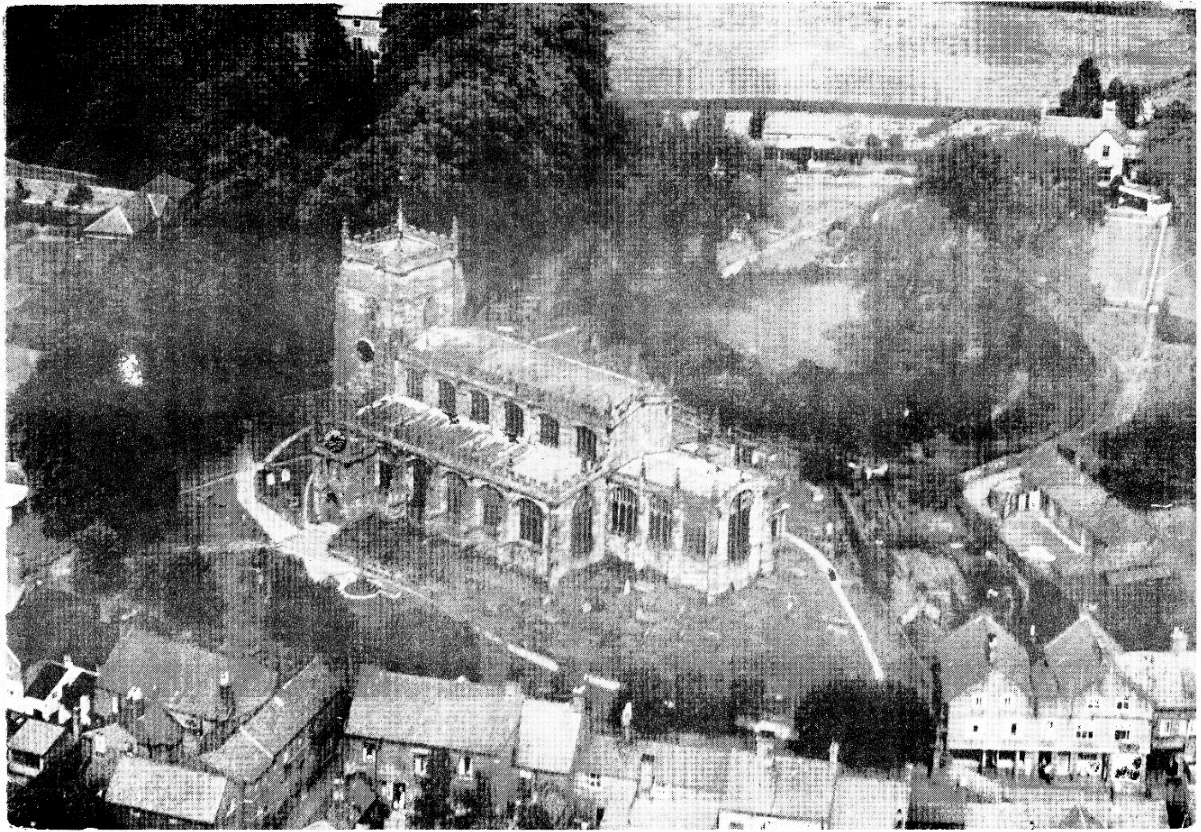
Malpas is fortunate in being able to take advantage of a very pure supply of some of the softest water in the country. It was one of the first things I noticed after moving here over twenty years' ago, having grown up on the Chiltern chalklands where kettles were constantly 'furred' and hot water pipes frequently had to be de-scaled. Malpas town's supply 'taps' the aqueduct from Lake Vyrnwy, in the uplands of North Wales, to Liverpool. However, it was not always so, as is suggested by the title of this article. The quotation comes from a report that appeared in the 'British Medical Journal' around 1871. This report refers to the first piped water supply in the town, which had been established in 1835 as a joint venture between the Marquis of Cholmondeley and Thomas Tyrwhitt-Drake, the two main local landowners. They caused to be erected on the Goodmoors, to the southeast of the town, a waterworks where a steam engine forced water through a conduit which ran up Well Street into the reservoir constructed inside the Castle Hill by the church. The system was designed to replace eventually the older sources of supply, such as the Town Well at the bottom of Well Street.

The original apparatus and its maintenance seem to have been paid for by the Cholmondeleys and the Drakes. A number of accounts relating to it are preserved in the Drake estate papers, in the Cheshire Record Office. The account reproduced here is for repairs to the water wheel in 1837. The fact that the repair required an engineer to travel from London, spending nearly a week in the process, suggests that that the apparatus might not have been very wisely selected.

Messrs Pearce & Thompson

*To Messrs W. Robinson
(Care of Messrs W. & L. Smith)
Pirbright.*

1837 For the Malpas Water Works
 S. for 4 Man's time travelling to
 Malpas, repairing Water
 Wheel Engine, & returning 2. 7. 3
 to London - - - - - by day 7.
 Paid him Coach hire, extra
 allowance, lodging, and } 5. 15. 6
 travelling expenses - - - }
 (P.P.) £ 8. 2. 9



AN AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN AROUND 1935 SHOWING THE PARISH
CHURCH OF SAINT OSWALD. BESIDE THE CHURCH IS THE CASTLE
MOUND CONTAINING THE RESERVOIR CONSTRUCTED IN 1835.

By the 1870s the system was giving serious cause for concern and the 1871 (?) report from the 'British Medical Journal' reads as follows:

See Whitchurch Herald 22 July 1871

A NICE COUNTRY VILLAGE.—Dr. Henry Stevens, one of the medical inspectors attached to the medical department of the Privy Council Office, has just been making a sanitary inspection of the village or township of Malpas, in Cheshire. "It may be stated shortly that, in every conceivable variety of sanitary defect Malpas village emulates the most neglected inhabited spot that has ever been reported on." The village has the usual amount of bad arrangements for dealing with the disposal of excrement and filth of other descriptions; and in this it is perhaps not so very different from other places; but in one matter—that of a portion of the water supply—the arrangement is so novel that it is worth calling attention to. "The scheme," says Dr. Stevens, "for raising the water to the reservoir for distribution is original. An over-shot water-wheel is attached to the pump, with the view that water from the neighbouring sewage-pool would afford sufficient power to raise the purer water to the height required," and the following is his brief account of it in a sanitary point of view. This water-wheel is within two feet of the open tank out of which the water for the village supply is pumped; the result being, as he afterwards says, self-evident, "that the splashing of the wheel throws the sewage to a not inconsiderable extent into the tank that collects the spring water." The consequence of all these arrangements, ingenious or otherwise, is, that in about five months one-tenth of the whole population has been stricken down with enteric disease. Surely something practical should be done to awaken the authority of such a place to a sense of its duties.—*British Medical Journal.*

See 'Minute Book of the meetings of the Ratepayers of the Township & Town of Malpas' Chester City Record Office RSP/10/11 Page 82 (July 1871)

Under the 1872 Public Health Act the water supply became the responsibility of the Board of Guardians for the Whitchurch Union, which formed a Sanitary Committee to look after affairs in Malpas. It would appear that the situation referred to in 1871 was improved eventually but the supply was still not satisfactory in other respects. In 1883, by which time the Liverpool Corporation was well ahead with its aqueduct from Lake Vyrnwy, reports started to appear in the local papers about the unreliability of the Malpas Waterworks' supply. There were regular meetings of the town's ratepayers at which they petitioned for a better supply. As a result of this pressure, in 1885 the Sanitary Committee arranged for the reservoir in the Castle Hill to be enlarged.

Still all was not well and the newspapers continued to carry reports of leaks in the reservoir and of bursting pipes. Things had come to a head by 1887, when the Sanitary Committee decided

that a major overhaul of the system was required. The following advertisement appeared in the 'Whitchurch Herald' for 4 June that year:

MALPAS WATERWORKS.
WANTED, 600 yards of Cast-iron RISING
MAIN PIPES, as per specification, now open
for inspection at Mr Wm. BERRY'S, Malpas. Tenders
to be sent in not later than the 23rd of June, 1887.

By the middle of 1890, when Liverpool Corporation had completed their works in the area, a decision was reached to accept the Corporation's offer to connect Malpas to the supply at a cost of £320. However, there was a faction that resisted the connection, claiming that the existing system was still capable of being brought up to an acceptable standard despite the fact that there were still problems arising from the sewage works being next door to the waterworks. As late as February 1891, at a meeting of the ratepayers, Mr Matthew Henry Danily, headmaster of the Malpas Grammar School, put the proposition:

"That we the ratepayers respectfully call upon the Rural Sanitary Authority to remove the nuisances at present existing around our water supply, as we are distinctly of the opinion that our present position on the Water Question is largely due to the Sanitary Authority's neglect of their duty in the past, and especially as the Liverpool water supply cannot be obtained for an indefinite period".

At last, by the end of 1892, Malpas was connected to the Liverpool supply and the town was able to shake of its reputation as a 'most neglected inhabited spot'.

REFERENCES

Minute Book of the meetings of the Ratepayers of the Township and Town of Malpas (Chester City Record Office RP/10/1)

Tyrwhitt-Drake Estate Records (Cheshire Record Office Ref.DTD)

'Chester Chronicle' 1880-1890

'Whitchurch Herald' 1887

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The Editor, 'The Whitchurch Herald'.

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Liverpool Water Supply.

COMPLETING THE GREAT SCHEME.

The last link in the completion of the great undertaking of supplying Liverpool with pure water from the hills in Wales is being rapidly forged by the construction of the reservoir at Malpas, which is capable of holding between four and five million gallons of water. The work was begun in December 1911, and but for the great delay caused by the strikes in 1912 would have been well on its way for being declared open. It will be handed over, after exhaustive tests have been made, during the year. The construction represents the final stage of the scheme conceived by Mr. Deacon, the engineer who was responsible for it, and it has been carried out by his successors in every detail. The reservoir is built on the West side of the original relieving tank, and will be fed through the latter from the twin line of 41 inch pipes, the water in the two compartments rising to the same level of fifteen feet. A circulation will be maintained through the connection aperture, a 12 inch branch being fed off the mains at a point below the reservoir, the flow through which will "agitate" the contents and keep up a constant freshness, the siltage being drawn to a circular pump and thence extracted by way of a 30 inch pipe to a brook several hundred yards distant.

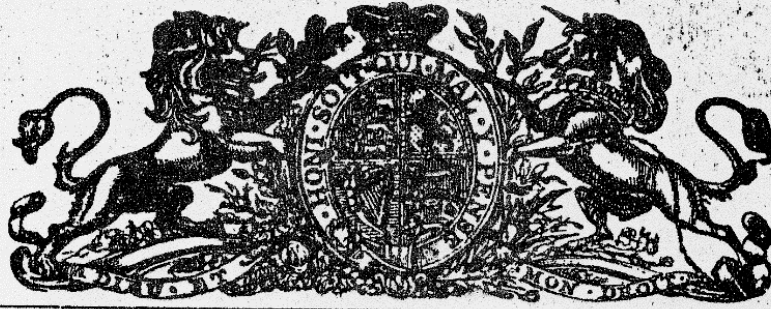
The contract for the work has been let to Messrs. Jowett Bros., of Burscough, the work having been carried out under the keen supervision of Mr. Humphrey Noel Giles, M.I.C.E. The reservoir is 240 feet internal diameter, and is constructed within a great barrier of solid rock which surrounds it on nearly all sides. The construction has involved the expenditure of a vast amount of manual strength, no explosives being allowed. Some idea of the amount of labour incurred may be gauged from the fact that 23,650 cubic yards of red sandstone have been removed through the wielding of hammer pick and spade. Though the structure has been designed to independently sustain the enormous pressure of water, the contractors have left nothing to chance, the massive walls of cement concrete being packed tightly against the surrounding body of natural rock which spreads away for many yards beyond. The walls are built upon a cement concrete foundation of 2ft. 6in. thick and nine feet wide, the super-structure battering from 6ft at the base to over two feet at the top rising to a height of seventeen and a half feet, being finished with a heavy stone coping and massive cast-iron guard rails. The internal half-brick casing is of selected first quality blue bricks, with the object of keeping a clean surface, there being a continuous bonding to the concrete backing effected by heading courses at every third course in height. The flooring is of cement concrete blocks 10 inches thick, cast in situ with circular heading joints, being bonded between the straight radiating joints which are disposed at every eighth part of the circumference. The utmost care is being exercised in the casting of these blocks, which are limited, for scientific reasons to a maximum area of 90 super feet; all the joints being ultimately made up with mastic. The extreme accuracy observed in every detail of the construction is a credit alike to the engineer who conceived the scheme, and to those upon whose shoulders has devolved the responsibility of interpreting it. The stone for the concrete has been brought both by road and rail from the Bulchwyn Quarries, Denbighshire, the crushed quartz coming from the neighbouring lead mines of Minera, a total of 3,700 cubic yards of concrete having been employed in the construction of the flooring and walls.

The water level will be 400 feet above ordnance datum. The situation is on an eminence delightfully open and commanding a magnificent panoramic view of Welsh Wales, verging into one of the neighbouring counties of Shropshire, Staffordshire, Derbyshire and Lancashire, and quite in keeping with the excellent arrangements generally in vogue on the system. The attendant, Mr. McIntyre, is housed in a commodious brick building with stone dressings, the approach thereto from the main road being by way of a long carriage drive, studded here and there with ornamental shrubs and trees and beds of various shapes gay with the flowers of spring. These trees, in many instances, are readily lending themselves to an enthusiasm for freak gardening, which the attendant enjoys. Thus one meets with a cypress tree twisted and bent and fashioned into an admirable representation of the "Commander Ethelston Charity Cup;" a little further on a holly tree has been coaxed into "personating" a living "Liver"—the arms of the city of Liverpool—and still further one sees other trees said to represent a hen brooding chickens, and another a fat duck, so healthy that it grows fatter and fatter as each Xmas veers round, and a little way to the right is a light and pliant tree, quickly responsive to every breath of wind, designed to ultimately represent the yacht by which Sir Thomas Lipton will lift the cup the Yankees hug so closely. The success of this great undertaking is as much an interest to many thousands of those outside Liverpool as to those within her gates, for by its crossing the country many places such as Oswestry, Ellesmere, Whittington, Bunbury, Malpas, etc., are benefiting by an adequate supply of pure fresh water which it would have been both costly and difficult to acquire by other methods.

The works were visited for the first time on Saturday by members of the Liverpool Corporation Water Committee, who motored over, and after dining at the Wyvern Hotel, inspected the installations at Malpas, Cotebrook, and Norton. The party, which included Col. Porter (chairman), Aldermen Radcliffe, Smith and Giles, Councillors Bolger, Burns, Eills, Gates, Hill, Kelly, Powell and Rutherford, were shown over the works by Mr. Joseph Parry, M.I.C.E., the chief engineer, and Mr. Humphrey Giles, B.Sc., B.E., A.M.I.C.E., the resident engineer at Malpas.

A PRESS REPORT (1912?) OF THE
CONSTRUCTION OF THE MALPAS
RESERVOIR AT THE OATHILLS.

From the Scrapbook of
Mr J C Wycherley.



OXHAYES, MALPAS.

CORONATION OF KING EDWARD VII.

Saturday, August 9th, 1902,

SPORTS

Commencing at 1 p.m. Sharp.

JUDGES:—G. C. DOBELL, Esq.;
REV. & HON. A. R. PARKER, CAPTAIN ETHELSTON.

STARTER:—H. Barnes, Esq.

HANDICAPPERS:—Messrs. Done, Aingworth, & Battarbee.

STEWARDS:—

Mr. S. H. Sandbach.
„ J. Davies,
„ H. C. Parry,
„ J. Jones,
„ W. Penk,
„ H. Bithell,
„ C. Price,
„ T. G. Huxley,
„ G. Weaver,

Mr. G. Lewis,
„ J. M. C. Burnett,
„ J. Huxley, junr.
„ H. E. Mercer,
„ H. Bebbington,
Rev. L. Armitstead,
Mr. T. Bevin,
„ A. D. Callcott,
„ A. McIntyre,

Dr. Jordison.
„ Leigh
Mr. T. C. Caldecott;
„ S. Timmis,
„ T. Griffies,
Rev. J. O. Morgans,
Mr. G. S. Morgan,
„ J. Andrews;
„ J. W. Wycherley,

Mr. H. Mercer, | Mr. J. Eaton, etc., etc.

