



PRESTBURY LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

AUGUST 2014

CHAIRMAN: Michael Cole. 01242 517192. email: tatchleybooks@gmail.com

SECRETARY: Norman Baker. 01242 583187. email: njb123@talktalk.net

Website: www.prestburyhistory.btck.co.uk

Welcome to the new term. We look forward to seeing you at the meetings of our Prestbury Local History Society which are planned for the next three months .

The name De la Bere is woven into the history of Prestbury. They owned land and properties in the area and left their name and mark on various buildings. But who were they and what did they do for Prestbury? You can find out at the next meeting which is on the 22nd September. Michelle Rees, one of our committee members, has been researching the De la Bere family and will share the results of her work with us.

The World War I Centenary commemorations are taking place across the nation and across the world but of course the effects and losses were very local too. At our October 27th meeting David Jones will help us to appreciate the sacrifice of men from our own parish of Prestbury as he takes us through the names on our War Memorial.

We are fortunate to have a wealth of historic buildings in Prestbury village and Tudor Cottage is one of them. John White, whose home is Tudor Cottage, will tell us about the cottage and its history at the meeting on 24th November. We will also share in a Prestbury History Quiz which has been devised by Tony Noel.

Meetings are at the Women's Institute Hall, Prestbury Road/Bouncers Lane, at 7.30p.m.

THE PRESTBURY ALBUM

The Prestbury Album is a new initiative, intended to provide a specifically photographic, or illustrative image archive as part of the existing PLHS Archive.

The aim is to have a collection of images of people, places, buildings, landscape, festivals, coronations, anniversaries, other events, or subjects that will reflect some aspects of life in Prestbury in history.

This is an appeal to all of our members to consider whether they can either donate, or at least allow us to copy, photographs, or images from whatever source, relevant to the above, in support of the album that will be available for all PLHS members to view either in actual material or online.

Submissions may need to be supported by descriptive or explanatory notes, captions or titles, and every image will have a recorded source acknowledgement and be protected online by a PLHS copyright watermark.

Thank you.

For submissions, questions, or just more information, please contact the PLHS Archivist:-

David K Jones, 5 Studland Drive, Prestbury, GL52 5BU. Tel: 01242 581991 davidkjones@myway.com



We are grateful to Matthew Parker for this photograph to add to our Prestbury Album. It is a picture of his Great Great Grandfather Henry Parker outside his home at Queenwood Grove. Henry Parker was at one stage a valet to Fred Archer.

The cottage has now been greatly extended and the original house is not readily recognisable.

Fascinating to see that Queenwood Grove was then called Winchcombe Road. In some census returns it is also known as Workhouse Road.



Another photograph from Matthew Parker is of Prestbury Scouts on a camp some time in the early to mid 1950s. Richard Henry Parker is the one with the round glasses. Do you recognize any of the others?

PLAGUE IN PRESTBURY

In the book entitled 'Norman's History of Cheltenham' by John Goding (1853 p58) a news item is quoted:

AS TO PRECAUTIONS AGAINST OVER-CROWDING. – 5th April, 9 Jac — Frankpledge. Presentment that Dobbins sounded his drum up and down the towne of Cheltenham, in the market, accompanied by R. Clerke and divers other young fellows; Clerke following Dobbins with a truncheon, like a lyvetenant or marshallman, and proclaiming, that whosoever would hear a play should come to the sign of the Crown. This the bailiff of the towne misliking, the rather for the neighbouring townes of Tredington and Prestbury were then infected with the plague, and the towne itself much suspected, and greatly doubted, that the infection was there also, sent them to forbear; they reviled his messenger, and he had to go himself to suppress them, but they had departed. Their insolence and contempt of good government was punished at the Leet.

The plague was greatly feared so when the bailiff heard of a public meeting being arranged in Cheltenham he moved quickly to stop it because Prestbury had the plague! We tend to think of the plague as one nasty outbreak called The Black Death but in fact the plague was a constant fear across several centuries and outbreaks were not uncommon. How did the plague affect Prestbury?

Some notes on the report. The date is given as '5th April 9 Jac'. Regnal years were widely used, especially in official publications. Thus 9 Jac is the 9th year of the reign of James. (Jacobus) The marking of the regnal year is from the date of accession so regnal years begin and end on that anniversary. Therefore 9 Jac began on March 24 1611.

Frankpledge and Court Leet refer to a form of oversight and trial which was in use for centuries.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 12th.13th and 14th.September at the PARISH CHURCH.

There will be a display of the Prestbury racecourse VAD Hospital which cared for wounded servicemen during the First World War. Information will be displayed on the men named on our War Memorial and the War Graves Commission burials in our churchyard together with snippets about daily life during the 1914-18 period

Teas will be available in the afternoons from 2pm to 5pm.

The Church will be open from 11am to 5pm on Friday and Saturday and from 2pm to 5pm on the Sunday.

Any more volunteers to welcome visitors, assist with teas etc will be very welcome. It would be greatly appreciated if those who have already volunteered contact Lynda Hodges.

Please note that All Saints Church will be open as will St. Mary Magdalen at Elmstone Hardwicke with Uckington,

Lynda Hodges.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE BUILDING AND RECORDING GROUP has its inaugural lecture on 6th Sept at 3pm at Whiteway Colony Hall, Stroud. If you want to know more or become more involved in building archaeology and ways to date historic buildings go to their website: www.buildingarchaeology.org

NATIONAL WAR MEMORIAL ARCHIVE : <http://www.ukniwm.org.uk/>

If you have any information relating to local war memorials that is not on this website, they would like to know. You can add to the archive with information and photos

VICTORIA COUNTY HISTORY

This website is very interesting and informative on Gloucestershire history and the ongoing development of the local Victoria County History work:

GCHTAcademy_Newsletter_1_July_2014.pdf

GLOUCESTERSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

LOCAL HISTORY DAY

Saturday 11 October at Pate's Grammar School, Princess Elizabeth Way

10.30—4.30

THE EFFECTS OF WORLD WAR I ON GLOUCESTERSHIRE COMMUNITIES

Morning talks:

Lt Col Robert Dixon—Gloucestershire and the Great War

Sally Dixon—Kidderminster's War: a local history society's project.

Afternoon talks: Geoff North—researching Gloucestershire's VAD hospitals.

Admission is free.

See www.gloshistory.org.uk

SOME GLOUCESTERSHIRE INQUESTS



1811 Sep 30. On Thursday, at our Infirmary, on the body of THOMAS THEY, who, whilst driving the Hibernia Coach from Cheltenham to Shrewsbury, on the 16th inst. one of the fore wheels coming off, the coach was dragged over him, and injured him so severely that he expired on Tuesday last. And, same day, and at the same place, on the body of THOMAS SAUNDERS, who, on the preceding Sunday, fell from a pear tree, in the parish of Prestbury, which caused so violent a concussion of the brain, as to occasion his death. Verdict in both cases, Accidental Death

1819 Nov 8. SUDDEN DEATH. On Monday last, as a respectable man of the name of HIGNELL, who resided at Prestbury, near Cheltenham, was returning home, he suddenly fell down on the road in a fit, which terminated his existence in a very short period after he was carried to his house. We have the additional regret of learning that his loss will be mourned and lamented by a wife and eleven children.



1829 Dec 5. MELANCHOLY ACCIDENT. As Mr GEO. COOPER, a respectable farmer of Prestbury, was returning in a gig from Gloucester fair, at a late hour on Saturday night, accompanied by a friend, the horse started at some object in the road, and ran the gig against a bank; which, owing to the extreme darkness of the night, it was impossible to avoid. The violence of the shock was such that both were thrown out, and Mr Cooper received so serious an injury in the spine, that he died in less than half an hour. His friend, tho' severely wounded by falling on his head, paid him every possible attention, and led the horse carefully with his dying companion in the gig towards the Pheasant Inn; but before they arrived there, Mr Cooper was a corpse. An inquest was held on the body, before J Cooke, Esq. Coroner, and a verdict of Accidental Death returned. The deceased was in his 64th year, and was much respect-

1834 Nov 22 On Sunday last, Mr WILLIAM PAGE, gardener, of Prestbury, retired to bed in better health than he had been for a considerable time. About eleven o'clock he was taken ill, and in less that quarter of an hour expired. He was 70 years of age, and has left a numerous family, consisting of eleven children, thirty eight grandchikdren, and eight grand grand children. SUDDEN DEATH.



1836 May 21. On Saturday last a quarrel took place at Prestbury, between two men named THOMAS WILLIAMS and WILLIAM NEWMAN, when the former challenged the latter to a pitched battle. After the third round had taken place, the combatants fell heavily. Williams being undermost. He was taken up in a state of insensibility and conveyed home, where he died almost immediately. An inquest was held on Monday, before J Cooke, Esq. Coroner, when the Jury, after a patient investigation, returned a verdict, Died from Apoplexy.

MORE ON ROBERT OF PRESTBURY

I have continued my research into our famous Prestbury character Robert de Prestbury and am close to being able to produce an article which could become a pamphlet on what is known of his life. I have returned again to the National Archives for further sources and have received two documents which have not been transcribed from the original form by the Archives. This presents me with quite a problem. Firstly producing a version of the document which is legible and secondly converting the text into words which can be translated. I have managed to improve legibility but there are various forms of 13th century writing which can be in French, Latin or early English and use many abbreviations. I am currently studying several books on the subject of Palaeography but would be interested to know if we have anyone who has experience of this work. Any guidance would be a great help.

Tony Noel

To me, there is nothing more touchingly affecting than a local story, one of the war memorial's 'named', the boy next-door, father, son, cousin or brother, a face in the crowd, remembered by few, no great heroics, no national recognition, just called up from a modest, quiet family, in a small community, to go and do their duty for King and country. Their stories, recounted a hundred thousand times, throughout towns and villages, up and down the country, of tragic, utter futility and loss; part of a generation of youth that for many, almost before they had grown up, ...simply disappeared!

I am continuing to research the names on the Prestbury War Memorial and would like to ask if anybody has any particular family information, articles, photos, etc.. contemporary to that war, they would like to offer, or make known to me?

David Jones

Was PRESTBURY'S first Sunday car boot sale held in the churchyard? Prestbury was granted a market in 1249 to be held in The Burgage. In practice this probably meant that the Lord of the Manor (the Bishops of Hereford) had applied for the necessary royal permission to hold such a weekly market so that he received the tolls and fees to add to the income from the manor. We have no indication that there was a regular market in Prestbury before that but is its very likely—and also possible that it would have been in the churchyard and on a Sunday. It was certainly a known practice and one which made lots of sense as Sundays were when people came together and the church was where they gathered. Therefore if people had surplus produce which they could sell for cash or exchange for other goods, or if craftsmen had products, then there was somewhere to sell and buy. In such cases the church raised no objection to Sunday trading as such, but objections were made about the noise and smell. It is estimated that about 2800 markets were granted between 1200 and 1540, the majority of them before 1275. Many of these were to regularise the informal Sunday trading which was already happening. Thus in 1285 the Statute of Westminster laid down that 'from henceforth neither fairs nor markets be kept in churchyards'. In 1353 one market was ordered to switch to a weekday but it was still conceded that 'all men may buy and sell bread, ale, fish and small victuals every Sunday, as they are used to do'.

I am indebted to the book 'The Medieval English Landscape 1000-1540' by G J White.

Norman Baker

HISTORY WALK

Our annual al fresco meeting, the PLHS history walk, took place on Monday 23rd June, when twenty-three participants met on the green beside the War Memorial. Jointly led by Michael Cole and Norman Baker, this year's route incorporated four places of great historic interest to which members would not normally have access.

At the start point Michael Cole directed everyone's attention to the newly refurbished gardens of Idsall, formerly The Clevelands, where between the boundary wall along High Street and the driveway to the house there is a little-regarded stream. The source of this stream is to be found in several springs above Noverton, but what is so very surprising is that, instead of flowing along the lowest and easiest course (along High Street and Deep Street) this watercourse flows along the top of an elevated bank. After leaving Idsall gardens the stream is hidden in a culvert, but further downstream, where we followed, it reappeared in the churchyard, making a sharp turn at the west end, then disappearing into the Priory gardens. Even there it does not flow on the lowest ground but is constrained in a channel leading to Mill Street.

The antiquity of this mill leat is a point of crucial importance for the history of Prestbury, whose prosperity once depended on agriculture and in particular the milling of grain produced on local farms. Michael conjectured that the diversion of this stream may have been undertaken by the monks of Llanthony Secunda, who owned both the Noverton area and 'the Priory', with the intention of supplementing the supply to the mill pond at Lower Mill.

There Norman Baker took up the story with a visit to the site of the long-forgotten millpond. For this we were given the kind permission of Mrs. S. Marsh, at Lower Mill. Standing in her beautifully presented garden we assembled on a spot within the original pond, now filled in, and could see how the land contours here gave the important height difference needed for an overshot wheel. Norman was able to show that, contrary to popular belief, the mill wheel was not at the Mill Street side of the building but at the opposite end where, before its conversion to residential use in the 1920s, the range of buildings farthest from the road had three floors, through which the grain descended in the standard mill layout, as may be seen in the restored working mill at Stanway.

From there we moved on to Home Farm where we were able to stand in the yard and view a variety of buildings which were the foundation of farm life. Around us we saw the old farmhouse, the great barn (both from the early eighteenth century), the stables, granary and dairy unit, and the cider mill, its now-disused wheel making a feature in the farmyard. We are grateful to Mrs. J. Banwell for access to this site.

Our excursion continued on foot over Bow Bridge and up to Park Lane where, thanks to the kind permission of Mrs. Kate Buxton, we were able to enter an ancient moated site, which formerly surrounded Prestbury's oldest known building. Of this all that now remains are foundations under the turf where we gathered under the lone sycamore tree. Here we found ourselves closely regarded by fifteen curious alpacas. When standing beside the moat itself we could see how, despite centuries of disuse, the banks were well formed and still contained water. As Michael explained, the site was excavated by archaeologist Helen O'Neil in 1951, an ample report being published in the Transactions of the Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeology Society, 1956. Her dig produced many potsherds dating from about 1180 to the sixteenth century. During most of this period it was used principally as a hunting lodge by the Bishop of Hereford, the associated park being enclosed by wooden paling several miles in length, surrounding not

only the present-day racecourse (still called Prestbury Park) but also Hunting Butts Farm, together with associated land stretching all the way to the former parish boundary near Swindon Village.

Following on from this visit we were invited by Mr. & Mrs. Davies, of Spring Lane, to walk through their grounds, which are surrounded by another rectangular moat, possibly used originally for the outbuildings, stables etc., associated with the Bishop's 'manor house'. This secondary moat, though it has been filled in and built over at several points, was surprising well preserved and deep at the north-western side.



History Society members in the Parish churchyard being addressed by Michael Cole. Photo: Geoff North

PRESTBURY LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Meetings are held on the fourth Monday of each month (except July, August and December) at Prestbury Women's Institute Hall (unless otherwise indicated) at 7.30p.m. All are welcome. Members have free admission and guests pay £2.

Membership is open to all and costs £10 per calendar year.

The Society was formed in January 2011 and exists to collect, research and study information concerning the history of Prestbury and to stimulate public interest in, and appreciation of, our local history.

The running of the Society is in the hands of the Committee which is appointed at the AGM.

Website: www.prestburyhistory.btck.co.uk