

Ludlow Heritage News

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FREE



One of the original photographs from Alec Clifton-Taylor's book showing the Buttercross, the Church and Bodenham's twenty-five years ago. *Photo Geoff Howard.*

SIX ENGLISH TOWNS, 6. LUDLOW: Martin Speight, past Chairman, Ludlow Civic Society.

The last in our series on the six towns chosen by Alec Clifton-Taylor for his first television programme in 1978.

Ludlow, surely the loveliest of the six towns selected by Alec Clifton-Taylor for his 1978 television series, preserves an illusion of changelessness. The classic prospect of the town from Whitcliffe, even allowing for the creeping municipalisation around the toposcope, is still basically the same view which was painted by Isaac Vogelsang and Bernard Lens in 1722. If the artist Samuel Scott, who painted the view looking up Broad Street from his front door in the 1760s, were to return, he would instantly recognise a majority of the houses there. Few smaller English towns can make such a boast today. Yet beneath the façade, there has been considerable and often fundamental change in the quarter century since Alec Clifton-Taylor's broadcast.

He would undoubtedly approve of at least two of those changes, perhaps with qualifications. He spoke scathingly of the old

Town Hall, which he called a 'detestable building', and no doubt rejoiced when it was demolished with somewhat unseemly haste on 'safety grounds' in the spring of 1986. Even the writer of this article, who had been a defender of the Victorian building, recognises that the open space which was created has enhanced the town centre and restored some of the atmosphere of the original medieval market place. Attempts to improve this further have been more questionable, as well as very costly. The imitation gas lamp standards, made unnaturally high to frustrate vandalism, are particularly unhappy, and might well have provoked Clifton-Taylor's scorn.

The second most obvious change to have taken place since 1978 was the opening of the long-awaited bypass in 1980, which removed at least some of the pressure on Old Street and Corve Street, two very attractive streets which had long been blighted by traffic. While it must seem almost inconceivable today that in the early seventies both the Town and District Councils (and, to their shame, even some leading

members of the Civic Society) favoured driving the bypass through Whitcliffe, the eastern route was eventually achieved after a long and bitter struggle. A perceived benefit of the eastern bypass was that it would provide a natural limit to the expansion of the town, and this idea was enshrined in the thinking of the planners for most of the succeeding two decades. The proposed breaching of this *cordon sanitaire*, which will be discussed below, poses one of the most dangerous threats to Ludlow today.

Many advances have been made in Ludlow since 1978. The District Council is far more proactive in the matter of conservation and listed buildings, and enjoys the services of a first-rate Conservation Officer, Colin Richards. In the seventies the Council considered that a Conservation Area Advisory Committee was superfluous to requirements, but their successors took a more constructive line, and the Committee provides a means whereby a range of bodies with interests in the historic area of the town may make a positive input into the planning process.



Samuel Scott's painting of Broad Street c. 1760, and Broad Street today.

The Civic Society has also changed and developed in the past twenty-five years. The Committee was once a far more informal affair, meeting every two months in private houses, and delegating a considerable amount of responsibility for commenting upon planning applications to its Chairman.

The increasingly sophisticated world of planning led Chairmen like the late Stephen Dornan to move the Society towards a far more efficient and structured organisation which was better able to tackle increasingly complex development proposals.

These complex developments, such as the Tesco proposals, were symptomatic of the real changes which were taking place in Ludlow. The town had long been blessed by its remoteness and relative poverty, which had preserved it from the attentions of developers who had converted other historic Midlands towns like Stafford and Bromsgrove into battered shadows of their former selves. However, improved communications, such as the Bewdley bypass, made Ludlow more accessible for commuters to Birmingham, while, ironically, the publicity for Ludlow's charms generated by programmes such as *Six English Towns* provided a stimulus to the town's development as a haven from the overpriced and overcrowded South East. This inevitably has fuelled a rise in house prices, which has meant that houses in the historic core of the town are generally beyond the reach of local people. This is not all bad news, for it means that historic houses are increasingly owned by

people who have both the inclination and the means to conserve them to a high standard. The awards which are presented annually by the District Council on the recommendation of the Conservation Advisory Committee well illustrate this point.

Prosperity does, however, bring new threats to the well-being of Ludlow. Greater wealth in the town, and rising house prices have meant that development is now a far more attractive proposition than it was thirty years ago, which in turn puts pressure upon vacant plots in the town. The current threat to build five houses on land adjacent to the Reader's House is an illustration of attempts to develop small parcels of land which a few years ago would not have been considered worth the investment. In addition, development raises the question of what form new building should take. This was graphically highlighted in 2000 with the controversy over the redevelopment of the site in Castle Street formerly occupied by the 'House with the Leaden Porch'. Proposals for an ultra-modern design of glass and steel split the town, and indeed the Civic Society, into two factions, the 'modernisers' who favoured new building in contemporary styles, and the traditionalists who favoured a Georgian design to match the existing buildings on either side. Ultimately a compromise was reached, whereby a Georgian-style façade masks a set of flats whose rear elevation is decidedly contemporary.

The controversy raised a number of significant issues. The modernisers raised the rallying cry that Ludlow should not be a

museum - a cry which has been uttered many times over the years. While this opinion does have some validity, it is worthwhile considering the alternative - which is a town where the developers are let loose to create another 'anytown' in place of somewhere which is unique. The modernisers' plea that Ludlow should have buildings in the idiom of the present age also tends to ignore the fact that Ludlow does already have examples of these. Tesco in Corve Street is surely a prime piece of late twentieth-century architecture, with the dubious accolade of approval by the Royal Fine Art Commission. The new Library and Museum Resource Centre is similarly a piece of modern building, in the opinion of the writer, most unjustly vilified by many people in the town. If buildings on the periphery of the historic core can raise such passions, it is surely desirable to keep the character of the town centre intact. Ludlow is unique, and deserves to be preserved for future generations to appreciate.

It is unfortunate, however, that even more potent threats face Ludlow at the start of the third millennium. The approach to the town from Whitcliffe has been mentioned for its timeless appeal. The other routes into Ludlow are faring less happily. The approach from the north, for so long dominated by the distant view of St. Laurence's church on the skyline, now has a foreground containing those twin temples to the contemporary religion of sport, the Coors Stadium and the Leisure Centre, surely two of the tawdriest structures to have been erected in

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the whole history of Ludlow. On the opposite side of the town, the southern approach is still through open country, and has survived the construction of the new, and on the whole well-hidden, auction mart. There is still a sense of surprise on first seeing Ludlow after passing through the cutting by Ludford House. This southern area within the bypass is highly vulnerable, and efforts to protect it from the threat of development have met with only limited, and one fears temporary, success.

It is the eastern entry to the town which is currently under the greatest pressure. Here the District Council plans to make the first breach in the *cordon sanitaire* of the bypass by constructing an Eco Park. Quite what makes an Eco Park is unclear, but it would seem to be little more than a cynical attempt to hoodwink the simple-minded and environmentally aware that it is something eminently more desirable than a mere industrial estate. This enterprise is justified by its proponents on the grounds of employment creation and the interests of the young, even though it is doubtful if local labour will be sufficient to serve the needs of the new employers who, we are told, are anxious to come to the town. Should this be the case, then workers will have to be imported, and more houses will need to be built. The joining of Ludlow to its strange seventies satellite at Beaconsfield Park will then rapidly take place, and the prospect of a linear settlement extending to Caynham does not appear too far-fetched in the longer term.

The opening up of land beyond the bypass for development threatens to ruin Ludlow in a way which is almost beyond imagination. It is clear why the faction which at present controls the District Council is in favour of the proposal, for the enhanced business rate revenue which would be generated could be used to underwrite its prodigal spending plans without too great risk of a council-tax-payers' revolt. It is precisely because of this vested interest that the proposals need the ultimate approval of the Deputy Prime Minister. It is ironic that in the week in which the local newspapers reported the disgraceful decision of the District Council

to approve the Eco Park on the casting vote of its chairman, they also carried reports of record numbers attending the Food and Drink Festival. Ludlow's development as a gastronomic centre unrivalled outside London occurred without the aid of economic planners or empire-building councillors. Indeed, ten years ago no-one could have foreseen this development, which has so aided the prosperity of the town and, significantly, many of its small shops. Out-of-town developments, so beloved of planners and developers, rarely benefit small butchers and bakers, as a visit to most small towns will show. The lesson is surely that those economic developments which succeed best are those which occur spontaneously when conditions are right, rather than those which are imposed upon communities by those who attempt to mould their future according to abstract principles or economic self-interest. As this is being written in September 2003, Ludlow's future as a small town looks very bleak indeed.



The demolition of the Town Hall in 1986.

Martin Speight has been a member of the Civic Society since 1969, and was its Chairman from 1975 to 1985.

THE LUDFORD HOUSE SCANDAL 1663: Chris Potter

One of the papers given by the Historical Research Group at a recent Civic Society meeting.

During the autumn of 1663 there was no doubt some gossip in the Ludlow area about the growing friction between two

women, Audrey Purslowe of Ludford, and Ann, the wife of Gilbert Freeman of Tenbury, a dyer, and at that time a Churchwarden of Tenbury. The final showdown occurred in the kitchens of Ludford House on a Monday in early October. The result was a case for 'defamation of reputation and character' brought to the Church Court by Ann Freeman against Audrey Purslowe.

The papers for this case, with detailed witness statements, have survived and are in Hereford Record Office (1), and we can gain an insight into the passions and feelings of some of the people in the Ludlow area at that time, and particularly fascinating, some of the words they spoke. Cases of defamation were not uncommon; over half the surviving court papers for Ludlow before 1750 are such cases. Also common were disputes about tithes, church pews, church lewnes (a tax to support the Church), wills and payments of legacies. Occasionally there are requests for divorce, or 'separation from bed and board', as it was termed. Not infrequently an action was brought by a private individual or court official against a fornicator or adulterer. All the proceedings of such cases were called Acts of Instance, as they were brought 'at the instance' of the plaintiff against the defendant.

The events leading up to the case can be pieced together from the statements of witnesses. The trouble began in the Common Field at Steventon during the September harvest of 1663. This was supposedly the first time that Audrey Purslowe 'defamed' Ann Freeman. Audrey and about a hundred others were working in the Field. Ann Freeman was working there too, and within earshot was a certain Catherine Colrick, Ann's sister, who lived in Ludford, was aged about fifty, and was the wife of Thomas, the blacksmith. Catherine told the court that Audrey and Ann Freeman originally fell out because Audrey Purslowe's daughter was alleged to have taken a handful of leafed corn from Ann Freeman. Ann Randall, a witness, heard the whole conversation. During a heated exchange, Audrey eventually said in anger to Ann Freeman: 'I tell you, you are a

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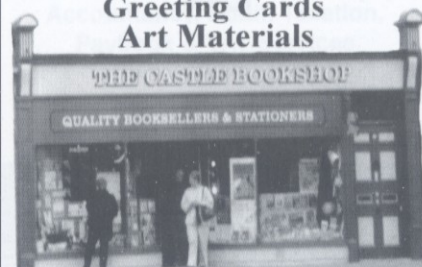
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whore. It is no sin to call a whore a whore.' Ann Randall further said that this incident caused Ann Freeman's husband Gilbert to threaten, as she put it, 'to forsake her'.

Scene two was only a few weeks later in 1663. It is a Monday in early October, perhaps the 5th. The scene is the kitchen of Ludford House, where Sir Job Charlton and his family lived. It is not known exactly where in the house or how large the kitchen then was, but a witness said there were about fourteen people in the kitchen at the time, which must represent about ten per cent of all the inhabitants of Ludford. It will have been pretty crowded, or perhaps noise had attracted everyone within earshot. Apparently only women were present, including two of Sir Job's daughters, though not Sir Job himself. In the midst of this throng, Audrey Purslowe, the defendant, and Catherine Colrick, Ann Freeman's sister, were arguing. One witness said they were 'at very high words', another that they 'fell to scolding, one with the other, using rude language'. Had they seen each other since the harvest, and were they taking up where the matter had been left then? No doubt at any rate the harvest incident was the initial topic, but it all led up to the climax of the argument which can be reconstructed using the words and phrases reported by several witnesses:

Audrey: *What is it to call a whore a whore?*

Catherine: *It is to be as honest as the skin between thy brows.*

Audrey: *Woman, all the water in Teme will not wash thy sister an honest name.*

Catherine: *And, I pray you, whose whore is she?*

Audrey: *Go to your master in the Cleeland whom you live with, and he will tell you whose whore she is.*

'All the water in Teme will not wash thy sister an honest name'.

Perhaps this imagery of the Teme water was a common saying in Ludlow at the time, but whatever the currency, it is remarkable to be able to hear the words of seventeenth-century Ludfordians. Was the simile 'as honest as the skin between thy brows' in common parlance, or perhaps a local Shropshire saying?

Catherine described to the Court the result of these accusations. 'Much difference has been raised thereby between my sister Ann and her husband.' She went on to tell the Court that Audrey Purslowe's husband also bore a grudge and had been rude to Ann Freeman.

Another witness, on Ann's behalf, confirmed the conversation, but admitted that there was a rumour that Ann had another husband besides Gilbert Freeman. This was later further elaborated by a witness for the defence. He said that there was a man named Richard Poulter of Hopton Wafers who was generally held to be married to Ann Freeman, but that 'upon some distaste between them' they had separated. Poulter went beyond the seas and she after his 'large' absence, married again with Gilbert Freeman.

Here we seem to have the weakness in Ann Freeman's position. Audrey Purslowe had indeed stated in her defence that Ann had been married to Richard Poulter but of Neen Sollars not Hopton, and that they had separated and he had gone abroad. She had then bigamously married Gilbert Freeman about six years previously, and therefore condemned herself by her actions. Here is how Audrey puts it in her defence to the initial charge. She (or the lawyer on her behalf) minces no words:

'Not having the fear of God before her eyes but being seduced by the Devil & the temptations and provocations of her own filthy lusts & her without any lawful divorce first had and obtained, did wilfully separate herself from Richard Poulter, her lawful husband & contrary to the known and approved laws of this Realm, since then hath cohabited intermarried and lived in Adultery with the abovesaid Gilbert Freeman her now pretended husband. And the said Richard Poulter her first husband was living in the months of April May or June last in this present year.' All this she sees as here justification for her words.

In the face of all Ann Freeman's witness statements, it took until October 1664 before Audrey Purslowe was ready to produce witnesses in her own defence. The court papers on her behalf describe the case as 'Ann

pretended wife of Gilbert Freeman against Audrey Purslowe'. One common method of rebuttal was to discredit the other side's witnesses. William Huxley of Ludford, a yeoman, was pressed into service. He came forward and told the court that one of Ann Freeman's witnesses was 'a person of ill repute and indigent. She does not frequent the Church, nor has ever received the sacrament, and when she was a servant in Sir Job Charlton's house was suspected to filch and pick her fellow servants pockets of their money.' Another witness said that she was 'a wench of an idle, loose life'. Another maintained that the Court could not trust what Catherine Colrick had to say as she was a professed enemy of Audrey and, as she put it, 'little credit can be given to what Catherine Colrick hath sworn'. She said that Catherine had put pressure on her to testify on behalf of Ann Freeman, that Catherine had promised to be her friend if she did so. Finally, when she was in the midst of her evidence, Catherine had burst into the room and 'clapped her hand upon the table' and swore by God that she had not spoken the truth. So this witness alleged 'you cannot trust what Catherine has said'. In fact, the defence said, the whole case was dreamed up by Catherine Colrick because of her hatred of Audrey Purslowe, and she had put monetary pressure on Ann Freeman's witnesses to testify.

What a mess! No doubt opinion in Ludford and Ludlow was divided.

It took until nearly the end of April 1665 before the judge reached his conclusion. He decided that Ann Freeman had not proved her case. She and her husband were therefore faced with heavy costs, as she would have to pay the expenses for both sides. The 'proctors' or lawyers that both Audrey and she had employed had to be paid, as well as the Court dues and witnesses' expenses. We do not unfortunately have the bills, but the Freemans were slow to pay, and the judge had to call their proctor back to Court. The total cost must have been over ten pounds, at a time when a labourer could expect to earn no more than a pound a month.

The outcome cannot have calmed the

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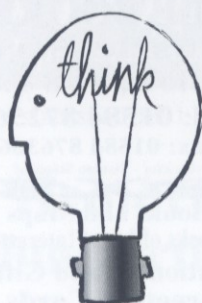
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mutual dislike of Audrey Purslowe and Catherine Colrick. For us, a glimpse into domestic unhappiness and village enmity has given us some rich pickings. The course of daily life in Ludlow did not run smooth, ordinary people had a command of colourful invective, and married couples did not always last the course even then.

1.HD4/22Hereford Record Office

THE BEGINNING OF RELIGIOUS NON-CONFORMITY IN LUDLOW:

Queenie Hayden

In 1672 during Charles II's reign a Declaration of Indulgence was issued which stipulated that 'assemblies for religious worship' must apply for a licence to be registered and that this had to be certified by the Bishop of the diocese. That year three such licences were granted for non-conformist worship in Ludlow, namely Old Court House, Bull Ring, the house of Margery Botfield of Old Street ward, and the house of Richard Higgin (a Congregational teacher) in Steventon; according to the applications there were both Congregational and Presbyterian Societies in Ludlow at this time. One of the first reports of non-conformity in Ludlow appears in the Religious Census of 1676 when 'twenty-one obstinate dissenters' were listed. It is recorded that about this time a group of worshippers met on a Sunday in Hook's Barn on the outskirts of Ludlow, and in fine weather would walk to the Baptist Church in Leominster.

In 1682 David Jones of Ludlow was presented for 'holding a conventicle in his house' and Thomas Hilton of Ludlow was brought to court for 'keeping conventicles and not coming to Divine service'; and at the autumn assizes in 1685 petty constables were ordered to make truer presentments of people who absented themselves from church. Another house that was granted a licence in 1690 was also the place where a riot took place in 1693. It was yet another riot in 1731 that is reported in detail.

On Sunday, 21st March, a group of worshippers met at 16 High Street for private prayer - the house was owned by the Corporation but leased to Mrs Jones and her son Philip, a mercer. Shortly after the start of the meeting a group of people (which quickly became a mob) began shouting, throwing stones and creating a disturbance. Being frightened and in fear of the group's being injured, the two leaders, Peter Griffen, a dyer of Corve Street, and Mr James Wynde, a tailor of Castle ward, went together with Mrs Jones to the High Bailiff, Mr Henry Davies, and asked for his protection and help. Mr Davies then charged the three of them with riot and threatened to prosecute them. On their return to the house the mob became even more violent and threatening (breaking all the windows of the house), and when they again appealed for help, they were fined twenty pounds and bound to appear at the next Quarter Sessions. It was not until the Riot Act was read to the mob that they dispersed. Mrs Jones's home was licensed for religious worship and the licence was signed by fourteen Justices of the Peace.

When Dr Samuel Chandler of the London Committee of Protestant Dissenters heard about this incident, he defended the group and compelled the Ludlow Magistrates to apologise and make ample compensation. The group accepted the apologies and said that they only wanted sufficient money to repair the damage to the house, and that their one desire was to build a chapel where they could worship in peace. The story of this persecution formed the basis of an appeal to the Christian public both locally and further afield. The appeal was signed by twenty-seven ministers and resulted in enough money to buy a piece of ground on which to build a chapel.

The plot of ground for this Independent Chapel was in Lower Corve Street behind what is now No.58, and was some sixty feet from the street itself; it is thought that a derelict building was converted. When the chapel was being built the women helped by carrying stones in their aprons. It was built to hold some hundred and ten worshippers and Pevsner describes it as 'a small

plain rectangular brick building with a segment-headed east window'. Unusually for a non-conformist chapel, it had its own burial ground.

The chapel opened in 1736 but did not have a happy beginning, as among the first ministers appointed there was immorality, drunkenness and general misconduct. Unfortunately no records were kept for the first sixty years and information had to be gleaned from older members of the congregation. It is stated, however, that in 1744 a large silver cup (c.1600) was presented to the chapel as a communion cup by a Mrs Mary Reid, together with some valuable books. It is thought that the



The interior of the Independent Chapel at Harvest Festival.

Sunday School was the first in Ludlow and from it most of the Sunday Schools in the neighbourhood started. The compiler of the 'Handbook to Ludlow' published in 1878 states that he was a pupil there when writing and arithmetic were taught on a Sunday.

As the membership increased, so the need grew for a larger building and the Congregational Chapel was built in Old Street in 1830, although further services were held occasionally in the chapel at Corve Street. The building was demolished in 1960.

If anyone has more information or pictures of the chapel, would they please write to Queenie Hayden through the Editor, Ludlow Heritage News.



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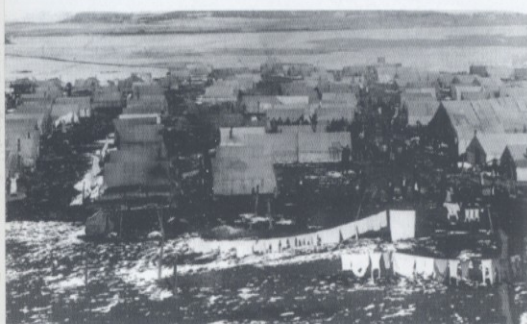
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THE LUDLOW MASSACRE OF 1914: Janet Verasanso

If you search the back issues of the Advertiser you will not find a mention of this event, for it occurred in one of the six towns named Ludlow in the United States. The early part of the last century witnessed escalating unrest among the employees of the Colorado mining companies and in particular the Colorado Fuel and Iron company owned by John D. Rockefeller. Dangerous working conditions with explosions and cave-ins were twice the national average and by September 1913, the unrest culminated in an eight month strike in which 12,000 miners took part. The men, largely illiterate immigrants from southern Europe, were encouraged by the United Miners' Union to demand enforcement of the state mining laws, union recognition, and the right to trade in any store and choose their own housing and doctors.



The Ludlow Tent Colony before the massacre on April 20th 1914.

Eviction from company housing followed. In retaliation the miners and their families set up tent colonies (totalling 12,000 tents) on public land of which the Ludlow colony was the largest.

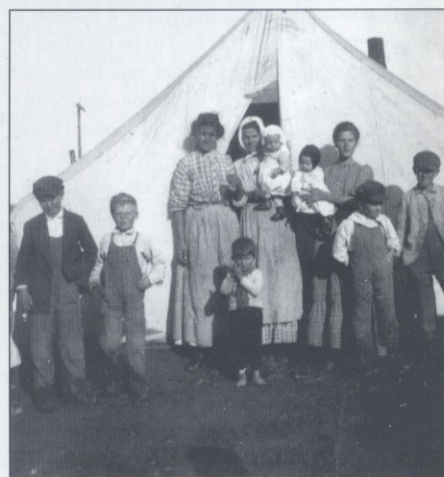
That year Colorado experienced one of the worst winters on record, with snow many metres deep, and in this situation families with small children endured famine, sickness and bitter conditions, alleviated only by the supply of a cooking stove for each tent provided by the union.

Throughout the winter Rockefeller's company brought in strike breakers, and the state

governor was prevailed upon to send in the National Guard to keep the mines open, thereby shifting the burden of the strike from Rockefeller to the state. It was the company's plan to goad the strikers into violence by a campaign of harassment.

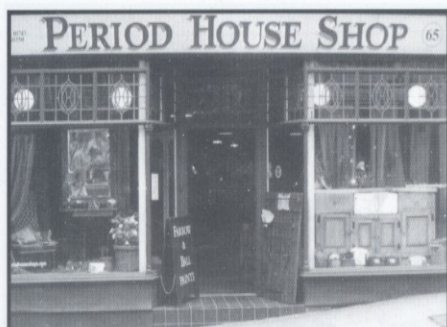
One of the key figures in this tragic episode was 'Mother' Jones, a fiery, eighty-year-old union organiser who inspired the miners with her outspoken rhetoric. After the men had voted to strike in September, and angered by the murder of an organiser, they began to collect weapons and ammunition. On April 20th 1914, the strikers celebrated Greek Easter with games and lamb roasts (stolen from nearby farms). The commander of the guards took this opportunity to prepare a carefully planned attack - at ten a.m. the Ludlow tent colony was ringed with militiamen and thugs who had been hired by a detective agency in the pay of John D. Rockefeller jr. During an encounter between an officer and the Greek leader of the strike, a shot was fired and the leader fell dead. As if this were a signal, a co-ordinated machine gun attack began, with the National Guards firing into the tents, the women and children digging pits and fox holes beneath their tents in a desperate attempt to hide from the bullets. By nightfall the strikers were running out of ammunition; the militia moved in with oil-soaked torches, setting the tents alight and trapping those sheltering in their underground pits. Others fled to the hills. It was later discovered that the tents had been doused with paraffin and the only well filled with coils of barbed wire. Sixty-six men, women and children, including thirteen burnt alive in the pits, lost their lives - yet not one militiaman nor Rockefeller employee was indicted for this crime.

The news of the Ludlow massacre spread like wildfire amongst the tent colonies. Miners and members of other unions in all parts of Colorado took up arms, and soldiers refused to join a troop train destined for Ludlow, declaring they would not shoot women and children. For ten days rioting erupted throughout the state. Thousands demonstrated in front of Rockefeller's head office in New York and clergy condemned the event from the pulpit.



Top: The women's march Above: A striker family

Finally President Woodrow Wilson was compelled to send in federal troops to restore order. Rockefeller remained unmoved, but eventually, after nineteen years, his company was unionised; in their struggle for justice the Ludlow strikers had not suffered in vain. Today Ludlow, Colorado, is a ghost town. A memorial commemorates those who lost their lives which, together with two or three crumbling shacks, are all that remain of its tragic past.



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Prue Bellak, Andrew Byrne, Michael Coleman-Smith, Bill Eastwell, Mike Evans, Stephen Evans, Jim Gosling, Beatrice Hely-Hutchinson, Daniel McDowell, Stanton Stephens.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES Autumn 2003

For most people, Summer 2003 will be remembered for the sunshine, the warmth (too much at times) and the rainfall (too little).

Others, myself included, will think of the interminable - and increasingly contentious - argument about whether Ludlow really needs another business park and, if so, where it should be located.

The Society's position throughout has been to doubt the need. Existing sites and buildings in the town remain underoccupied. It has had no doubt, however, that in any case the greenfield site at Sheet Road North would not be the right location. Just because there are funds available

from Advantage West Midlands and from Europe (not to mention £400,000 of our own South Shropshire money) is no reason to proceed. As one Councillor was brave enough to say, 'People may offer you money, but you don't have to accept it.' We fear, of course, that opening up these sixteen acres of green fields on the far side of the A49 bypass will prove to be the thin end of a very long wedge that will ultimately result in the pointless expansion of Ludlow and the destruction of its character.

Before the development can proceed, the Council must have planning permission from the local planning authority (which is, of course, the Council itself) - but this has not proved so straightforward as some might have expected. The Council's own Development Control Committee rejected the application by 7 votes to 4. The matter was then referred to the Full Council which, after a meeting that lasted over three hours on the evening of 17th September, voted 15 against the application, 15 for it. The Chairman then used his second vote (he had already voted in favour of the application) to approve the planning application. This is a highly unsatisfactory outcome - a matter of such importance to the whole future of Ludlow should not be approved on the thin justification of a Chairman's second vote. The proponents of the scheme, instead of preening over their hollow victory, would do better to recognise the extent of public disquiet and support the call for a public enquiry.

Turning to a happier matter and an 'enhancement' that has actually been an improvement, I think most people would agree that the approach to the Castle gateway has been restructured very much for the better. All credit to those who visualised what was needed and those who found the funds. (The rather wild notion of relocating the cannon was fortunately dropped.)

I wish we could be equally confident of the outcome of the further 'enhancement' planned for the Bull Ring. This entails the introduction of one-way traffic, controlled by traffic lights, alternately north and south, with a third phase for pedestrians. It is true that the present free-for-all looks alarming and unsafe but in fact it

seems to work rather well, even though it is dependent on mutual care and consideration. As far as I know, there have been no serious accidents at the junction, either to pedestrians or vehicles. It seems a pity not to leave well alone. Our suggestion that a trial should be conducted has been dismissed by the County Council, on the grounds that it is unnecessary. I hope they're right but greatly doubt it.

By contrast, how nice it is to be able to give unqualified praise and support to those largely voluntary initiatives that have done so much to improve Ludlow without in any way prejudicing its future - the Millennium Green, the Teme Weirs Trust, the Assembly Rooms, the care of Whitcliffe Common. The Civic Society itself made another contribution recently. With the generous help of a past Chairman, Owen Elias, we have marked the site of Dinham Gate with a blue plaque. The sites of all the town gates are now labelled but some are only briefly designated with the old Borough signs which are not very conspicuous and give no information. We hope to provide blue plaques for all of them in the future.

James McFarlane

MEMBERSHIP

Both the Heritage News and the Society's leaflet have an application form incorporated in them, complete with a Gift Aid declaration. Anyone wishing to join who is unable to get hold of a copy of either should contact the Membership Secretary for a separate form.

The separate yellow A5 sheet summarising the Society's Public Meetings has now been reprinted for 2003/2004. This will be found inside leaflets at the Tourist Information Centre, St. Laurence's Church and the Library. For the moment the Assembly Rooms have nowhere suitable to display them.

Supplies of this edition of Heritage News will also be maintained at the same locations from December; it will still be free of charge. When you have finished with your copy of either please pass it on to anyone you think may be interested in joining the Society.

Michael Coleman-Smith



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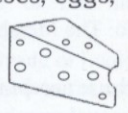
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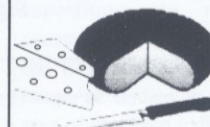
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EVENTS

The Civic Society's Lecture season got off to a splendid start with David Lloyd's extremely popular lecture. Well over a hundred people attended and enjoyed a fascinating talk with excellent slides. The subject was 'The Property Market, Ludlow, 1660-1848' and this will be followed next year by a lecture on 'The Property Market, Ludlow 2004', to be given by Michael Evans of Nock Deighton. The October lecture, which had to be changed at short notice, was given by Colin Richards, our local Conservation Officer on 'Sustainable Repairs for Ludlow's Historic Environment'.

In November the lecture will be given by Shaun Hill and the title, appropriately, is 'Gourmetville'. Note that this will be on MONDAY, November 10th, to accommodate the opening days of the Merchant House. In December we are holding another Christmas Party and discussion. This will be on December 10th at the Old School Room in Mill Street.

In 2004, to replace the talk on January 14th by Colin Richards, we have Peter Whyte-Venables speaking on 'The way we were: undeveloped Eastern Europe.' This is followed on February 11th by a talk on three poets of the Great War given by Morag Jones of Keele University, and on March 10th a talk by Andrew Byrne on restoring houses in Spitalfields and Corve Street, Ludlow. Finally, on April 14th there will be a lecture by Sir Neil Cossons, the Chairman of English Heritage, with the intriguing title 'A Future for the Past'.

Prue Bellak

We would like to congratulate Caroline Roberts of Ludlow College who has been awarded the **The Ludlow Civic Society Prize for History**.

LUDLOW MUSIC SOCIETY

Season 2003/4

The Society's new season is one of the most ambitious yet, covering a wide range of chamber music performed by artists of the highest calibre.

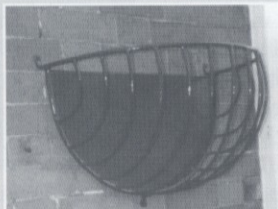
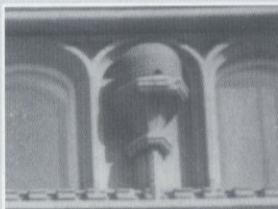
We opened with two highly successful concerts in September and October from the LONDON MOZART TRIO and the CALLINO STRING QUARTET. The Young Artists' Concert, takes place on the 8th November and features the early music group, the TRIO INCONNU (consisting of baroque flute, viol da gamba and theorbo). They will play music from 18th century France and Germany.

On February 21st 2004, the concert is given by the Russian pianist ALEX SLOBODYANIK. It includes Schubert's fanciful 'Papillons' and Ravel's great masterpiece for the piano, 'Gaspard de la Nuit', with three pieces by Chopin and three excerpts from 'Petrushka' by Stravinsky.

The season ends on March 27th with a visit by the PARIS-BASTILLE WIND ENSEMBLE which will give one of the première performances of 'Trittico al Antico' by a very contemporary composer, Nicholas Bacri. Also included are Mozart opera arrangements, Eugene Bozza's 'Octamphonie', Mozart's C minor Serenade and the Octet for wind by Svend S. Schultz. An exciting programme.

Further details are available from the Hon. Secretary, Mrs Rosalind Caird, Glebe house, Caynham, Ludlow SY8 3BN (01584 876141)
E-mail lms@caynham.globalnet.co.uk

USE YOUR EYES COMPETITION



The prize was won by Miss Rowena Lane.

Reading clockwise from top left, the answers were as follows:

Stone bee-skep from over the door of Lloyd's Bank in Broad Street; *hay-rack* from the front of No.11 Dinham; *stone head* from the inside of the arched entrance to St. Leonard's graveyard, Corve Street; *brass plate* on the side of Broadhurst's in Castle Square; *gilded railing finial* outside Phillips, Solicitors, in Corve Street.

BECOME A MEMBER - JOIN NOW

If you care about Ludlow and its surroundings please complete the application form (or a copy) below and send it in now.

To: The Membership Secretary, Ludlow Civic Society, 75 Old Street, Ludlow SY8 1NS

Please accept my application to join the society as an annual member.

Annual membership subscription is £10 per person - normally due on September 1st. I enclose £..... to cover.

Cheques payable to 'Ludlow Civic Society' please.

Please treat all my subscriptions and/or donations to the Ludlow Civic Society from 6 April and until further notice as GIFT AID.

I am currently a UK taxpayer.

Signed:..... Date:.....

NAME: (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms).....

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