

Ludlow Heritage News

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FREE

Reporting The First World War

Clive Richardson discusses how the "Ludlow Advertiser" brought news from the front



Ludlow Library has recently purchased the 'Ludlow Advertiser' for the First World War years on microfiche, and I have recently spent some time reading through them while researching my forthcoming book on the Ludlow men killed in the war. This will be called *Till Ludlow Tower Shall Fall*, and will be available later this spring.

At the outbreak of the war in 1914, the 'Ludlow Advertiser' gave in-depth coverage of the progress of the war. It reported not only from the fronts where British men were fighting but also covered the progress made by other Allied armies fighting on both the Western and Eastern Fronts. Each week there was a section

on 'Shropshire's War' which, more often than not, included a letter home from the front such as this one which appeared on 25th May 1915 from Private A. H. Dyke, Sherwood Foresters. Before the war he lived in Ludlow at 20 Upper Galdeford. He was subsequently killed in action during the Battle of the Somme on 5th July 1916.

A Ludlovian's Thanks TO ANONYMOUS SENDER OF PARCELS

14510 A. H. Dyke, Sherwood Foresters, writing to Mr J. Diggle, Headmaster of the National Schools, from 'somewhere in Belgium' under date Sept, 18.

Soldiers from the Kings Shropshire Light Infantry on parade in Castle Square. The regiment expanded to eight battalions and fought on the Western Front and in other overseas theatres for the duration of the Great War.

'When writing before, we had been in the trenches 11 days; we made it 13 and then got relieved for a rest which only lasted three days. Then we marched about ten miles to relieve the Royal H---. We got in all right about 10 o'clock and we stayed in 14 days when we got relieved again for another short spell. The weather here at present is grand, but we had two wet days, and were up to our knees in mud and water. All our dug-outs fell in, and we were forced to sleep where we could. We

had a rotten time of it, but I think our friends over the way were in the same fix as we did not have a deal of trouble with them for a day or two, but when they did get going we got some snuff in quick time, but they only asked for trouble, which they got all right.

'We had quite a lively time one afternoon as the Germans got the wind up over something, and gave us half an hour of hell with the lid off, but they got their change all right; our lads saw to that. The boys must think it is more blessed to give than to receive as they always give them double or treble weight for everything. On the Sunday I was with some R.E. repairing some works, and the Germans must have thought we had not enough to do as they tried to knock the parapet down with about 20 'whizz-bangs' and a 'Jack Johnson' or two, but our artillery soon got going and gave them something to think about for an hour or two. When the war is over, Belgium will be a happy hunting ground for scrap iron dealers as both sides are dishing out iron rations all day long and best part of the night.

Last night and early this morning we could hear them going at it hammer and tongs. It is comical to see our lads when artillery are at the game. As every shell goes over up go the heads over the parapet to see where it lands and what damage it does, and then down again, just like a jack in the box. Sniper Joe is a nasty customer to deal with. We have gone through the mill this last time – two officers killed and four wounded, and of course the men in the firing line

suffered as well. Our officers are a good lot; never forget that the men are only human beings like themselves, and that makes it a lot better for us when the hard knocks come along.

We are pretty fair off for food; it's a wonder how they get it all up for all the troops. Sometimes we have to go a bit short, but there are always plenty of biscuits to go at, and one will last you an hour easily; but when we get a nice parcel from home – any of the section, as we whack up all the parcels as far as they go – we gather around and forget

our little troubles and talk of better times when this is all over and we are all back again in Dear Old Blighty. I have a very kind friend in Ludlow, and I now take pleasure in thanking that lady for her kindness in sending me a parcel from time to time. The boys of the section all wish her the best of health and luck.'

Early in 1916, however, much stricter censorship was introduced, and this, coupled with the soaring cost of paper, resulted in the 'Ludlow Advertiser' being reduced to a four-page publication with scant coverage of the war. This produced a coverage that bordered on the bizarre. For example, on 16th September 1916, the front page featured two columns on a story headed 'Alleged Theft of a Horse and Sheep' – All Stretton Farmer Committed for Trial'. There was no mention of the war until page four which featured half a column of obituaries of fallen Shropshire officers, and half a column listing Shropshire regiment casualties (25 killed, 6 died of wounds, 2 died, 74 wounded, 1 wounded (shell shock) and 3 missing). Three entire columns were devoted to the military tribunals which were set up to hear cases of men or their employers appealing against being conscripted. There was considerable debate on this subject in the newspaper, particularly from the farming community. One edition printed both sides of an argument about whether or not a farmer should



Crossed weapons engraved on the flower-decorated gravestone of a young machine gunner killed in September 1918 during the final phase of WW1 as the German army was pushed back beyond the Hindenburg Line.

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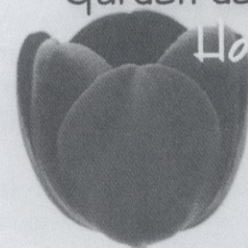


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While the smart young infantryman represents the proud serving soldiers of the day the Meadows playing fields below Ludlow Castle are eerily empty in this typically patriotic and poignant postcard from the period.

be allowed to evict the family of a conscript from a tied cottage if he needed to offer the cottage to attract a replacement worker.

The government's censorship of the press helped to create a huge gap between the people at home's perception of the war and the reality. Typical soldiers home on leave would be inclined to play down how awful life at the front was, partly because they felt that nobody who had not experienced it would be capable of understanding, and partly because they would not want to cause their

loved ones to worry more than they already did.

Christmas parcels were sent from Ludlow to men from the town and on 8th January 1916 the following letter from three of the recipients was printed:

Thanks From the Western Front
**TO THE EDITOR OF
 THE ADVERTISER**

'We should like to thank those kind people who sent us such useful parcels from Ludlow; they came as a surprise to us. We can hardly thank the donors enough. It is the thought that we are not forgotten by those at home that keeps us in such good spirits. We hope that when our work is finished here and we are spared, to thank personally those

who are doing such good work at home.

– Yours truly,
 Pte. A. Jukes,
 5th Yorkshire Regiment
 Pte. W. Jukes,
 8th York and Lancasters
 Lce. Corpl. T. Dean,
 7th Shropshires'

Private Arthur Jukes died in captivity in Germany in 1918, Private William Jukes was killed in action in April 1918, and Lance-Corporal Tom Dean was killed in action during the Third Battle of Ypres in September 1917.

After the spring of 1916, other than the casualty lists, there was little direct mention of the War and no discussion about its progress. Occasionally an obituary appeared or an 'in memoriam' for the anniversary of a man who had been killed earlier in the war. One could argue that the war was a world event and that the 'Advertiser's' role was to cover local news, but the excellent coverage produced earlier in the war makes that argument difficult to support.

While my reason for being there was to research the coverage of the war, the reporting of local issues, crime and even the advertising distracted me considerably from my task. The 'Advertisers' provide a delightful and undiluted insight into life in Ludlow during this pivotal period in our history.

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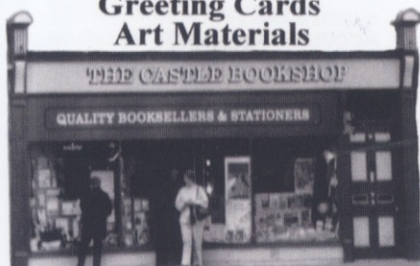


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PETER BREARS

WILLIAM FOXE OF LUDFORD

Jonathan Moor LL.B. (Hons) B.A. (Hons) takes a shine to some Ludlow brass and wonders if it is time to reassess the story behind it.

Abutting the Welsh border for much of its length, the remote western counties of Herefordshire and Shropshire, despite their size, possess few medieval Tudor and Stuart monumental brasses. A simple tally of the brasses and indents surviving in their parish churches reveals that neither county was ever very well endowed with this kind of memorial.

Indents are the slabs from which brasses have been lost – whether as a result of deliberate destruction at the Reformation or during the English Civil War, or by simple neglect (principally in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries). Brasses were also laid down in the churches of religious houses but, because of the Dissolution of the Monasteries, few monastic brasses survive, and none in either Herefordshire or Shropshire.

The overall lack of such memorials may be partly explained by the distance of the counties from the engraving workshops which from the thirteenth to the mid seventeenth centuries (when brass engraving per se came to an end) were based primarily in London. It may also be that the unsettled nature of this area, which persisted until the mid sixteenth century, contributed to the dearth of brasses. And by the time this changed, other forms of monument had begun to eclipse brasses as the chosen form of memorial of society at large.

Nevertheless, Shropshire possesses several fine brasses – the late fourteenth century monument commemorating Sir

Nicholas Burnell (died 1382-3) at Acton Burnell; and, from the following century, that erected to the memory of Sir William Vernon killed in 1467 (an apparent casualty of a minor skirmish during the Wars of the Roses), his widow and family, to be found in the former collegiate church of St. Mary and St. Bartholomew at Tong. There are also two excellent late fifteenth century brasses to members of the Mainwaring family at Ightfield in the far north of the county, close to the Cheshire border.

Yet as far as the commissioning of brasses was concerned, the remoteness of the counties could be overcome, not least because during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, an engraving workshop existed in the bustling commercial centre of Coventry. It was patronised by several Shropshire families – the Lacons, the Onleys and the Yonges. Brasses engraved in Coventry commemorating members of these three families still survive in the parish churches of Harley, Withington and Edgmond.

Herefordshire also has some good examples – a brass to Sir John Barre and wife c. 1478 at All Saints, Clehonger, is especially fine. That apart, within the church of St. Mary the Virgin, Marden, is the magnificent early seventeenth century memorial commemorating Dame Margaret Chute who died, probably of puerperal fever, following the birth of her second daughter, Francis (sic). Margaret's baby died the day she was born; and

Margaret herself 'THE NEXT DAY AFTER BEING THE NINTH DAY OF JUNE ANNO 1614'. The brass includes figures of Margaret, her elder daughter Anne, a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes for Francis and an inscription rendered in English in Roman capitals.

Hereford Cathedral still houses an exceptionally fine collection of brasses, including the beautiful memorial to John Trilleck, Bishop of Hereford (1344-60). There is also a fragment of national importance – the small seated figure of St. Ethelbert, king and martyr – all that survives of the brass laid down to commemorate St. Thomas de Cantilupe, an earlier Bishop of Hereford (1275-81). There were once many more brasses in the Cathedral and some of those which still survive are either much worn or badly damaged.

As for Ludlow, notwithstanding the richness of its medieval stained glass and its wonderful fifteenth century misericords, the parish church of St. Laurence – the 'Cathedral of the Marches' – possesses only a few paltry seventeenth century inscriptions. However, on the floor of the Chapel of St. John is a well-preserved indent – of a brass to a civilian and wife. Who this memorial commemorated is unknown, but it dates from the early sixteenth century. Maybe it was for one of the town's burgesses, an erstwhile member of the prestigious Palmers' Guild, or perhaps even Geoffrey Baugh, the rich Ludlow draper, who made



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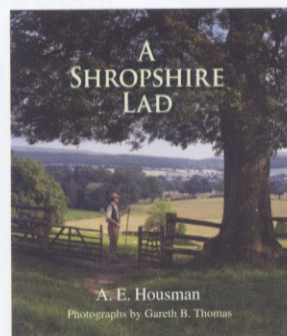
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Here under this stone lye the bodie of William Foxe of Ludlow in the countie of Salop Esquier and founder of this Churche who died the 4th of June 1553 and was buried the 10th of June 1553 and the same day was buried the bodie of Jane his wife daughter of Henry of Richard Doulme of Ludlow Esquier. Which William devided the xxiiij daies of April Anno dñi 1553 to his son and the said Jane devided the day of A dñi m cccc lvi in whole soules this haire aier



his will in November 1500 and bequeathed a considerable amount of property to the Guild.

Whilst the small church of St. Giles, Ludford, contains no medieval glass or wood carving, it does possess an exceptionally fine mid-sixteenth century memorial brass commemorating William Foxe (who died in 1553-4), his widow Jane and their large family of fifteen children – nine sons and six daughters. The brass (illustrated left), consists of the figures of William, Jane, their children, an inscription and four shields of arms. The Purbeck marble slab into which the brass is set once formed part of an altar tomb which was destroyed early in the nineteenth century. The brass, engraved in London by the most capable of the engraving workshops then in existence, was probably commissioned by William's second (but by then eldest surviving) son, Charles.

The brass has recently been the subject of a major scheme of conservation undertaken by the Monumental Brass Society – the national society concerned with the conservation, preservation and interpretation of memorial brasses. Founded in 1887 by a group of Cambridge undergraduates, initially known as the Cambridge University Association of Brass Collectors, it was later renamed as the Monumental Brass Society.

By far the most important family in sixteenth century Ludlow, the Foxes seemingly owed their meteoric rise to local social pre-eminence, wealth and prosperity to their greedy and rapacious acquisition of the lands and properties of dissolved local religious foundations obtained during the early years of the English Reformation. Indeed, it has been said that the basis of William's fortune and that of his entire family stemmed

from 'a corrupt bargain, which founded a powerful local dynasty on the ruin of a Ludlow charity'. That the family then lost its Ludford estates after barely a century of tenure is surely proof positive of the old adage that those who acquired former church lands, often in dubious circumstances, never prospered. Or is it?

Maybe.

But is this the whole story and, more importantly, is it true? After all, the inscription on the brass proudly records the fact that William was the 'ffounder of this Ile adjeinyng unto this Churche and which...reedyfyed the Almes Howse of Seynt Gyles being decayed'. Is it likely that a man who undertook such pious enterprises was also the prime local example of a Tudor gentleman on the make, who ruthlessly and selfishly based his aggrandisement and personal fortune and that of his heirs on the destruction of religious foundations in and around Ludlow which hitherto had done so much towards the relief and support of the indigenous poor?

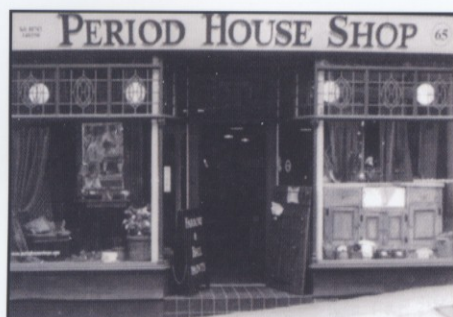
Perhaps it is time to set the record straight.

On 15th June, 2010 at 7.30pm, the author of this article will be presenting a lecture at St. Laurence's Ludlow entitled:

'A Sixteenth Century Recusant Philanthropist: William Foxe of Ludford.'

There will also be a major Exhibition of Brass Rubbings at St. Giles Ludford during the Ludlow Festival.

All proceeds will be for the benefit of the ongoing conservation of the Foxe brass and the restoration of the fabric of St. Giles.



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THE OTHER LUDLOW CASTLE

Julia Ionides discovers a namesake building in turbulent colonial India

It was not until I read *Soldier Sahibs – the Men Who Made the North-West Frontier* by Charles Allan, that I discovered the existence of another Ludlow Castle, located in India.

The other Ludlow Castle, a Gothic revival mansion, was built by Samuel Ludlow, who died in 1853. He was a surgeon with the Bengal establishment of the East India Company and was based in the Delhi residency from 1813-31. It is thought that he built his house within the civil lines of the city at this time; he called it Ludlow Castle. The civil lines were a focal point of the European community in Delhi.

Because of its position it was the scene of fierce fighting during the uprising of 1857, known either as the Siege of Delhi, one of the decisive battles of the Indian Rebellion, First War of Indian Independence, or the Indian Mutiny, depending on which history is read. At that time Ludlow Castle was still in enemy hands. The references to it read like a Boy's Own adventure story: 'The two men slipped over the outer perimeter at midnight, and not only surveyed the enemy positions at Ludlow Castle, but got as far as the old Mughal summer palace close to the Kashmir Gate.'

An extensive battery of guns and mortars was set up near what has been described as 'a flamboyantly-designed house known as *Ludlow Castle*' and they opened fire on 11th September.

The citation on a memorial to the Bengal Sappers and Miners reads:

On the 14th September 1857 the British force stormed Delhi; it was after sunrise

on that day that the undermentioned party advancing from Ludlow Castle in the face of a heavy fire and crossing this bridge which had been almost totally opening the gate for the assaulting Column.



The defeat of the sepoy rebels at Delhi was a major setback for their aim to reinstate the Mughal Empire, and gave the British a decisive victory.

Ludlow Castle later became the Commissioner's House and was pulled down in the 1960s. A 1958 photograph shows rugby posts in the grounds. But the name lives on in a government school

which today has around 1900 pupils. It's one of the oldest schools in Delhi with an excellent educational record and a reputation for producing engineers and doctors. According to a website 'it has always had the finest of teachers and staff'.

However, it does have a disadvantage that the first Ludlow Castle does not suffer from (yet): it's in an earthquake zone and the curriculum includes earthquake drill.

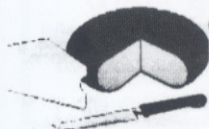
Oh – and the school will be the venue for the men's wrestling at the Commonwealth Games this year.

Ludlow Castle, Delhi, from a portfolio of photographs taken in 1858 by Major Robert Christopher Tytler and his wife, Harriet, at Delhi, Lucknow and Cawnpore in the aftermath of the Uprising of 1857. Photograph © British Library Board; 193/(7)

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FEEDBACK ON THE CONDUIT

The Civic Society has recently replaced the Blue Plaque at the Conduit by the Buttercross, and this was reported in 'The Advertiser'.

Paul Smith, who now lives in Old Street, but who for many years owned the Valentine Dawes Gallery next to the Buttercross, contacted our Chairman to tell him that the stone carvings which are on each side of the plaque, are not, as was reported, 'thought to be from the original Town Cross', but were in fact purchased by him at an auction in Yorkshire, and were installed in the wall during some repairs many years ago!

So there's an end to some local folklore, and our thanks to Paul for correcting the record.

NOTES from the chairman

Looking back at my notes from last time I see that all the issues are ongoing!

The issues surrounding the New Hospital have been subject to a growing level of public debate, and we have tried to ensure that we reflected the views of our members by sending out a questionnaire. As always, there is a wide variety of opinions which makes representing them a little difficult. However, we believe that retaining at least one GP surgery in the Town Centre is important in maintaining Ludlow's special character, whereby most of our daily needs can be accessed on foot in a vibrant Town Centre. For those people living further afield there is an argument for a facility on the outskirts, but it would be a shame if everybody was obliged to travel by car or bus just to visit their GP.

A summary of the responses to the questionnaire is enclosed with this Heritage News, and over ninety written comments may be found on our website: www.ludlowcivicsoc.org

There is great pleasure in seeing the restoration of the Reader's House nearing completion. Well over 130 people attended the Lecture by Simon Buteux and were delighted by the presentation and the fascinating insight into the survey and restoration. The Survey Project, led by the Civic Society, has received support from the Pilgrim Trust and the Walker Trust which, together with support from English Heritage, Ludlow History Research Group and the owners themselves, will, I am sure, result in a published outcome of use to many people, professionals and visitors alike.

There is less happy news to report on the adjacent land, known as 'Advocates Walk'. Towards the end of last year we were notified that our offer to buy the land was not successful, but we note that, at the time of writing this, the successful bidder has not yet exchanged contracts. So we ask those who made pledges of support to remain with us and we will notify you when things are clearer.

We remain optimistic that the Conserving Historic buildings DVD may yet reach a wider audience, and we would still like to hear from anyone who might offer us marketing skills, particularly using the internet.

The annual Ludlow Heritage Awards in December continued to reflect the high standard of many of the restoration and building works taking place in Ludlow. The wide age range of the craftsmen recognised was most encouraging.

The latest version of the Shropshire Core Strategy has just been published, all 405 pages of it! We will attempt to digest it and comment appropriately.

To maintain an active committee and programme, it is important to encourage new faces on to the committee, and I therefore would ask that anyone who is interested in helping us should make themselves known to us. They will be sure of a warm welcome.

Finally, I should like to thank four committee members who will not be standing at the next AGM. John Bowles, our Membership Secretary, and Paul Haslam Fox are retiring from the committee and Andrew Byrne has moved to London. We wish them well. Dr James McFarlane, for several years our Chairman, has decided to retire from committee work. We shall miss his contribution to our deliberations, but no doubt will hear his unmistakeable voice from the floor. Thank you, Jim.

John Nash

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EVENTS

In January, the first lecture for 2010, Duncan White on 'Country Pottery', had to be cancelled as the winter weather was so bad that we did not think it likely that there would be an audience. However, we are very pleased to say that the lecture will now be the first of the new season in September.

Simon Buteux's talk on 'The Reader's House' in February was exceptionally well attended and was such a success that it has to be repeated. In March, Barbara Holcombe gave another of her entertaining talks on writers, this time on Barbara Pym who has a Shropshire connection, having been brought up in Oswestry. And in April, Merlin Unwin revealed the awful truth about 'Book Publishing' to a delighted audience.

Next season's talks include David Burnett on 'Grub Street Memories', Ted Maidment on opera—with musical illustrations, Richard Field on 'An evening with John Betjeman', Roger Bartlett on 'Ludlow's Sebastopol Cannon and the imperial ironmaster, Charles Gascoigne', Geoffrey Crofts on 'Brightwells Auction House' and a talk from the History Research Group—a very varied and enticing programme.

Prue Bellak

MEMBERSHIP

At the time of writing we have 240 paid up annual members in addition to our 130 life members. This is slightly better than last year and is quite encouraging in these difficult times. It means that we have been able to recruit enough new members to more than offset the losses due to deaths, moving away and failure to renew for whatever reason. We have about 30 members who have not renewed this year, and we would hope that at the next renewal date they will reconsider and rejoin the Society.

As always we would like to encourage all our members to keep an eye open and try to persuade new friends or neighbours to join us.

John Bowles



Responses to articles are always welcome. Please address your letters to:

The Editor, Heritage News,
7 Dinham, Ludlow SY8 1EJ

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