

In Our Age

Living local history

Summer 2007
Issue 5



Hereford &
Ross Markets



Those happy
Fownhope Pigs



The strange story
of Silver John

Get in touch on **07845 907891** or **inourage@btinternet.com**
Herefordshire Lore PO Box 9, Hereford HR1 9BX

Hereford Market – The Inside story



October 1956 and the start of a busy, two-day cattle sale at Hereford Market. Auctioneer Bill Gallimore holds the gavel with Frank Robinson and Frank Russell in the rostrum. Two of the porters are George Matthews and Reg Wall. The cattle belonged to Baden Powell of Whitney-on-Wye. (Russell, Baldwin and Bright)

A new *History of the Hereford Market* is to be launched on Tuesday October 16 at The Courtyard, Hereford. Call Eileen on 07845 907891 if you can come along to the launch.

The *History of Hereford Market*, a well illustrated, 112 page book, is based on the memories and photos of people from Herefordshire from auctioneers and grain dealers to sheep, cattle and pig farmers.

The History arose out of Herefordshire Lore's latest project, Butchers, Bakers, Cidermakers, kindly funded by the National Lottery. Herefordshire Lore will also launch a new website, www.bbcm.org.uk and a useful teaching pack to help school children find out more about our heritage.

"In the past two years we have transcribed over 250,000 words from more than fifty recordings of local people and added them to the growing collection at Herefordshire County Archives in Harold Street, Hereford," says John Turner, chairman of Herefordshire Lore. "Following on the heels of our book, *In The Munitions*, the *History of the Market* represents another important contribution to the county's recent history."

Market Memories

Forgotten cash

Auctioneer Colin Manning, one of the contributors to the *History of Hereford Market*, recalled the regular Wednesday morning run when he and auctioneer Frank Robinson would walk to Lloyds Bank, collect five to ten thousand pounds - in cash - and return to market with it in a leather Gladstone bag. On the way back Frank Robinson liked to stop off at the pork butchers for hot pies and a little place that sold doughnuts in Monkmoor Street. One Wednesday morning, the butcher called Frank Robinson's office: "Mr. Robinson. You've left the money on the floor here!"

Droving days

When he was fourteen in 1954, Tom Wheatstone used to drive cattle through Hereford. Fred Ralph, a Crickhowell farmer, would buy cattle from Talgarth, Hay or up the valleys, put them on the railway train, and send them down to Barton sidings (now Sainsbury's). They'd travel through the night.

"Every morning on a Saturday I used to go down with Fred Powell and drive the cattle up through the streets to a meadow on Moor Park Farm, where Moor Park estate is now, and leave them there over the weekend. Monday morning, I used to go up at 7 o' clock with a couple of other drovers, Bill Matthews, Fred Powell and his dog, Bill I think, and we used to drive the cattle down through town to the market for Fred Ralph to come and sell them. You come down Whitecross, you'd got anything up to a hundred cattle and you got to run on and stop them going down each street. Some of the houses down Three Elms Road weren't happy with the cattle - cattle kept going on their gardens! We used to get shouted at. I'd go on to school from there and then back after school to be paid. Ralph used to give me half a crown a day. Some days when he was a bit Brahms and Liszt, he used to pay me twice! So I'd get five bob!"



Tom Wheatstone and his delivery horse, Lady, in the days when he worked for T.S. Matthews at Bartonsham Farm.



More market memories: Mr Alfred Hammond (centre) selling pigs and calves. (Sunderlands)

Mac Higgins

Mark Robinson emailed IOA (inourage@btinternet.com): "The long distance droves faded as the railways came in and later motor lorries took over. I was interested in the 'Mac' Higgins story of droving from Carmarthen in issue 4. I wonder when he made that journey and the route he took with the ewes - even more so how he got them to Swansea! My wife and I with our kids have had many a walk discovering drovers' routes, particularly in north Wales.



Wyndham and Ken Blackwell with the Honddu Valley bus on the way to market in the 1930s. Their father Charles started the first bus service in the valley. (And if you're wondering, Ken was the father of our picture editor, Bobbie Blackwell).

Caring for Gods' Acre

Keep fit and active by caring for the county's churchyards. The Churchyard Task Team needs volunteers to help with conservation. 01568 611154 info@cfga.fsnet.co.uk

The pig wins!

Another story from the forthcoming *History of Hereford Market* concerns the famous **Vowchurch** sprint runner R.E. Cole who, unfortunately, fell into a disagreement with Martin Pearson, the son of Mrs. Pearson who ran the Market Tavern in Hereford. Martin Pearson kept a piggery on Blueschool Street.

Pearson told Cole: "Run? I've got a pig that can run faster than you. I tell you what. Next Easter Wednesday we'll have a race: you and my pig, from my piggery to the entrance of the football ground."

No-one realised that Pearson failed to feed his pig, a sizeable sow, for three days. The day of the race came and they all lined up along Edgar Street. When the starter's whistle blew, Pearson was at the far end with a bucket of pig meal. The pig was gone! Everybody closed in, Cole couldn't get by and the Hereford Times carried a piece about Cole being beaten by a pig!

Contented pigs

Margaret Bell talked to Sarah Laws about her time as a pig farmer at **Fownhope**. She had taken over the family farm on the death of her father, Charlie Norman, and expanded it until she had 1000 pigs.

One of her sows had 19 piglets in one litter and died after giving birth to them. Margaret nursed the lot and they all lived. Her favourite was Nizzy, a large pig who would accompany her on walks in the woods. She could whistle to him and he would come along: "I used to hear him coming back through the woods: 'thump, thump, thump!'"

Margaret made sure her pigs were never bored by providing them with play things like old tins filled with pebbles and hung by a chain from the pen. "They'd get hold of them and play with them like kittens!" One of her pigs loved music and she would leave the radio on by the sty.

Not surprisingly her contented, home-raised pork was in great demand. One local butcher would have none other than Margaret's 'acorn pigs' as they were known ("they used to love acorns").

Margaret took her pigs to the slaughterhouse off Grandstand Road herself, but she never got used to that part of pig keeping.



Margaret Bell's musical pig. "One day the pig took off with the radio in her mouth and all you could hear was this music going!"

Bromyard

Bromyard and District Local History Society opened their office at Sherford Street in 2003 and have never looked back since. Run by volunteers, the Society offers all kinds of services from opening up their record collection to helping with family history research. The Society is at 5, Sherford Street, Bromyard, HR7 4DL, 01885 488755 www.bromyardhistorysociety.org.uk



Auctioneer Graham Baker has generously loaned many of the pictures for the *History of the Market*. They include this one of drover Freddie Fox at the Sheep sales in the 1950s. In the background stands the first truck driven by haulier Geoff Jones from **St Weonards**. Here is he (right) with his last truck.



Front Page Caption: Mrs Bevan beams at the photographer in a Hereford hop field. *Full story page 5.*

LIVING LOCAL HISTORY



Cycling stunts

Mention of Hereford's Little Wonder, Micky Minton in the last issue of IOA prompted Brian Deamus from Leominster to send in these pictures (left). Micky Minton was born in January 1883 at Dewchurch. His father, John, ran the Trinity Cycle Works in Whitecross, (below). Micky was small, but athletic and his chief interest was cycling. He set two World Records for grass track racing and in 1912 became Champion of England over 440 yards with his fixed-wheel, brakeless Rover. He was so supple that he could pass through the frame of a bike, from one side to the other . . . without stopping the machine.



Cycle routes

Mark Edwards from Herefordshire Council writes in reply to Dr Malcolm Rigler's request for more cycle maps (Issue 3 Autumn 2006): Check your local Tourist Information office. As well as the Council's own Cycle Leisure Map (also available at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/transport), there's the *Cider Route*, the *Cycles & Spires* series around Leominster, Tenbury Wells & Cleobury Mortimer; Kington TIC have their own ride too, and on the edge of the county there are rides published on Radnor Forest, Forest of Dean, Hopton Wood and the Peregrine Path between Symonds Yat and Monmouth. Finally, Ordnance Survey publish a spiral-bound book of *24 One-day Routes in Gloucester, Hereford & Worcester* available for £8.99 at most bookshops.

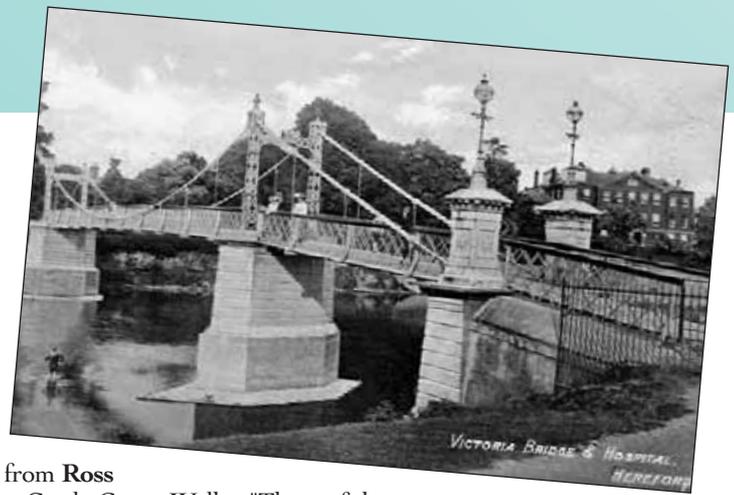
Nellie's bike



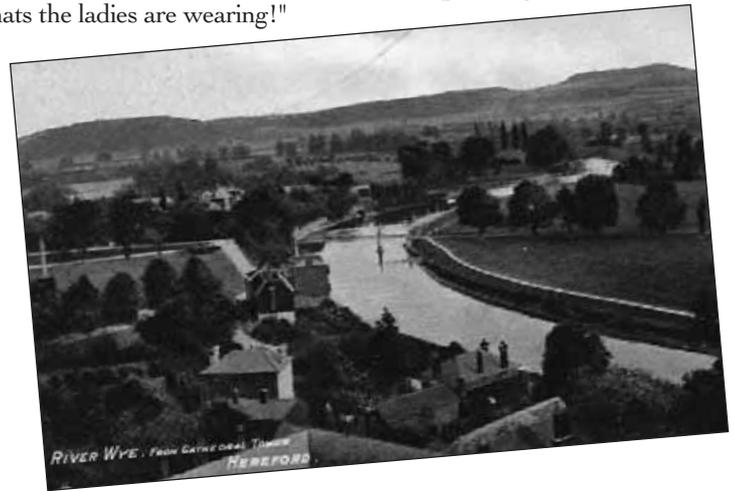
Cycling enthusiast Nellie Nash was once a cook at the Three Horseshoes, Allensmore. Nellie was born at Dewsall where her father, John Hughes, was head shepherd. She attended Callow School in the early 1900s. Her daughter, Eve Huskins from Putson, loaned the picture.



Market Day in Ross in the 1950s. Thanks to Colin Smith for the loan of the photo.



Diana Bone from Ross sent IOA these picture postcards showing the Castle Green Walks. "Three of them are postmarked 1906 and 1909. Hereford Cathedral and the river are shown before the trees had been planted while the old Art College in Castle Green had an open front with pillars. The picture of the Victoria Bridge and Hospital clearly shows the Nurses' Home (now refurbished into apartments) had yet to be built. Note how low the river level is with the child paddling in his breeches, and what elegant hats the ladies are wearing!"



Hop Pickers



Thanks to Margaret Wheatstone for this **Dormington** hop picking picture. Her mother, Mrs. Bevan, is the rosy-faced woman on the left. Next to her is Mrs. Young while Mrs. Tuffley has the tea. Margaret's friend Elaine Turner is next to her (they're still friends today). At the back stand the pole puller and the busheller, with the farmer, Mr. Davis, in his best suit

Peter Diamond is looking for hop pickers who worked in **Cradley** in the 1940s, '50s and '60s. "We'd really like to know where these visitors came from and if there are any still around," writes Peter. His email is diamondsworldtour@hotmail.com



This photo comes from Andy Taylor and the Herefordshire Light Infantry Museum. In 1968 the Herefordshire Army Cadets were at camp in Chickerell. The adult instructors included Melville Smith, Bernard Hughes, Reg Thwaites, Rev. Claude Sell, Peter Wooderson, Teddy Phillips (CO), Jack Greenhouse (RSM), Cound, Jon Taylor, Dickie Davies and Marvin Bundy. Dougie Harris, Joe Evans, Preece, Denver Kings and 'Drummie' Plaine were also there. Andy welcomes any information about soldiering in Herefordshire: ast@taylors5.fsworld.co.uk or the Drill Hall, Harold Street, Hereford.



Gordon Amand from Ross sent in this photograph of the **Much Marcle** Home Guard farewell parade in December 1944.

Eddie Drew and the strange tale of Silver John

Eddie Drew (right) the bone setter was a remarkable man. A short, stocky farmer from **Lyonshall** he was said to be very quiet, very reserved and very nice. He was also very skilled in the osteopath's art (although he was completely untutored).

People would bring their injured animals - and themselves - to his farm while on Wednesdays he held surgery in the

Wheatsheaf pub in Newmarket Street. As one auctioneer recalled: "He used to rent this room and meet his clients in there over half a beer. Then he'd get them down on the table and straighten their back or their legs or their arms and probably charge them half a crown. You knew you were going to get some pain, but you knew ultimately that you'd be better. And if we had a problem with an animal in the Market we'd pop up and say: 'Mr Drew can you come down and look at this?'"

Eddie Drew inherited his skills from his great, great grandfather, the famous but forgotten, Silver John Lloyd.

John Lloyd was credited with the ability to heal both man and beast. At the turn of the last century he lived with his wife on a small sheep farm in Radnor Forest by Harley Dingle under Great Creigiau, a few miles north of New Radnor.

After setting the spine of an injured miller's son, John was presented with a silver button by the grateful miller. He had



Eddie the bone setter on his Lyonshall farm

refused money: "I dunna take no gold or money for what the Almighty gave me."

John's wife sewed the button onto the waistcoat her husband always wore to market. In time, as his reputation grew, so did the number of silver buttons sewn on to that waistcoat. Eventually both waistcoat and smock glittered like a coat of silver mail.

Then, one fateful night, John's pony and trap returned from Builth Market without the healer. A search of the district failed to find him.

The following winter the annual St Andrew's Fair was held on the frozen surface of Llynheilyn, a small lake near Forest Inn on the Builth to Kington road. But the festivities came to an abrupt halt when young Mary, the daughter of the Forest Inn landlord, let out a scream. There, beneath her feet and entombed in the ice, was the body of Silver John.

John had been murdered, some said by a gang of no-gooders from New Radnor, and dumped in the lake. His body was buried beneath Great Cregiaiau on a spot known ever afterwards as Silver John's Tump. No-one ever stood trial for the murder, but an old Radnor song goes:

Silver John is dead and gone

So they came a-singing.

The Radnor boys pulled out his eyes

And set the bells a ringing.



Eddie's brother, Danzie, on the family farm

Dorothy's home movies

In the 1950s Craswall housekeeper Dorothy Howells bought a cine camera and began documenting the daily life of the hill farming community who had lived and worked under the Black Mountains. From Shepherd's Day, when the sheep were brought down from the mountains for sorting, to pony sales at Hay Market and the Wild West Rodeos at Michaelchurch Escley, Dorothy kept her camera running.

Some of Dorothy's best footage is of young farmers trying to stay on the back of unbroken, Black Mountain ponies during the Rodeos. "They never lasted much more than four seconds," remembers Dorothy.

Now highlights from Dorothy's film, together with interviews from Black Mountain farmers Eric Price, David Gain, 'Woody' Cole, David Perry and Rodeo rider Mike Starkey, have been brought together in a short film *Real Life on the Black Mountains* available (£12.50 incl. p. + p.) from Borderlines Film Festival, 31 Watling St, Leintwardine, Shropshire, SY7 0LW.

Do you have any old cine footage? Borderlines Film Festival would love to hear from you! Call IOA on 07845 907891 and we'll pass your details on.



Dorothy Howells with *Real Life on the Black Mountains* director, Naomi Vera-Sanso

Miller's tale

We missed National Mills Weekend in May, but for those with a passion for old mills here's a local list with OS references: Hergest Mill, Kington (SO288561); Clenchers Mill, Eastnor (SO731351); Cowarne Mill, Much Cowarne (SO620467); Rowlestone Mill (SO370270); Court of Noke Mill, Staunton on Arrow (SO372595); Clodock Mill, Longtown (SO326273); Arrow Mill, Kingsland (SO437587); Mortimer's Cross Mill (SO426637); Risbury Mill (SO540550); Staunton Mill, Staunton on Arrow (SO369599); The Corn Mill, Michaelchurch Escley (SO315345). Thanks to Alan Stoyels (alanstoyel@hr53el.freeserve.co.uk) for this information.

RAF Credenhill

I was sent to RAF Credenhill as a young National Serviceman in 1956. There was petrol rationing due to the Suez crisis at the time, but it didn't worry Herefordians - they got out their pony and traps.

Two things I remember are going on the 327A bus to the cinema one Wednesday to see a Western. When the bad man was thrown through the bar window, the man next to me shouted out: "664B!" Only RAF lads knew that was the form to fill in for a new sheet of glass!

When we were sent to Hereford to catch the train to RAF Innsworth it was a hot day and the sergeant kept us standing for 25 minutes. While he was on the phone in the guard room a friendly coal lorry driver offered us a lift and the 20 of us got in. The sergeant couldn't believe it when he came out - an empty parade ground! We were black all over when we climbed on the train.

Now 51 years later I'm living in the area again and wondering what happened to the ex-RAF Credenhill men. Perhaps In Our Age can dig up a few others?

John Kinross, Little Dewchurch.

(Call 07845 907891 or email us at inourage@btinternet.com or write to us at Herefordshire Lore, PO Box 9, Hereford HR1 9BX. And send us a snap of you in your uniform!).

Harry's trees



Ah! Those trees on the Bishop's Meadow. Mary Wayman from Hereford remembered them well. From 1949 to 1960 she was private secretary to Harry Williamson who started Wyevale Nurseries. The first thing he ever undertook as a nurseryman was to plant the beech trees. "He had a trailer on the back of his bike and went to Bishops Meadow with the trees in the trailer." Mary also recalls when Wyevale published their first catalogue - in colour! The cost was amazing in comparison to what it had been."

The loss of Sandra Kay

I've just finished In Our Age - I confess I had no idea it existed. I was interested in Derrie Edge's piece about the loss of the American B-17 bomber Ascend Charlie on September 16, 1943 in the hills above Abergavenny (Issue 3 autumn 2006). This ties in with my researches into the loss of another aircraft on that date in the hills above Rhayader, another B-17, the Sandra Kay.

Richard Boughton, Hereford

Spelling!

You mentioned Thimms Tile works in last summer issue. I presume you mean Thynnes of Withington?

Elizabeth Okell, Ross

We did! Thanks for putting us right.

Heckler's put down

I was a pupil at Hereford Cathedral School from 1949 to 1955 and vividly remember one Wednesday afternoon when games were cancelled due to bad weather. So I went to the Market and picked up 17/6d in gifts from various relatives! It helped that all my uncles were farmers in either Herefordshire or Radnorshire.

During the 1958 Hereford election my political mentor, Frank Owen, was speaking in the Market supported by John Arlott, the famous cricket commentator. A heckler called out: "Owen you wouldn't know a bull from a horse!" To which Frank replied: "But I know a donkey when I see one."

L.J.Meredith, Moreton on Lugg

Student days

I was so pleased to see the Art School pictures (IOA 3 Autumn 2006) I was there from 1933 to 1935. I went to the High School down Widemarsh Street and my brother was in the school opposite. At the time there was a prison down Commercial Street, now the cinema and bus station. When the prison was going to be

demolished anyone could have a look round for a 1d. I remember going through the cells and seeing the padded cells.

And when May Fair was on my father used to take me.

There was a Headless Woman on show!

Mrs PO. Williams, Wellingborough.

Send us your memories of student days.



Hereford Art School in 1970.

John Ward

Former Art School student (and Royal portrait painter) John Ward, who died in June, wrote to IOA in 1999 about his days at St Owens School, Hereford. "As a portrait painter I have met and talked long with many distinguished people and this made me value my luck in being under the then headmaster, P.H. Alder-Barrett." John was replying to another former St Owens schoolboy, Charles Morris, who had described the head as "the only person I can honestly say I hated my whole life."

Market Men



John Sevenoaks (with cap) behind duffle-coated Bill Gallimore and young Walter Edwards with Geoffrey Morris, right, looking on. In the background is Bill Sinnett.

The young chap in the middle of your photo is Walter Edwards who worked for National Fox Hounds, reckons **John Morris**. John also recalled the cattle dealer Fred Ralph who, despite being unable to read or write, was a successful dealer, even dealing for the Queen (see Droving days, page 2).

And **William Wilde** from **Ross** says the man on the right is Geoffrey Morris of G. Morris and Son and now Morris Wargent and Wild.

SNAPSHOTS



Jean Edwards (second left) joined her fellow employees at Chadds for this rooftop photo.



Wagoner Arty Mills ploughing at the Wormbridge Vallets Farm annual ploughing match in the early 1950s. Sheila Winnie



Margaret Bell loaned us this picture of her father who drove traction engines. He lived in **Fownhope** and, like Margaret, was a reliable water diviner.

Shropshire reminiscence

Shropshire reminiscence is a charity which promotes reminiscence for therapeutic and recreational purposes. They have published a useful series of guides (£6) from how to get people talking to how to record reminiscences. Susan White is the chairperson: The Lantern, Meadow Farm Drive, Harlescott, Shrewsbury SY1 4NG 01743 210806 shropshirerem@yahoo.co.uk

Herefordshire Lore

Who are you?

We're a voluntary group and we've been collecting and publishing people's memories since we started in 1989.

What do you do?

We publish *In Our Age* and we're currently working on our *History of Hereford Market*. We work closely with Herefordshire Archive Service - the master copies of all our interviews are kept there - and the Museums and Libraries service. Previous publications include the newsletter *Age to Age*, *Amazing How Times Change*, *The Schoolchildren's Tale*, *The Shopkeepers' Tale* and our last book *In the Munitions - Women At War in Herefordshire*.

Who pays for it all?

We rely on grants, subscriptions and donations to keep going. Readers can guarantee their copy of *In Our Age*, which costs £6000 a year to produce, by taking out a subscription. The rest are distributed through local libraries, museums and Tourist Information Centres. And they are free.

Why?

Because we want everyone to get a copy whatever their circumstances.

Where are you based?

We don't have an office. But we do have a PO Box, a mobile phone an email address. Soon we'll have a new website.

Who's who?

On the committee are John Turner (chair), Mary Horner, Rosemary Lillico, Elizabeth Semper O'Keefe, Harvey Payne (treasurer), Dawn Turner, Betty Webb and Lenora Williams. Also involved are Bill Laws (IOA editor), Eileen Klotz (administrator), Bobbie Blackwell, Sarah Laws, Marsha O'Mahony and Sandy Green, and our Market Advisory Group including Tom Nellist, Geoff Jones, Liz Rouse, Julian Gallimore, Margaret Wheatstone with committee members Mary, Rosemary and Betty.

Can I help?

Get in touch with Eileen 07845 907891 or email us at inourage@btinternet.com or write to us at Herefordshire Lore, PO Box 9, Hereford HR1 9BX



Herefordshire Lore in 1993

What's
on?

July 7 - August 27 Art Exhibition by June Baker at Hereford Cider Museum
August 12, 26 & 27, 1.00 p.m. - 4.00 p.m. Full steam ahead at the Hereford Waterworks Museum
September 1 - December 31, art exhibition at by Ruth Hargest at Hereford Cider Museum
October 20 & 21 Annual cider making festival at Hereford Cider Museum

Waterworks Museum: 01432 357236 info@waterworksmuseum.org.uk
Cider Museum: 01432 354207 enquiries@cidermuseum.co.uk