



# Tewkesbury Museum Supporter's Newsletter

**August  
2023**

My newsletters seem to get later and later. Days and hours seem to be getting shorter. We seem to have settled into a routine in the Museum, with enough of us to open every day and to progress some of the long-outstanding work in the background. Visitors seem plentiful and full of compliments about the displays and all is well. The only uncertainty is with the impending building works, which once finished will allow the reopening of a leak-free top floor, with a beautifully-restored ceiling. The work, though, will involve a lot of disruption, which we'll learn about in due course.

## **A New Stock Market**



In May 1927, George Hone, Auctioneer, combined his scattered and very inconvenient markets for cattle, pigs and sheep into a single stock market on the site of Thomas Walker's old works on what is now the Spring Gardens carpark. The complex included a market house, a sales ring, and three purpose-made stock areas and a weighing machine. All built at George Hone's expense. There was a grand opening, conducted by Sir Thomas Davis, MP for Tewkesbury, followed by a luncheon for the VIPs at the Town Hall. In the evening, Collins and Godfrey's employees who had built the complex, were entertained to dinner in the Anchor. The commemorative plaque for this grand occasion now resides in the Museum.

## **The King's Stables**

In 1536, John Leland, the first English travel-writer, passed through the region on one of his itineraries. On his visit to Tewkesbury he made observations about Holm Castle which has been a subject of speculation ever since. He moved on to Upton afterwards. His comments include one about Tewkesbury:

*Upton standith on the right bank of the Severn apoun a cluster four miles above Theokesbyri, and here is a bridge of wood .... And here is a great stable of the Kinges a late occupied for great horses, and a nother at Theokesbyri*

Where was the King's Great Stable? Could it have been the stable at the Black Bear? What was the purpose of the stable? What had it to do with the King? There are always questions!

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## Bye Laws 1852

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In 1852, the Borough Council's bye laws (based a national model) were approved by the government. They say something about what concerned the authorities back then.

What concerned them greatly was cholera. The last outbreak was only three years earlier and the emerging public health service was well aware that hygiene and cleanliness were key tools in the fight against the disease. Refuse collection, which included the 'night soil', was a front-line service. These clauses set out the service to be provided and the expectation of the public's duties. The refuse service was very different to today's, as was the expectation of house holders, though it sounds as if there were two levels of service; for the 'respectable classes' and alley dwellers.

### Bye-laws Relating to the Removal of Refuse.

**IX.** - That a cart shall at least once in every twenty-four hours pass through every street in the district with the words "Scavenger's Refuse Cart" painted thereon in legible characters (the driver of which shall ring a bell before each house), into which the scavenger shall place all the refuse animal and vegetable matter, and all house-refuse whatever which may have accumulated since the last passage of the cart, and access shall be given to such scavengers to all places where such refuse is deposited. Provided always, that where such dust box or boxes as are described in the next section have been provided by the Local Board, it shall be sufficient to place such refuse in such boxes for the removal of such boxes when full, as directed in the next section. Provided also, that when any public dustbin, or receptacle for refuse is or shall be provided by the Local Board for any part of the district, it shall be sufficient for the occupier of any house to place his or her refuse in such bin or receptacle for removal by the scavenger when required by the Local Board.

**X.** - That when any house in the district shall be without a dustbin accessible to the scavengers employed by the Local Board of Health, and approved by the Inspector of Nuisances, as a fit and proper receptacle for refuse, and when the Local Board of Health shall provide a movable dust box or dust boxes for such house, the occupier or occupiers of such house shall place in the said dust box or boxes every day, all the dust, ashes, and other refuse of such house, and shall every day bring, or cause to be brought, such dust box or boxes, so filled, to the outside door of the said house, or such other place as the Inspector of Nuisances shall direct, at the hour appointed by the Local Board of Health, for its removal by the scavenger employed by the said Local Board, (which hour shall be notified to the said occupier or occupiers by notice in writing left at the house), and shall take into the house the empty dust box or boxes that shall be left by the scavenger in the place of the box or boxes removed by him.

**XI.** - That no dust box, or other movable receptacle for refuse, containing any offensive noxious matter, or any refuse whatsoever, shall be permitted to remain open in any street, court, or place within the said district for more than fifteen minutes before the time appointed by the Local Board of Health for the removal of such a dust box or movable receptacle by the Local Board of Health.

**XII.** - Where no such dust boxes as above described have been provided by the Local Board, and there is no dustbin or other fixed receptacle for the house refuse, all refuse shall be taken in pails or buckets or other suitable vessels, and emptied into the scavenger's cart as it passes by, at the time appointed by the Local Board.

**XIII.** - Where any nightsoil, sewage, or any contents of any cesspool, or other offensive or noxious matter has to be carried in or along any street, thoroughfare, or place within the district, it shall be carried in vessels properly covered, and no part thereof shall be allowed to fall on the street or surface..

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**XIV.** - No nightsoil, sewage, or other contents of any cesspool, nor any other noxious or offensive matter shall be conveyed through any street or thoroughfare within the district, between the hours of five in the morning and twelve in the evening, or at any time except in carts properly covered, and secured against any escape of the contents thereof, or any issue of offensive smells from the same, to the satisfaction of the Inspector of Nuisances.

**XV.** - No person shall empty, or assist in emptying any privy, water closet, cesspool, or similar receptacle of offensive matter, within the district without the use of such deodorisers, and the employment of such other means of preventing disagreeable or hurtful effects therefrom, as shall be directed by the Inspector of Nuisances, by order under his hand, or by order of the Local Board through any other of their officers.

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### A Thomas Walker Relic



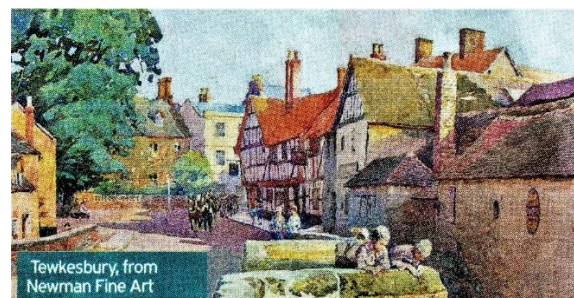
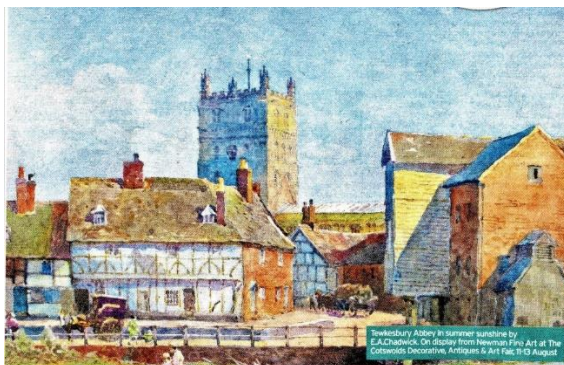
Cellar covers are not the most romantic of town artefacts. They rank a little higher than manhole covers, though manhole covers are more often catalogued. The cellar covers of Tewkesbury are worth looking down at, as many, though often badly worn by generations of feet, have strong local connections.

This cover is across the road from the museum, outside 24 Barton Street. (There is another in Church Street.) If you look at it closely it bears the inscription 'T Walker Engineer Tewkesbury'. This is Thomas Walker, Engineer and fairground ride manufacturer, who had his works at the back of Walls Court and in the old malthouse/theatre/silk throwing factory where the Ambulance Station now stands.

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### Views of Tewkesbury

Westonbirt School will be displaying two watercolour views of Tewkesbury at the Cotswolds Decorative, Antiques and Arts fair to be held there from August 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>. They are from Newman Fine Art in Cirencester. The first is of the Black Bear end of the High Street (including the old distillery and North House) from the bridge; the second is the ever-popular view of Mill Bank and the Abbey from the Ham. The latter is by E.A. Chadwick (1876-1956), a native of Marston Green, Birmingham. Chadwick was a well-known and competent water colour painter who specialised in rural landscapes, travelling all over Europe on his bicycle to find his subjects. At least one of his excursions was to visit Tewkesbury.



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## Museum Talks

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Soon, we will announce the topics of the autumn talks, but we don't want to think of winter before August is over. Dates are Tuesdays October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup>, November 28<sup>th</sup> and December 12<sup>th</sup>.

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## Secret Tewkesbury

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David Elder, author of 'Literary Tewkesbury' has recently produced a new book about the town. Published by Amberley Books, 'Secret Tewkesbury' explores some of the quirks and oddities of the town. He provides a lot of interesting detail about all manner of town features and personalities. Some, like the railway, are locally well known, but the book is full of curiosities and surprises. It is well worth a perusal.

If you want to learn more, David is talking about his book, or its contents, on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> September at the Civic Society meeting, 7.30 in the Library. If you miss that, he'll be at the Historical Society in the spring.

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## Alley Strolls

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The summer programme of Wednesday evening alley strolls is drawing to an end, as the evenings draw in. There are 7.00pm walks (from the bottom of Warders Alley) on 16<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> August, looking at the High Street and Barton Street respectively. The first Sunday afternoon walk will be on September 10<sup>th</sup>.

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## Overlooked Tewkesbury

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This year, the Museum is featuring 'Going to the Flicks', about the history of Tewkesbury's cinemas for Heritage Open days; 8-17 September. The programme for the whole town will soon be announced by the TIC.

One event will be a town walk on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup>, titled 'Overlooked Tewkesbury', staged by Project Alleycat. This will visit some of the often-unnoticed small things in the town which have some local significance. Participants will be invited to photograph them and submit their best pictures for an exhibition to be staged in the Library. The walk will start at the foot of Warder's Alley in the High Street at 2.00pm.

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## 150 Years Ago

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On 9 August 1873, the 'Register' reported on the ever-popular regatta and horticultural show, held on Breakingstone Meadow and the Old Avon. It wasn't a little local affair; it attracted rowing teams from far away and seemed to be an important event, on the national scene. This account has been pruned somewhat, removing a lot of names:

We think we may safely say, in proof of our prognostication last week, that the Regatta of this year was in every respect the most successful we have had; both in number of entries

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and in the first-class racing, the Committee may be fairly congratulated. The gentlemen connected with the numerous rowing clubs represented in the several contests expressed their highest admiration and astonishment at the excellent and perfect arrangements made for the carrying out so long a programme. But we must not omit to express our opinion that the successful efforts of the committee were in a great measure aided by the ready manner in which the crews fell in with the rules and regulations.

Up to Monday morning the weather looked most promising, but by middle day the weather-glass and the wind gave warning of a change which duly came; the rain fell heavily and incessantly up to a late hour, and Tuesday morning gave no better promise of a fine day. Those who had been zealously employed in making every arrangement for the enjoyment of the thousands of holiday folks who were sure to visit the town in fair weather, awoke to find the elements against them, heavy rain damping their spirits up to ten o'clock; mackintoshes and thick boots were called into requisition, and the members of the Committee and the officials wended their way to the inclosure with the expectation of having to carry out the programme without any company to witness the sports. A delightful change, however, took place; just before the opening of the proceedings a beautiful blue sky appeared, and visitors soon flocked upon the ground. The races were all well contested, and we never saw the public take more interest in the results. The Swimming Race was also very attractive and was looked upon as one of the greatest feats of the day. The Pig Hunt drew upwards of a dozen competitors, and after several amusing attempts to gain the little flag at the end of the pole, C. Hawker, of Tewkesbury, was successful. Messrs. Synyer and Gilmer's Band gave the greatest satisfaction. The refreshments, supplied by Mr. E. H. Barnes, were all that could be desired. The labour of management was divided amongst the committee, and we have only to say that in no department was there a single murmur or complaint. Speaking financially, the rain in the early part of the day made a considerable difference in the amount taken at the gates, but all things considered the Committee have good cause to be satisfied, and are deserving of the public thanks for their pluck in providing this annual holiday treat against all obstacles.

The Horticultural Show was as usual a great success. The display of foliage plants was not so large as we have seen at Tewkesbury, but this deficiency was made up by a grand show of stove and greenhouse plants and ferns. The exhibition of fruit was not only plentiful but very fine, the greatest attraction being three of the largest bunches of grapes we have seen, from Eastnor Castle. The tent set apart for the display of Cottagers' produce was well filled. The Regatta Prizes were arranged on a handsome stand in one of the tents, and this new feature was much appreciated.

The following are the results of the various races, in many of which the closeness of the finish caused much excitement to be manifested by the spectators on both banks of the river as the competitors neared the winning post.

THE TODDINGTON VASE value FIFTY GUINEAS. For Gentlemen Amateurs only. The Winners to hold the Vase for one year, and to receive Four handsome Silver Cups, of the value of THIRTY GUINEAS and a Coxswain's Prize. Entrance 10s Distance 2 miles. The winners of the Stewards' Challenge Cup at Henley, and of the Thames Cup at the Metropolitan Amateur Regatta, barred.

This, the grand event of the day, proved an easy victory for the Chester crew, who rowed in splendid form and won as they pleased. The race was won last year by the Ino club, who have held the Vase during the past twelve months, the honourable custody of which until next year's regatta now passes into the hands of the victorious Royal Chester Rowing Club. The Lancaster crew finding they had no chance of getting up to Chester did not persevere. THE CORPORATION PLATE, value £20. For Amateurs, in Four-oared Clinker-built Boats. Entrance £1. Distance 1 mile.

Bath won as they pleased, coming in a long distance in front of their opponents.

THE LADIES' PLATE. A Four-oared race for Gentlemen Amateurs only. For Four Silver Cups of the Value of TWENTY GUINEAS, and a Coxswain's Prize. Entrance £1. Distance

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11/2 miles. The winners of the Stewards' Challenge Cup at Henley, of the Thames Cup at the Metropolitan Amateur Regatta, and of the Toddington Vase, barred.

This was one of the most exciting contests of the day, both the West London and Ino crews being and neck until a very short distance from the close, when a good spurt was made by the former crew, who only won by a few feet. The John o'Gaunt crew scratched at the last moment.

A SCULLING RACE FOR A SILVER CUP of the value of £10. For Gentlemen Amateurs only. Entrance 15s. Distance 1 mile. The winners of the Diamond Challenge Sculls at Henley, of the London Cup at the Metropolitan Amateur Regatta, and of the Wingfield Sculls, barred.

An excellent race; won by half-a-length. At the bridge Mr. Barlet steered a very wide course, or it was the general opinion he must have come in first but he was beaten by Mr Thompson.

A SCULLING RACE FOR A SILVER CUP. For Amateurs. Entrance 5s. Distance 1 mile. In clinker-built Boats provided by the Committee.

This proved an easy victory for Mr. G. Brotheridge, who came in some distance in front of his nearest opponent.

A CANOE RACE. First and Second Prizes. For Amateurs only. Entrance 2s. 6d. Distance, from the Bridge. The Committee provided Canoes for this Race.

Mr. Walker had a good start, and appeared to be winning easily, when, in trying to avoid fouling his opponent's boat, his canoe capsized and threw him into the water and out of the race at the same time, and thus deprived him of what would otherwise have been a well-earned victory.

A SWIMMING RACE for 2 Valuable Cups. First Prize, silver-Gilt Goblet in case, second prize, Handsome oxidised Cup. Distance 100 yards. Entrance 5s. Competitors being required to swim in jerseys, flannel trousers, and rowing shoes, similar to what a man would have to put up with if upset.

1. Mr. Evans (Worcester)
2. Mr. Freeman (West London Rowing Club)
3. Mr. Barkley (Worcester)

A SCRATCH RACE for FOUR CUPS. Entrance 10s. each Boat.

After three very closely contested heats, this race was won by a crew consisting of Messrs. Comber, Hooper, Wood, and Reeks.

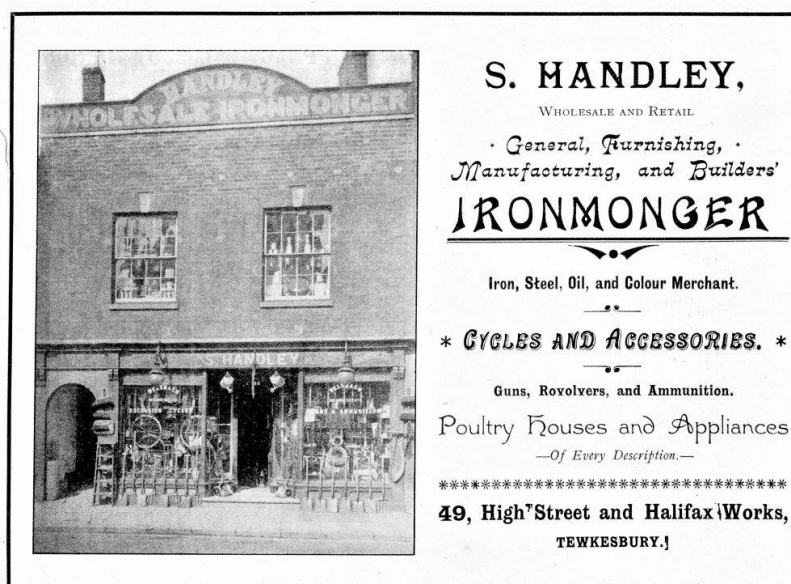
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## Past Tewkesbury

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W J Gardner's Tewkesbury guide book from 1902/3 contains a series of sixty full-page advertisements for Tewkesbury businesses, most with photographs of the premises.

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This property, 49 High Street, is now occupied by Melanie's Café. The alley alongside is Bray's Court. The range of products sold by ironmongers in 1903 far exceeds what you can buy in Haywards today. Ironmongers also manufactured some of their items (not the guns, though the Fletchers did not many years earlier). Mr Handley also operated from the Halifax Works, in St Mary's Road (now replaced by Tannery Close).

Sam Handley came to Tewkesbury in 1883 and went into partnership with a Mr King to manufacture hay elevators at the Halifax Works. Later, he opened his shop at 75 High Street on his own account, and ran it until retiring in 1918.

Before him, William Matty had the premises, selling fish, game and poultry. After him, Arch Collins opened a fishmongers.

This was a short-lived venture. By 1926 Mr Hardacre opened the River Café. It also fulfilled the role of the old post houses by offering bed and breakfast and being the booking office and Tewkesbury stop for Ribble Express coaches to and from the north west, The café seems to have morphed into a sweet shop, until it was bought and turned into Cromwell's electrical appliance shop. When the owners retired it reverted back to a café, which it remains today.

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## CONTRIBUTIONS

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This newsletter is written for supporters of the Museum. It is confined to local history, the background to items in the museum collection and things which the compiler thinks are interesting. I hope you also find them interesting!

Contributions are very welcome, and will add to the range and variety of topics covered. If you have a few minutes to type up something you're researched, or even to suggest a topic which might be of general interest, please email [info@teWKesburymuseum.org](mailto:info@teWKesburymuseum.org) .

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