



Tewkesbury Museum Supporter's Newsletter

**Sept.
2023**

September is a momentous month. The museum will be emptied and closed for several months and when it reopens it will be in a physical condition such as we have not seen for many years, with the top floor not only reopened but with a conserved and restored ceiling and free of the worries about roof leaks. It's something to look forward to.

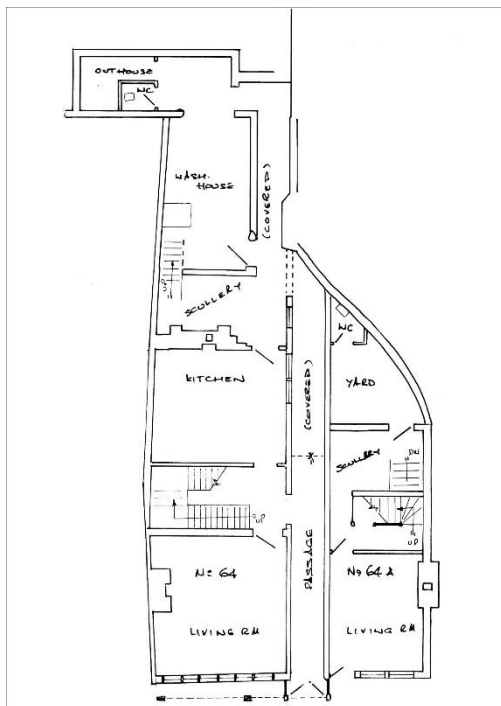
Following comments about the legibility of last month's newsletter. This one is also attached as a 'pdf file. I hope that helps.

64 Barton Street. 1957

Whenever buildings are altered, it's always worth remembering what they were in the past and how they have evolved into what they are now.

The earliest plans we have of the site date from 1957 when a survey was carried out, presumably in anticipation of purchase. The George Watson Hall Trust was in financial trouble and the (old) Borough Council decided to intervene, became Trustees for the hall and embarked on a large expansion of the facility, which until then was simply the building erected by the Friends in 1804.

An extension was planned for the back, into the burial area, to create a proper stage. Another at the front created a reception lobby and box office. It was the need for a bar which needed the museum building. They purchased a large building in the plot behind No 63, which became the Tudor Bar. They purchased No. 64 to demolish the rear part of it and build a kitchen and a passage to the bar (they did more; this is a simplification!)

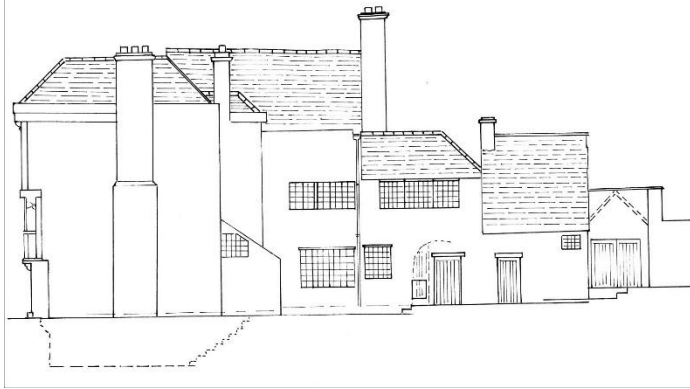


The plan shows that there was a scullery (with another room above), wash house and toilet as a rear range, accessed by a covered corridor. These were all demolished. What is now the toilet was occupied by a staircase to the floor above, and the second scullery (now the kitchen) contained a staircase to the cellar which is now accessed by a hatch in the office floor.

Whilst it was a single dwelling in the nineteenth century, at some time it was divided (or redivided) into two. It was two at the time of the survey. It was divided by extending the partitions on the upper floors to the window. There were no doors between the two.

When the rear was demolished, the 'making good' was done by pointing the now-exposed brickwork with cement mortar and the external floor levels were raised to suit the Watson Hall with concrete. Now, with a better understanding of building

physics, we know that that's not good for old bricks and lime mortar buildings without damp proof courses, and a substantial part of the work to be done is to remedy some of this.



The elevation drawn in 1957, looking from the Watson Hall side, shows the extent of the demolitions and the location of the cellar.

To build their meeting House, the Quakers purchased the two plots which included the museum building, to build at the back. No 64 was retained and rented to Rev. Welford, the Congregational Minister. It was undoubtedly modified, creating the curved boundary wall. A completely

unknown building was demolished to make the entrance from the street, but its cellar was retained to store rain water. It's still there, underneath a manhole cover.

HODs

Heritage Open Days, Saturday 9th to Sunday 17th, are slowly gaining traction locally, though a little disrupted this year by the cycle racing.. Events are planned for the Hop Pole, the Town Hall and the John Moore Museum, as well as the Town Museum.

The Museum event, 'Let's go to the Flicks', is a display of the history of cinema in Tewkesbury, curated by Linda Pike, and including some old cine footage from the Museum's collection. Linda, will be talking about Tewkesbury Cinema at the Roses on Friday 8th

As part of the event, Linda will be giving a talk at the Roses Theatre at 5.00pm on Friday 8th; 'A Brief History of Cinema in Tewkesbury'. As a Heritage Open Day event, admission is free.

Young Watson

The state of the nation in 1816 was uneasy. The economy was stuttering after the Napoleonic Wars and the rich were getting richer whilst the poor were getting poorer. There was a lot of unrest, and agitation for change. One group of agitators was the Spenceans, followers of the ideas of Thomas Spence, a Radical who had campaigned for the common ownership of land and universal suffrage.

In December 1816, this group invited Henry, Orator, Hunt to speak at Spa Fields, London, with the intention of causing a riot at the meeting which would lead to an insurrection and the overthrow of the government. It didn't go to plan. A spy had infiltrated the group and most of the ringleaders were quickly caught. James Watson, son of another conspirator of the same name, hence 'Young Watson' evaded arrest and fled, with the Bow Street Runners in hot pursuit. Amongst many other leads, the pursuers were led to Tewkesbury. The 'London Courier' of 17 December 1816 reported that:-

'Yesterday, we stated in our last, Mr. Wontner, the City Marshal arrived in town. He returned by the Worcester mail, after a fruitless and arduous journey to several principal cities and towns, and lastly into Wales, in quest of the fugitive Watson. It is probable that. Mr. Wontner was on a wrong scent; but we will relate the several occurrences which led to the suspicion of the individual being Watson, and leave it to the public to draw their own conclusions on the subject.

At the public-house called the Chequers [18 Church Street], at Tewkesbury, Mr. Wontner learnt, that a person, answering closely to the description of the fugitive, came there on the 6th inst. requesting to know if could have a bed: He sat down and had a pint of ale. As every stranger coming that way since the riots has been examined with a suspicious eye, the daughters of the house, surveying the person in question, thought they observed something singular in his conduct: he looked at them sideways, and always appeared to endeavour to prevent a full view of his face. There being no bed disengaged, the person was recommended to the Farmer's Arms [Farrier's Arms? 87 Church Street], where he was told he could have a bed for the night. There the traveller sat down with an intent to sleep. A resident in the town happened to be present, and made particular observations on the manner of the person, which induced him to change his seat to two different parts of the room within a short period, always endeavouring to keep his left cheek towards his observer. At length the traveller became so uneasy at the remarks made upon him, that he gave up his intention of stopping all night, hastily ate some bread and cheese from his pocket, and abruptly left the house. As he departed he inquired the road to Bristol, and pursued that direction. In the course of an hour and half, however, the same person was seen at the Old [Black] Bear, the last public house in the town, on the road to Worcester. At this place he engaged a bed. paying for the same overnight, together with some refreshments, in order that he might depart early in the morning. This he did not do, but stopped breakfast, for the payment of which he tendered a £1 note to change, which the woman objected to do, under the impression that it was from the Bank of Birmingham, and did not pass currently at Tewkesbury. The traveller undertook to send the amount by the coach from the Hen and Chickens, at Birmingham, whither he said he was going, and could have the note changed. He took the road to Birmingham, but it is considered worthy of remark, that before he went to bed overnight, he enquired if there were not more ways out of the house than one, which induced the landlady, to suspect him for an improper character. Before he left, he inquired for a Newspaper, and one of an old date being offered him, he seemed disappointed, and said he wanted to see the latest details of the disturbances in London. All the parties at the different houses where the man stopped concur in the fact of his dress, and as to a mole or mark on his face, and also state that he was in a trifling degree pitted with the small pox.

At a little village about four miles on the Worcester road, the same person was observed to pass through very much splashed; and what made the person remark him was, he thought it strange that a person of apparent respectability should choose to walk, when coaches on the road were plentiful. At Severnstoke the traveller called at a public house, and had a pint of ale. At a pot-house two miles from Worcester, he appeared to be inclined to stop, but was supposed to be prevented from a number of persons being there drinking, amongst whom he did not wish to mix. From this place the person moved onwards to Worcester, and was heard of there at the Pheasant Inn, enquiring for a bed, but there was none to be had, except one in the garret, which the landlady says she did not offer, as she considered the person too respectable to accept of it. On the Sunday morning the same person here described was observed on the bridge at Worcester, looking at the vessels lying there: but all trace of him after that period was entirely lost. Two Bow street officers remain in that neighbourhood prosecuting their inquiries.'

Young Watson was never caught. He fled to the United States, out of the reach of the Bow Street Runners.

Sir John Easthope

John Easthope was born in Tewkesbury in 1784. Bryan Linnell says he was born in Lock Court, which may be correct, because his father, Thomas, was a barge owner, a trade followed by John's elder brother Thomas Jnr.

John had a head for business and as a young man was involved in several ventures in Tewkesbury, including promoting a canal between Tewkesbury and Cheltenham. He went into partnership with Nathaniel Hartland, who owned the bank in Church Street. He moved from Tewkesbury in about 1816, possibly to Cobb's Bank in Banbury, but by 1817 his address was Threadneedle Street in London.

His rise was fast. From banking he moved to stockbroking and amassed a large fortune. He became chairman of the London and South-Western Railway Company, a director of the Canada Land Company and chairman of the Mexican Mining Company.

He was elected MP for St Albans in 1826, supporting the whigs, transferring to Banbury in 1831 and Leicester in 1837. His son, also John, stood, unsuccessfully, for Tewkesbury in 1841. He was a reformer, in an age when reform was high on Parliament's agenda. His main campaigns seem to have been for the abolition of the corn laws and the abolition of church rates.



On Lord Melbourne's recommendation Queen Victoria made him a Baronet in 1841. The title died with him, though.

He was a newspaper proprietor, buying the Morning Chronicle in 1834, employing John Stuart Mill and Charles Dickens as journalists. He was not a good proprietor and his record as owner was mixed, maybe because of the bombastic editor he employed. Charles Dickens led a strike against him over terms of employment. He sold his interest to a group of Peelites in 1848.

When the London and Southampton railway was built, it went through Weybridge and turned a small, quiet Surrey town into a very affluent stockbroker suburb.

John Easthope, chairman of the railway company, bought almost all of Weybridge Heath on his own account and developed it, living there until his death in 1865. A far cry from Lock Court!

John Easthope is completely unremembered in the place of his birth. The only memory of his life seems to be in Canada, where he was a director of the Canada Land Company. The small townships of South and North Easthope, in Ontario, were named for him.

[the picture is a detail from a painting in the National Portrait Gallery]

Elmbridge

This comment, raised by looking up Elmbridge, the district which now includes Weybridge, only has a peripheral link to Tewkesbury, but it raises one of those 'what if' questions which are so interesting.

As a place-name it owes its existence to the 'Emly Bridge Hundred', itself a relic of early administration. In 1974, local government reorganisation merged the councils for Esher, Walton and Weybridge into a new District Authority and no-one could agree on a name. The [Elmbridge Hundred website](#) puts it well:

'Ideas were running out when someone recalled that there was a rural deanery of Emly, and another commented that there was a telephone exchange at Surbiton, which was called 'Elmbridge'. This led to a run on the reference books, and it was discovered that they had all been living in Elmbridge without knowing it, while the fact that Elmbridge had a past of impenetrable obscurity might be seen as a positive advantage.'

If they'd taken a similar approach when deciding what to call our new district in 1974, a lot of arguments might have been avoided.

Bye Laws 1852

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.

These clauses are about refuse and nightsoil collection. A very different standard of service to today's!

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.

Museum Talks

The Museum lecture season starts in October. Tuesday evenings at 7.00pm at the Baptist Church. The programme has now been finalised:

3 rd October.	Tewkesbury Medieval Festival- The Early days	Jane Baalam
17 th October.	Making, Marking, Mending -what a Small piece of needlework can tell us about Victorians women's lives.	Jo Teague
31 st October.	The Battle of Evesham.	David Snowden
28 th November.	501 'County of Gloucester' Squadron in the Battle of Britain	Dilip Sarker
12 th December.	A Christmas Magic Lantern show.	Patrick Furley

Other People's Talks

The Civic Society's next talk will be David Elder, talking about 'Secret Tewkesbury', the subject of his recent book. It will be on Thursday 14th September at 7.30. in the Library.

The Historical Society's first autumn talk, 'Dowty in the Tewkesbury area: Expansion and Decline' presented by Ally McConnell is on Thursday 21st September at 7.45 at the Methodist Church.

The annual Deerhurst Lecture in on Saturday, September 23rd 2023 at 7.30pm in Deerhurst Church. The Speaker is Professor John Hines, of Cardiff University. His topic is 'A routeway in a borderzone: Deerhurst against the background of Early Medieval settlement around the Lower Severn'. Entry is from 7.00

Alley Strolls

The summer programme of Wednesday evening alley strolls finished at the end of August. In the three months of light evenings there were seven 'public' walks, which attracted 140 strollers. There were also seven walks for groups with a further 116 people. A busy summer!

The Sunday afternoon walks have now restarted, with September walks on 10th (Church Street) and 24th (High Street). They start at 2.30, from the High Street at the bottom of Warder's Alley.

100 Years Ago

From the 'Register.', September 3 1923

TO LET.

On Lease with immediate possession.

CAPITAL Lock-up

BUSINESS **P**REMISES

Centrally situated at the Cross, near the Post Office in Tewkesbury.

Apply, **GEORGE HONE, Estate Agent, Tewkesbury.**

Abbey

Octocentenary.

Festival Practices

Commence **SEPTEMBER 4th, at 8 p.m. (sharp) in the ABBEY VESTRY.**

It is a matter of satisfaction that the Ministry of Health has consented to the closing of the Tewkesbury tramp ward upon the re-opening of the Cheltenham tramp ward. It is not

generally known that the accommodation in the Tewkesbury ward is so restricted that tramps have to be given tickets to the lodging house when that small accommodation is exhausted, and there have been as many as 63 dealt with in this way in one week. The lodging house keeper is paid 1/- per head for this and each tramp has to return to the Workhouse for breakfast. The tramp fortunate enough to call when the tramp ward is full is therefore under no control and has not to perform a task.

HARNESS,
Dog Collars,
Whips,
Halters,
Embrocation,
Harness Oil, Hoof Oil, Axle Oil,
Boot Polishes,
Leather for Boot Repairing,
Repair Lasts, Rivets, etc.

HARNESS and TRAVELLING
REQUISITES REPAIRED BY
EXPERIENCED WORKMEN.

TURVEY,
Saddler & Harness Maker
24, High Street,
TEWKESBURY.

**Palace Electric
Theatre,
TEWKESBURY.**

Continuous Pictures
FROM 6 TO 10 NIGHTLY.

MONDAY, SEPT. 3.
Lillian Hall-Davis
In an Engaging Turf Melodrama

**Stable
Companions.**

Past Tewkesbury

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. This advertisement hasn't got a photograph, but there are pictures of the premises available from other sources.

BAYLISS AND MERRELL,
(Late Banaster, Vernon, & Co.,)
Wine and Spirit Merchants,

- BREWERS OF HOME-BREWED BEER, -
From the Best English Malt and Hops.

The Distillery, TEWKESBURY.
∞ AND UPTON-ON-SEVERN. ∞

This complex of buildings has completely disappeared, and today it is the beer garden of the Black Bear Inn.

In his 'History of Tewkesbury' James Bennett wrote 'A distillery and rectifying House on an extensive scale were established in Tewkesbury about the year 1770. The distillery was built on the meadows on the Bushley side of the Severn, but the foundations of it cannot now be discovered. The rectifying business was carried out in the town and from that period to the present it has continued to prosper under the superintendence of highly respectable proprietors'. Confusingly, the rectifying house became known as the distillery, and the distillery referred to has gone without trace.



Distilling and rectifying seems to have ended in the early nineteenth century, probably with the crack-down gin consumption, and had become a wholesale wine and spirit depot under the ownership of George Banaster, Thomas Vernon, William Howard and Robert Young. Through the rest of the century, these names appeared in a regularly changing series of partnerships with other names coming and going until 1866 when the partnership of Banaster, Vernon and Cossens was dissolved and the building and stock sold. Bayliss and Merrell bought the premises and continued the wine and spirit trade. They applied for an off-licence to sell beer, which was rejected at an ill-tempered magistrates' hearing in 1870. A small brewery was installed, though, and beer was sold through the Masons Arms in Church Street, which Bayliss and Merrell also owned.

When Bayliss and Merrill ceased business, it was taken over by W. H. Nutt, the last wine merchant to trade from there.

Reginald Gaze, who had a farm at Gupshill Manor, next bought the buildings and converted them to a dairy, which operated until Mr Gaze moved from farming to manage the Bell Hotel in 1939. The buildings became derelict and were demolished after the war, like many others in Tewkesbury, to become a beer garden.

CONTRIBUTIONS

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 .

The circulation of this email is to a list which has not been updated for a while. If you no longer want to be on that list, just reply to this email with 'UNSUBSCRIBE' in the subject box.
