

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2017

**Colwall
Village
Society**

Revealing Our Heritage

TOM MARSH, LT COL RE (RETD), OBE



(1923 - 2016)

Tom was born in Australia and lived there until he was six when his family moved to Wales. After the death of his father, the family eventually moved to Little Purlieu, Colwall in 1934. Following the outbreak of the Second World War, he joined the Royal Engineers and was commissioned in 1943, and joined 3rd Parachute Brigade. The average age was 21, and the squadron's motto was "Go to it", which it did - taking part in the D-Day operations, achieving all its objectives, but not always as planned! On 27th May 1944 at the camp between Cirencester and Cricklade, Tom's brigade was inspected first by King George VI and then by Field Marshall Montgomery, prior to Operation Overload taking place on 6th June 1944. Tom, along with 19 other paratroopers, jumped from a Dakota (over 3,000 aircraft were involved in the whole mission), which took off from South Cerney airfield around midnight on D-Day. He landed out of his designated drop onto the roof of a Normandy cottage. The land-borne invasion commenced six hours later. Over Christmas 1944, his unit was unexpectedly moved to counter the German offensive in the Ardennes, where Tom was slightly wounded, before the Germans surrendered. After the war ended, Tom was posted to Palestine for two years to help maintain security there. His unit was then moved to Germany in February 1948, but in October Tom was pleased to be located back in Whitehall. In 1954 Tom married Dorothea (née Norman), and they had two children Patricia and David. After several other moves, in 1967 Tom was promoted and became CRE Malta and Libya. In all, Tom and his family spent three years in

Singapore, six in Germany, and three in Malta. In late 1970, Tom was posted to the Ministry of Defence and became involved as senior staff officer to the Army's Director of Public Relations in briefing the press regarding the difficulties the Army was facing in Northern Ireland, including internment and Bloody Sunday.

Following his diagnosis with angina, Tom retired firstly to Little Purlieu, and latterly to 'West Cove', Old Church Road, Colwall, Tom was busy in local affairs being involved with the Church of the Good Shepherd, Upper Colwall, secretary of the Ledbury Deanery Synod, secretary to the Malvern Branch of SSAFA and many other village matters. He founded the Colwall Parish newsletter, which became the monthly magazine 'The Colwall Clock', was a founder member of the Colwall PROBUS Club and a Life Member of the Colwall Village Society. As well as these duties, Tom was an assiduous collector of family records, which he stored in a large number of neatly kept files. He died peacefully on All Souls night on 3rd November 2016.

Our thoughts are with Dorothea and the family.

Colwall Archives by *Mary Clayburn*

The Colwall Village Society is the custodian of books, papers, photographs and documents relating to village life. The collection is housed in Colwall library and is available for research by appointment. The material has been donated or lent by numerous members of the community and is now being processed and put on a database. Susan Bond, the co-ordinator, would welcome relevant items to add to the collection – contact her c/o Colwall Library or use 'Contact Us' on the website colwallvillagesociety.org.uk

I have been involved in recording newly donated items but find it hard not to start reading the fascinating records. One acquisition is a Register of Colwall Lending Library from June 1901 to November 1913. This records the names of the borrower and who actually came and took the books out –not necessarily the same person. This led me to another document 'The Story of Colwall Library'. The library was the first public library in Herefordshire. The original library was built on land belonging to the Ballard Trustees and the builder was Fred Ballard who was also the chairman of the Parish Council. The building was heated by gas from the Colwall Gas Company. A terracotta plaque, designed by Ada Ballard was fired in the Ballard brickworks and adorned the building.

Local residents provided books, mainly the classics. In addition newspapers and periodicals were available and the library was also open in the evening. A penny rate was levied on the parish. However thirty years later there was debate about the future of the library and community provision. Mrs Isabella Wilson had given the Walwyn Meadow as a memorial for WW2 and plans were drawn up to build a new Community Centre. The Walwyn Education Foundation became involved. This foundation has its roots in an Elizabethan charity founded by Humphrey Walwyn, who left £600 to fund a free school in Colwall. The complicated story continued including matters going to the House of Lords. It was finally agreed that the Walwyn Education Foundation would take over the clock tower meadow and build a new library and look after the field. This was the beginning of a new ongoing saga involving various bodies. Read this fascinating account in the archives.

Mary Clayburn

If you attended the History Fair at the Village Hall in June this year, you may recall that Victoria County History Society are currently conducting a study in Colwall and Coddington with a view to publishing their findings in a booklet. This booklet, along with similar parish histories for Cradley, Mathon and Donnington will be combined with existing booklets for Eastnor and Ledbury to make Herefordshire's first 'Red Book'. The publishing of 'Red Books' is the ultimate aim of the many Victoria County History groups around the country. Given here is an update of their progress in Colwall - published in Volume 21, Spring 2016.

Colwall Census: times of change by *Emma Mawby*

This article will focus on what has been happening on the analysis of census returns in Colwall across 1851 to 1901, key findings so far and some thoughts about work needed in the future.

To date, Amanda Simons and I have been working on transcribing the census entries for 1851, 1861 and 1901 to use as a source to track how people's occupations changed over time. For 1861 and 1901 we have adopted a traditional approach of entering every single piece of information. This has involved some interesting challenges

interpreting handwriting, spelling and ink blots. For 1851 we are now seeking to develop a quicker route, matching and checking individuals and households against computer-generated coded data from the University of Essex Data Archive.

When coding occupations we began by using the nine standard Occupation Clusters, suggested by Adam Chapman, the national VCH Coordinator. These are 'Agriculture and Fishing', 'Mining', 'Building', 'Manufacturing', 'Transport', 'Dealing (Retail and Wholesale)', 'Industrial Services (Labourers and Clerks)', 'Domestic Service' and 'Public Service and Professionals'. We found this covered only around half the census entries for Colwall. At this point we decided to add three additional codes - these are now known as 'Scholars', 'Family No Occupation' (for family members of a Head of Household who have no occupation listed) and 'None' (where the individual has neither a family link in the household nor a listed occupation). This now covers all Colwall entries. Finally, because we knew that Colwall in 1861 had involvement in glove making and in the construction of the railway and tunnel we also checked across all clusters for these themes. For 1901 we kept both of these but added three more: Mineral Water, Brewing and the Vinegar Works.

The conclusions for 1861 were surprising. Of the 1624 entries, the largest single segment, totalling 28.9% of the individuals (469 people) turned out to be 'Family No Occupation'. With the addition of Scholars, 14.7% (238 children), these two clusters alone made up 43.6% of the population, i.e. over four in every ten people in the census of Colwall 1861 were dependents of those working. The standard occupation clusters then showed the preponderance in Colwall at that time of jobs in agriculture, industrial services, domestic service and mining. These represented 12.3%, 10.5%, 9.1% and 9.1% of individuals respectively. Looking across all clusters, however, showed us just how important the railway and tunnel construction were. Railway workers were 16.4% (267 people) driven largely by the industrial services and mining sectors.

By combining the standard and Colwall-specific approaches we found that the three largest occupation clusters in 1861 were railway workers 16.4%, agriculture 12.3% and domestic service 9.1%. In total this was 37.8%, i.e. just over one in three people in Colwall in 1861. Glove making, which we had expected to feature more strongly came in at only 1.9% (19 people).



The 1901 return showed us a very different picture. The total population returned in this census was 1892, up by 268 (16.5%) over the fifty intervening years, but the number of people in named occupations had actually fallen. Meanwhile the proportion of dependents had risen. 'Family No Occupation' and 'Scholars' (made up of 133 children at school plus the ten 'Boarders' at the Camp End Residential School for Household Training) had grown to 52.9% of the population in 1901, i.e. now over five in every ten people in Colwall were dependents of those working.

The standard clusters then showed us that the focus of work in 1901 had also changed. Now the key elements were Domestic Service, Manufacturing, Agriculture, Industrial Services and Dealing (Retail and Wholesale). The railway, which drove work for 267 people in 1861 now provided work for just thirty-two. Glove Making which had

just nineteen people engaged in it in 1861 had now entirely vanished. Agricultural jobs had dropped from 200 to 95, Industrial Services from 171 to 92, and Mining from 148 to just 10. Domestic Service had, however, risen very significantly from 148 in 1861 up to 279. Finally, Manufacturing, while it had risen only very slightly to 114 it was structured very differently with Mineral Water, Brewing and the Vinegar Works now providing a total of 47 jobs.

There were new jobs in Colwall as well. By 1901 there were two telegraph messengers and a telephone operator, a gas works manager (living at Gas House) and gas fitters, two milkmen and a milk seller and, on the railway the station master, signalmen and porters had arrived once the line was open. None of these were listed in 1861. Finally, there were also new people in Colwall in 1901. For example, following the opera singer Jenny Lind's death in 1887, George Cadbury (of chocolate fame) was now in residence at Wynd's Point.

And now to our next steps. On completion of the 1851 data we will conduct the same occupation analysis so that we can start to see the changes moving more gradually decade by decade. We then need to finalise the other two or three dates we will study and use them to fill in the final chapters of the story. The more themes we can glean from the others working on the Colwall team, the more focused our work and investigation can be. So, any thoughts, please let us know. Your input really makes a difference.

Emma Mawby



Letter from the Chairman of the CVS to all members.

Moving into the 21st century

Dear Member,

The Society has decided to improve its method of communicating with you, to allow Newsletters and important notifications, to be sent direct by email. Already an increasing number of members have opted for emails to be used thus saving us time and money.

If you are not on our current email list, I would urge you to consider allowing us to use your email address in future which will ensure you are kept up to date. If you agree, please send your email address to our Membership Secretary: Mary Clayburn [REDACTED]

Thank you for your cooperation.

Kind regards,

Michael

PS The Society warrants that access to member's emails will be strictly limited to allow it to send Newsletters and important notifications to members



Happy New Year!

Future Talks

23rd January 2017

Peter Sutton - 'William Langland; Poet of the Malvern Hills'

24th April 2017 [AGM]

Penny Platt – 'The History of Cider'

From the Editor

You are encouraged to receive your newsletters by electronic means (see above), please register by contacting the email address [REDACTED]

Corrections and additions to the information in newsletters are always welcome, as are **CONTRIBUTIONS!**

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or hardcopy c/o Colwall Library

