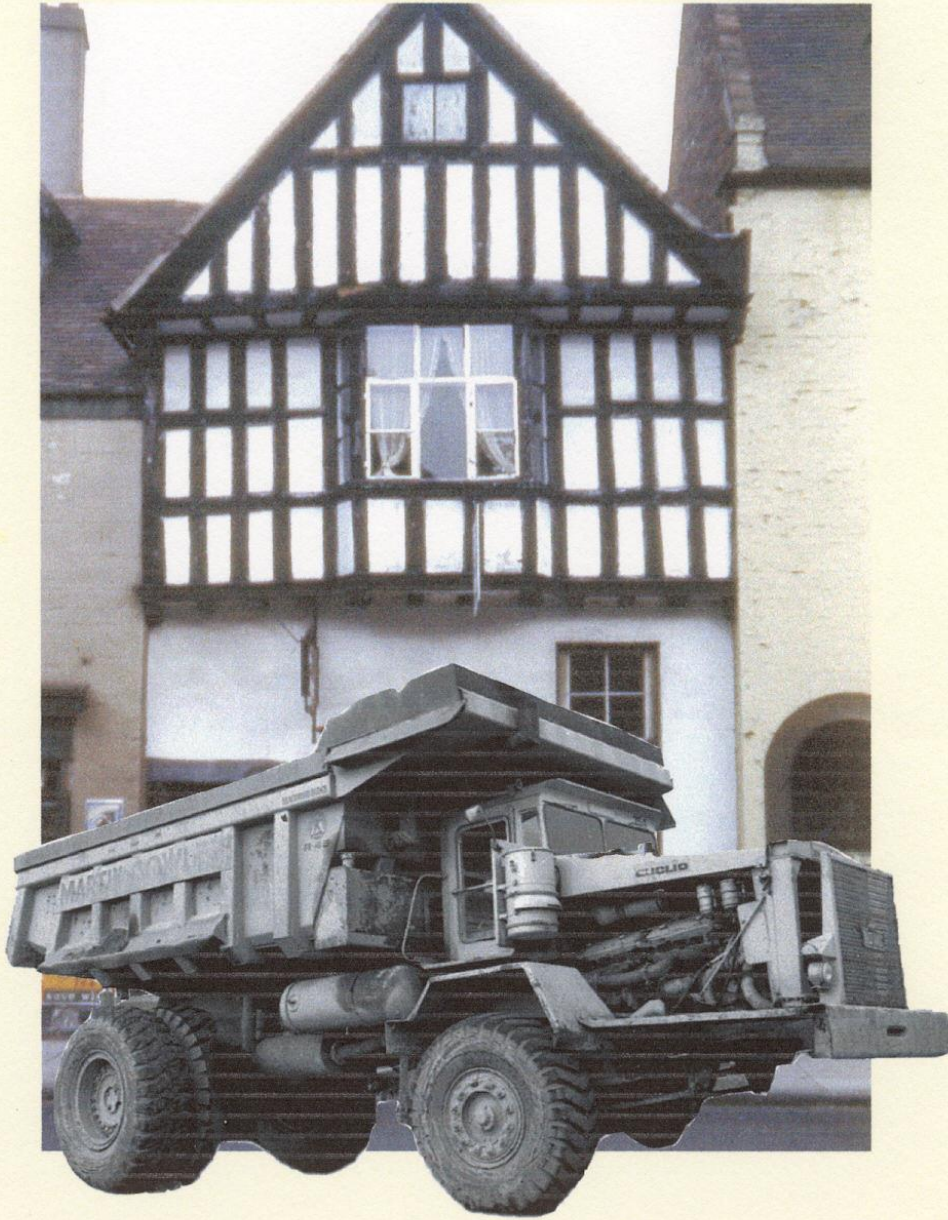


Doddo Defiled!

The Controversial History of the Re-development
of Tewkesbury's Upper High Street



by
John Dixon & Toby Clempson



Publication Number 2

with over 100 photographs
4 pages in colour!

2017 Editorial

In 2017 *the Kremlin* still has not been bulldozed! However, I was horrified to undertake a survey of the businesses it housed and found that most had changed in the past 14 years.

It was time, therefore, to update '***Doddo Defiled!***'

However, it was also an opportunity to create a new version in a smaller and more accessible format.

So for Christmas 2017 I have made ***Volume 5 of Then and Now*** a bumper edition that updates the photographs for a new generation. It also allows me to correct errors - especially in the former buildings 88-91 High Street. I am once again grateful for the advice of Mrs. Jean McNiven and her brother Ed Jones, both descendants of the famous "Nellie".

In using this shortened format, I felt I was depriving people of the superb planning history written by ***Toby Clempson*** which formed part I of the original book - and also serious students who value detailed endnotes for further research.

The decision was to make the original '***Doddo***' available at a nominal price on a disk in PDF format - if disks are now too old technology, email johnhistory46@btinternet.com and I will find a modern way of sending the file.

Do read ***Doddo Mark I*** in conjunction with the ***Then and Now V*** version as I have made sure that it is as accurate as possible!

I hope you enjoy both versions!

2003 Acknowledgements

- Members of the Tewkesbury Historical Society: **Bill Camp** for his technical advice and **Bill Rennison** for proof reading. We are grateful to the Society for its initial financial support. Any surplus will remain with the Society.
- Cited owners of the photographs for permission to use them in this non-profit making venture. In particular, we are deeply grateful to the **Ministry of Defence (MOD)**, **Messrs Aerofilms**, the **Ordnance Survey (OS)**, by whose kind permission the plans at Figures 2, 28, 29 and 61 are reproduced from the 1885 Ordnance Survey map, **Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC)** and **English Heritage**, **NMR** whose permission to publish made this whole venture feasible. Additionally **Cliff Burd**, **Reg. Ross**, **County Library Service**, **Tewkesbury Borough Museum**, **Cynthia Brown**, **Bert and Norah White** of the **USA** for access to the ***Bigland Archive***. **Mrs. Linnell** for the deposit with the Society of the late **Bryan Linnell's** invaluable archive. **Mr. B. Reeve** for access to the ***Butwell Collection*** of Photographs and **Dave Postle** of ***Kidderminster Railway Museum***.

Notes

- The authors have decided to use endnotes rather than footnotes for the benefit of readers who wish to undertake further research.
- Because commercial enterprises may change rapidly please refer to the date of publication for maps and photographs.

First Published 2003

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'Doddo' Defiled!
Tewkesbury's Heritage desecrated by Progress



Figure 1: *Doddo Cafe* in 1951 (TBC)

In 1965 such was the anger, caused by the proposal to demolish the *Doddo Café*, that it inspired the birth of the *Civic Society* whose aim was to prevent any further desecration of Tewkesbury's historic heritage.

The *Doddo Café* was a Tudor-style building located at 90 High Street and was but one of fifteen properties and one street, destined to be demolished in order to make way for a shopping centre. This would signal the emergence of Tewkesbury into the modernity of motorways, consumerism - and progress.

It also galvanised Tewkesbury townsfolk to inaugurate another 'civil war', which was as keenly fought intellectually as that which made Tewkesbury famous in 1471. Those who wished to demolish the *Doddo* and its neighbours were dubbed the "*Progs*" whose leader was seen to be the dynamic Town Clerk, Ken Smale. Those who rose to its doughty defence were the "*Meds*", derisively nicknamed but proudly inspired by Tewkesbury's favourite local author, John Moore.

We now know, of course, that in the short-term victory was claimed by the "*Progs*" and the shopping centre was created. As a form of revenge, locals - who no doubt nevertheless shop there - dub the area the '*Kremlin*' which is a historical insult to that beautiful medieval building of which the "*Meds*" would be proud: no doubt, the enemies had the Stalinist *Lubyanka* prison in mind?

In this book, Toby intends to explain the historical context in which this development took place, whilst my task is to reveal the displaced buildings and the people who inhabited them. This would not have been possible but for a chance meeting with Toby who wished to place photographs from the archives of the *Borough Council* in the public domain and, indeed, the public spirit of the *Ministry of Defence* in letting us publish these photographs for the common weal.

We shall be seeking to analyse how justified were the views of both sides in the long term when it is evident that, after thirty years, the mood has switched to that of "*Let's flatten the Kremlin*". It does seem clear, however, that the redevelopment did succeed in shifting the centre of gravity from the Cross to upper High Street which was undoubtedly run down - perhaps deliberately so. We shall, however, seek to ask whether the "*Meds*" won in the long term by the now accepted insistence that architects can - and must - design buildings which, not only serve the needs of the community, but also do not desecrate the heritage as '*Doddo*' was defiled a generation ago.

Preface

Part I

Note on the status of the pre-1974 Tewkesbury Borough Council

Whilst reading this account it is important to bear in mind that, apart from the last part of the narrative bringing the story up to date and the acknowledgements, all references to Tewkesbury Borough Council refer to the pre -1974 Tewkesbury Borough Council which was, until then, the local authority for Tewkesbury Parish.

Following the 1974 local government re-organisation, the present Tewkesbury Borough Council was formed assuming local authority control over the old Borough, as well as for the whole of the old Cheltenham Rural District and a substantial part of the old Gloucester Rural District, a total of 50 parishes.

Part II

The re-development very cleverly realigned the new buildings and streets so that they are situated at right angles to the *High Street* and *Oldbury Road*. Readers are, therefore, advised to keep referring to the **map on page 6**.

Also confusing is that *Sun Street* was moved north to its present position containing the *Library* and the *Roses Theatre*. However, we have learned during our researches that gradually *Sun Street* was renamed *Station Street* and certainly by the 1920s name plates testified to this change of use. The irony is that the Station on High Street, just to the south of this street, was no longer used and the new station was located from 1864 in modern *Station Road* near *Safeways' Store*.

To make research still more difficult, a re-numbering of the streets was ordered in March 1871 and this took effect by the 1881 census. Today the modern shops do not display numbers so they will only be referred to by name; this in itself is dangerous in the long term as businesses come and go as is the case with the café on *Bishops Walk* which is being redeveloped as we write.

Referring as always to the Map on page 6, the numberings is as follows:

Pre - 1871	1871 - 1960	2003
87	79 <i>Hereford House</i>	79 <i>Hereford House</i>
88-89	80-81	Library
90-91	82-3	Sun St.
92-93	84-87	<i>Boots</i>
96-7	88-89	<i>Bishops Walk</i>
98	90 <i>Doddo Café</i>	Café (renovated but unoccupied, 10/11/2003)
99-100	91-92	<i>Winerack</i>
Sun St.	Sun St. / Station St.	<i>Housewives Choice & Nutrition Centre</i>
101	101 <i>Car Mart</i>	<i>Post Office</i>
102	102 Old Station	<i>Co-op Travel and Toyzone</i>
103	103	<i>Tewkesbury Cookshop</i>

In the text, we have used the numbers from 1871-1960.

The teacher within the author regrets that customary usage dictates that apostrophes will not be used in the names of alleys: e.g. *Bishops Alley*. This is, however, historically incorrect as the alleys were said to be "owned" by the "front house" proprietor; *Bishop* was a butcher. If the owner changed so would the name of the Alley. Thus *Double Alley* is also known as *Castle* or *Harris Alley*; or latterly *Oldbury Walk*¹. When the town was laid out, the front houses occupied one *burgage plot* measuring 48 feet by 260 feet. *Hereford House* (79 High St.) occupies one burgage plot - the rest were later subdivided².

Map showing the High Street Before and After Redevelopment

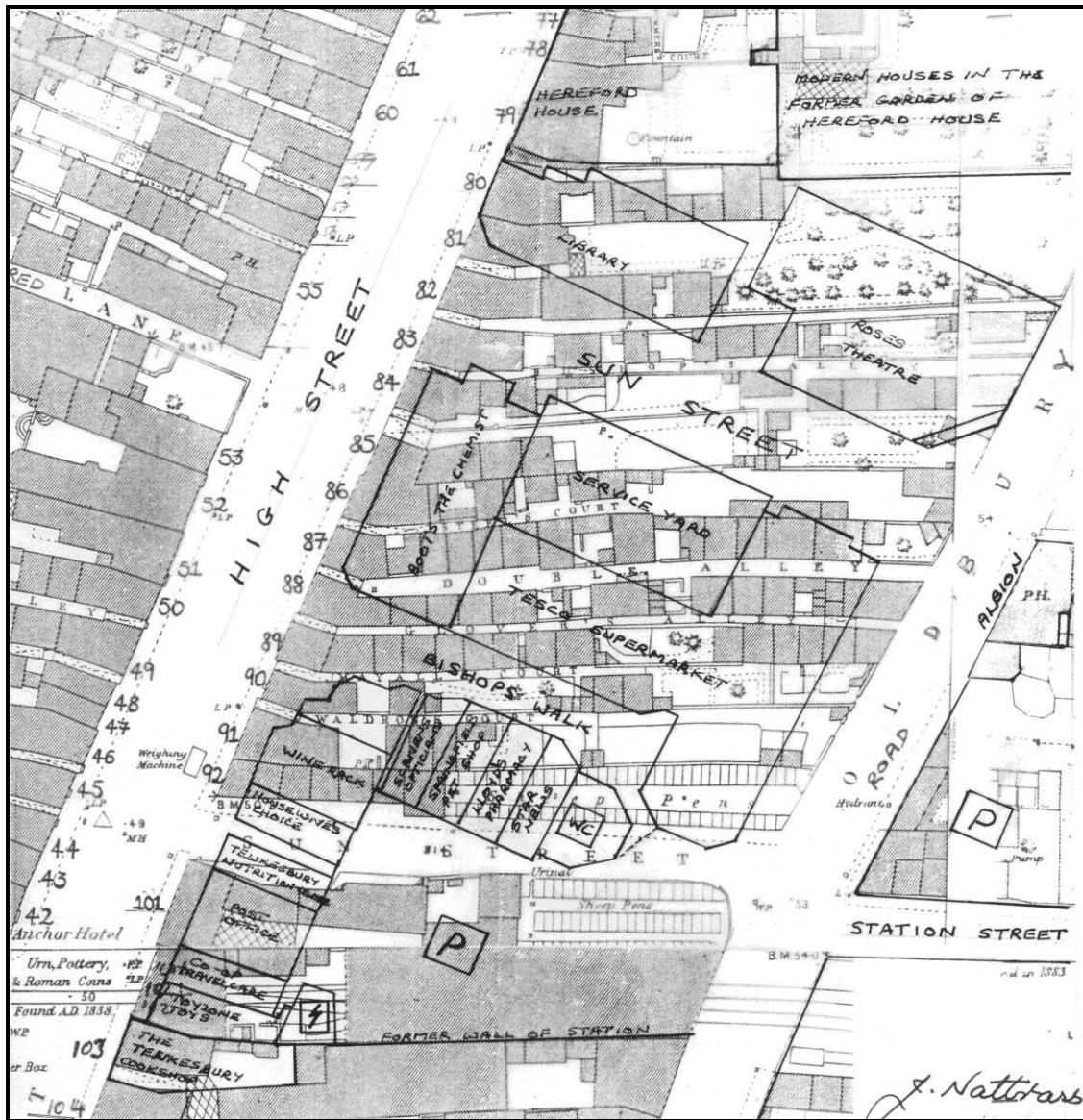


Figure 2: Map of the Redevelopment by Jan Nattrass in May 2003,
using a base of the 1885 Map, scale 1:500
(Reproduced with the kind permission of the Ordnance Survey)

Part I The Reasons for Redevelopment



Figure 3 Before Re-Development in 1964 (TBC)



Figure 4 After Redevelopment in 2003 (Clemson)



Figure 5: *Bishops Walk* soon after completion in March 1973. (TBC)

Visitors to the historic town of Tewkesbury in the early 21st century may wonder at how the rather brash 1970s shopping development opposite the Tudor House Hotel in the High Street came to be built, and might also wonder what it had replaced. The answers to these questions are well worth exploring as they cast a light on that moment in our history when the desire to modernise things became tempered by the popular wish to conserve more of what was valued from the past, a situation which we mainly take for granted today.

The narrative could be said to begin with the arrival of the railway in 1839, that is to say the arrival of the main line two miles away in Ashchurch, by-passing the town whilst depriving it of its commercial importance as a river port and coaching centre. This condemned the town to a hundred years of economic twilight relieved only by the fortunate presence of light industry in the town which provided it with a lifeline.

The stagnation of the town's economy proceeded over a long period of time, despite investment in the 1920s, the decline of the Town's agricultural market reduced the economic status of the town further still, especially after the Second World War. One of the main reasons why Tewkesbury had more shops than might have been expected for a town with a population of 5,000 was the importance of its agricultural market, bringing trade in from a wide area of surrounding country. This closed during the early 1960s just as the era of the supermarket was beginning in the UK. Supermarket shopping being geared towards people with cars and having originated in the USA, it also represented modernisation and plenty, things which were then in demand in an England to which rationing and wartime austerity were a relatively recent (and unpleasant) memory.

The scene is set: *Tewkesbury Triumphant?*

After the 1939-45 war, Tewkesbury Corporation commissioned the town planning practice, *Gordon Payne and Partners*, to produce a survey and plan for the future development of Tewkesbury. This was published in February 1947 under the title 'Tewkesbury Triumphant'. This act clearly demonstrates that the Town's governing body, having already embarked upon a successful programme of slum clearance and council house construction between the wars, recognised that to accept continuing gentle economic decline, was not an option for the Town.

The report provides a detailed portrait of the town's condition in 1946. In giving a context for the present study it is interesting to note that the introduction states that:

"The ancient Borough has had a chequered career, its prosperity rising and falling during the past century. History has left a remarkable legacy of historic and artistic interest; it has also left a legacy of ruinous and dilapidated buildings which are a serious handicap to those now living in the town. Is it possible to remove the latter while preserving the former?"

*This report endeavours to show how this can be done; so that over its obstacles to progress Tewkesbury may rise triumphant. The plan is a long term one; but this fact should not deter the Corporation from starting on this plan immediately it is approved. Enormous values lie hidden beneath the dilapidated and ruinous buildings. These values lie dormant, waiting to be realized by a bold and energetic policy of town reconstruction."*³

He notes that the three main streets remain relatively unchanged but that, in some cases, restoration had been overdone and that:

"...there is an unfortunate superfluity of "Ye Olde" about the Town. But only three buildings in the main street are really damaging in the architectural sense - the hard red-pressed brick Grammar School so typical of its age opposite the Abbey; the regrettable Sabrina Cinema, which has at least the decency to stand back a little from the street front, and the arch offender - Woolworths Store".



Figure 6: *Sabrina Cinema* 1957, 81 & 82 High St. built c.1936. (MOD)



Figure 7: *Woolworths store* 1957, 3 and 4 High St. built c.1933. (MOD)

The heritage value of the town was very explicitly emphasised as well:

"The whole mixture of half timber, much of which still remains hidden behind its plaster covering, mellowed Georgian brick and lovely old hipped tiled roofs, forms a composite picture few old towns in England can rival. It is rich in heritage, most worthy of preservation and in the days to come when the tourist traffic receives the impetus and encouragement it deserves in this country, Tewkesbury may well prove to be as much of a national asset to the country as Rothenburg,....has been to Germany⁴."



Figure 8: The Doddo Café 1951 (TBC)

This remarkable report goes on to enumerate and briefly describe the historic buildings considered to be worthy of preservation: these include no. 90 High Street, the *Doddo Café*.

The chapter on housing includes some discussion as to the factors influencing redevelopment or preservation of derelict historic properties. It notes that there are properties with a "nil life assessment" that, for historic reasons, should be restored, although there was said to be a difference of opinion over this issue. However, it was also indicated that: "...the present government⁵ had stated that it is not their intention to recondition slums whether in Town or Country". Many of the alleyway properties were said no longer to be in residential use, and that a lot of them were derelict, accordingly they had been given 'Category I' status: "nil life" (fit only for demolition), whilst property of a similar condition

on the main street frontages was placed in 'Category III: "worthy of reconditioning"'.

To give an indication of the scale of the problem, the survey carried out showed that according to the provisions of the slum clearance acts, 34% of the houses in the town had a "nil life" assessment and should be replaced immediately, whilst a further 14.4% of the housing stock was only considered to have a life of ten years.

The retailing section paints a general picture of Tewkesbury having too many shops, which are too extended along the main streets. Many of them were dilapidated and they nearly all lacked an adequate service approach from the rear. Although the situation is much improved in 2003, there are still properties in the town which have such problems - and there are still, arguably, too many shop units in Tewkesbury. The evidence is the consistent presence of about twenty to thirty vacant shops at any one time over, at least, the last 50 years. Moreover, the actual vacant units are constantly changing. It was noted by Mr Payne that "chain taste" could be good or bad but that in the end it could make Tewkesbury "look like Tooting".

The report ends with the plan for 'Tewkesbury Triumphant'. This was based upon conservation principles in some (but not all) ways remarkably similar to those used today. Thirteen buildings were identified for specific preservation, (mainly the principal timber buildings but also the *Abbey Mill*). Furthermore, "rigid control should be exercised in all

alterations to and reconstruction of buildings fronting the main streets". Large plate glass windows, gaudy fascia boards and glazed tile dados were to be banned, whilst the reinstatement of Georgian windows with correctly sized glazing bars was to be encouraged where these had been lost.



Figure 9: Lost Georgian glazing bars. (MOD)



Figure 10: Surviving Georgian glazing bars. (MOD)

The mediaeval Abbey Cottages to the north of the Abbey were to be demolished to open it up to Church Street, and it was proposed that: *"The glaring white of the Sabrina Cinema should be recoloured brick-red in the interests of the character of the Town".* As for the new development, it was proposed that this should: *"...be constructed of harmonious materials in sympathy with existing traditions but should not necessarily imitate past styles".* Incidental to this study is the report's recommendation that the site of the old railway station in the High Street⁶ should be converted into a bus station to replace the *Crescent*, which was too far from the shops and proposed community focus in *Spring Gardens*.

Retail proposals were restrained, perhaps by the unusual trading conditions existing in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War: with no end in sight to food rationing that lasted into the 1950s. Apart from noting that there were too many shops, the only land use proposals were that the shopping area should be clearly defined and that antique and postcard shops should be concentrated near the Abbey. The remaining proposal was concerned with controlling the appearance of retail units from an *'anti-chain store'*, and *'pro-conservation'* point of view.

Whilst the construction of Council Housing proceeded, it is clear from the *Air Ministry* photographs of Tewkesbury dating from 1957-58, that very little had changed in the three main streets since 1946 in terms of retail development. There were still many dilapidated buildings, with a high proportion of small shop units amongst these quite a few of which were evidently vacant. It is true that there was a scattering of chain stores down the High Street towards the Cross, there were not many.

There were very few modern buildings to be seen in the main streets at all. This is, of course, one of the key elements of Tewkesbury's charm and character for which it was, and is, rightly famous.

The 20th. Century buildings in the High Street were Lloyds Bank (20 High St) of 1921, Woolworth's, (the building now housing W. H. Smith's at 3-4 High Street), dating from the 1930s, and the rather earlier Co-op building at 114 High Street (since demolished), and none of these could be called modern in style. The sum total of 20th century development in Church Street and Barton Street amounted to the painting and decorating shop at 56 Barton Street (now a veterinary practice).

It was against this background that the plans for town expansion unfolded during the 1960s.



Figure 11: Lloyds Bank
20 High St. built 1921. (MOD)



Figure 12: Co-op retail store
114 High St built c.1910. (MOD)

Why was Tewkesbury redeveloped in the 1960s?

By the beginning of the 1960s, The Borough Council had become deeply concerned about the future viability of the Borough as an independent local authority and was determined to preserve its status. Whilst it was proud of its record of building new council houses, it came to a view that, in order to survive, it was essential for the town to grow substantially: otherwise the Borough was likely to be swallowed up in some future local government reorganisation. This, as history has shown, was quite an astute assessment of future prospects. What is much more difficult to judge is whether it would have survived the 1974 reorganisation had the old Borough Council prevailed and expanded the town.⁷

The Borough Council therefore evolved a plan to become an overspill town for Birmingham under the '*Town Development Act of 1952*'. Indeed, the Council had held preliminary discussions with the City and Corporation of Birmingham and agreed upon a proposal whereby the town's population would increase by 10,000 people over the next 10-15 years, with most of these coming from Birmingham. Industry would also come from the Midland City. The Borough Council received approval from the Minister for Housing and Local Government to proceed with negotiations subject to the agreement of Gloucestershire County Council.

The audacity of the Borough Council's proposal was remarkable for such a steady community: nothing less than a trebling of the town's population to 15,000 over 15 to 20 years. The prize for this dramatic course of action was that the town should retain its Borough status and gain much improved community facilities at the same time.

An extraordinary meeting of the Borough Council took place in November 1962 to consider the recommendations of its *Local Boundary Committee* into the expansion⁸. The local newspaper, the *Tewkesbury Register*⁹ included a detailed report of the meeting, at which the Town Clerk, Mr. Smale, explained what the expansion plans would involve. He also reported the informal discussions which had taken place with officers of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHLG), the City and County Borough of Birmingham and Gloucestershire County Council (GCC). The decision was conditional on the agreement of MHLG and GCC as well as "*satisfactory terms and conditions being negotiated between the two authorities, (that is, TBC and CCBB), to cover all aspects of the town expansion scheme*".¹⁰

An amendment, proposing a delay to the expansion plans pending further public consultation, was defeated on the basis that the importance of maintaining the Town's Borough status was not in dispute, i.e. that the Council had no choice but to attempt an expansion plan. The matter of the scale of expansion was said to be the only issue for debate. The view was also expressed that a case for expansion beyond the TBC boundary towards Ashchurch¹¹ might be made, where sites for light industry could also be found. It was hoped that County Council support might be forthcoming for such a move.

The matter of the town's character was also addressed, Alderman Knight, in speaking to propose the motion said that:

*"we shall be charged with a desire to destroy the character of the town. There need be no injury to the things which are rightly valued and no interference with the character of Tewkesbury. I cannot contemplate any appreciable change in the old town from the Abbey to the Black Bear, along one arm of the "Y" and to approximately Chance Street along the other."*²

He went on to justify the importance of keeping the Borough's status because "*local government loses its value and its meaning when it ceases to be local*".

The additional population were mainly to come from Birmingham. It was suggested that 10% of the additional housing could be '*affordable housing*' for local people, (in other words, council houses), in order to facilitate the integration of the new development areas into the community, because local people would be neighbours with the newly arrived Midlanders. The Mayor, L. G. Marston, was quoted by the Tewkesbury Register as saying

"that this was, perhaps, the most momentous decision taken by any council, during the long and not undistinguished life of local government in the Borough." "Not many towns have so rich a heritage as this ancient borough of Tewkesbury," he declared, "and in very few have historic and architectural characteristics been so admirably preserved." "The present Borough Council are not only concerned with improvement and expansion but also preservation, and in recent years the Council have acquired for the town several fine buildings of historic and architectural interest."

He believed that progress and preservation could march together. The proposals would bring greater resources and new vitality to the town.

It is clear from this that the Borough Council did, in fact, have the protection of the town's heritage firmly in mind when the decision was made to pursue the expansion plan. The *Tewkesbury Register* commented supportively in its editorial that greater rates revenue would allow better facilities - a real swimming pool, riverside improvement and a public reading room. Moreover, light industry would check the migration of young people from the town. Interestingly, it also mentioned the '*urban design approach*' that it believed should be applied to the new development:

"Good planning should counteract the worst possibilities associated with the idea of expansion. The new dwellings should be in harmony with a modern country town - no brick boxes or terraces. The planners should have in their minds a general picture of boulevards and groves, recreation grounds, and small intimate public gardens. The Tewkesbury of a past age, with its half timbered buildings should be lovingly preserved."

The Borough's foresight and vision was applauded and, also indicated, was its forthcoming connection with the M5 Motorway¹².

It is essential in looking at the re-developments which occurred in Tewkesbury during the 1960s and early 1970s to have this context in mind. Several of the key developments, including *Bishops Walk*, represent the Borough Council's determined efforts to realise their vision despite the frustration of their town expansion plans by Gloucestershire County Council which had its own ideas for the future development of the town as the statutory planning authority for the whole County and which, after careful consideration, had vetoed the Borough's expansion plan for reasons of conserving the character of the town and lack of development capacity because of flooding, effectively putting a stop to it.

Meanwhile, as it continued to argue for its expansion plans, the Borough Council persevered with the task of providing appropriate civic and retail facilities for a town of 15,000 people. The amount of development actually achieved is impressive - or unfortunate - depending on one's view of the results. The *Roses Theatre*, the camping and caravan park at *Perryhill Gardens*, the swimming baths at *Spring Gardens* (now *Cascades*), *Rails Meadow*

car park and the *Bishops Walk* shopping development all arose directly out of this vision. It is fair to say that the town still benefits from these facilities, although it may be wished that some of it had been designed differently. One wonders how many towns of Tewkesbury's size could build a theatre of the scale and quality of *The Roses* today.

The Borough Council regarded modern shopping premises as an important part of its plan, involving the provision of shops of a much greater floor space than would fit into the existing historic buildings, most of which have a relatively shallow plan and many of which contain massive chimney stacks filling part of the available floor space. By the late 1950s, the supermarket had arrived in Britain, bearing in mind the proposed population increase there was a recognition locally that, particularly the expected in-migrants being used to the facilities of a city, would look elsewhere for their shopping facilities unless something was done to provide more modern retailing accommodation in Tewkesbury.

The 1958 pictures suggest that they opted for the part of the High Street with the lowest retail value; in crude terms, the part furthest from *Smith's*, *Boots* and *Woolworth's*. The area chosen was on the east side of the High Street because that was where there was most industrial dereliction interspersed with slum housing already identified for clearance.

The area known as the Oldbury, to the east of the High Street, was the last land to be enclosed locally in 1811, development took place rapidly due to the long standing shortage of development land in the town, many rows of small cottages were built, but also industrial and subsequently railway buildings. This was also the location of the agricultural markets with auction offices and areas of animal pens. The character of Oldbury Road was still mainly commercial and industrial when these events were taking place. However, many of the industrial uses were in old buildings. As these were not ideal for modern manufacturing purposes, there was a migration out to the new industrial estates being developed in Newtown and Ashchurch. One of the buildings on the Oldbury Road side of the Bishops Walk site was occupied by *The Tewkesbury Engineering Co.*



Figure 13: Tewkesbury Engineering Company, Oldbury Rd., 1949 (TBC)



Figure 14: the shop front installed in 91 High St. c.1952 (TBC)

Not all of the buildings in the area we are considering were disused or in poor condition. As late as 1952 a large double shop window was installed at 91 High Street, where none had existed before, and at least some of the other buildings along the demolished frontage were still trading in 1958. Some of these buildings were also in a good

state of repair, such as Nos. 83 and 84 which had been built about 70 years previously and were sound brick-built houses, but if a comprehensive area were to be redeveloped then it was considered at the time that they all had to go.

It must be remembered that this was an era when comprehensive redevelopment in town centres was sweeping the country - and very few towns escaped completely. In Tewkesbury's case, a London based company called "*Tewkesbury Developments*" collaborated with the Borough Council to acquire the necessary property from the *Sabrina Cinema*, derelict since it had closed in 1963, down to the forgotten old railway station site between 101 and 103 High Street. By the end of 1965 most of the buildings on this considerable site would have been demolished.



Figure 15: Bishops Walk site c.1965, only the Sabrina and numbers 83 and 84 High St survive. (TBC)



Figure 16: Demolition contractor's earth mover at Bishops Walk c 1965. (TBC)

The Struggle Develops: 4 March 1965 to 9 April 1965

On 4 March 1965 the Borough Council's efforts to revitalise the town were presented to the Chamber of Commerce by the Town Clerk, Mr. Smale. The speech was reported on the front page of the *Tewkesbury Register* under the headline "*The Borough Must Grow or Die*". In a speech, he set out the range of plans that had emerged since the initial bid for expansion status. Opponents of progress were criticized since Tewkesbury currently had more houses under construction than had been built between the two wars. In a notable 'sound-bite', he said that the town must make a clear choice between the "*progressives*" and the "*mediaevalists*" (he referred to anonymous correspondents in the local press expressing anti-progress views.) He quoted population figures to illustrate the town's comparative degree of stagnation, comparing the 1801 and 1921 census figures.

	1801	1921	% growth
Gloucester	7,579	55,886	637%
Cheltenham	3,076	50,168	1530%
Stroud	5,422	13,253	144%
Cirencester	4,130	8,130	97%
Tewkesbury	4,199	4,546	8%

Tewkesbury had slipped from being the third largest in 1801 to the fifth largest by 1921 and had hardly grown at all whilst great changes had taken place elsewhere. He had drawn attention to the situation 40 years ago because that was the golden age according to his opponents in the press. Mr. Smale countered that *"The three main streets might have looked picturesque, if one could have seen them clearly through the crowds of unemployed lounging aimlessly around. People were living in terrible conditions in the filthy alleys and courts. Tuberculosis was rife and child mortality high."* He also contrasted these 1920s slum dwellers with the prosperous craftsmen in 1965.

The key announcement was that the *High Street-Oldbury Road* redevelopment was ready to proceed to detailed design state including shopping, residential and office uses, a new cinema and conversion of the old *Sabrina Cinema* into a heated indoor swimming pool. The site was to be demolished pending drawing up of the plans. Car parking was a major part of the plan with an extension for the *Spring Gardens* car park through to *Chance Street* and a new car park at *Rails Meadow*. *Gander Lane* would be widened and the *Abbey Lawns Trust* would also provide a new car park there. A total of 400 cars would then be able to be accommodated close to the centre of the town. A *Riverside Walk* was to be completed, all property now having been acquired, there would also be a new sports and recreational centre of some 30 acres and the Fire Station (in the *Abbey Barn* in *Mill Street*) was to be converted into an arts and crafts centre. The museum was to be extended, the



Figure 17: Tewkesbury Town Clerk Mr. Smale in 1965. (TBC)

Watson Hall improved and also an industrial estate was to be provided. These proposals for development coincided with the transfer into the Borough of Mitton on 1 April 1965 where development was still going on. The Borough Council felt that Tewkesbury had a great part to play in the future and growth of the County, especially with the coming of the M5 Motorway in the late 1960s. The Borough had a period of three to five years *"... to make Tewkesbury a most attractive town in which to live - irresistible to the tourist, and a regional centre for leisure activities."* The importance of the traders participating in *"Britain in Bloom"* and the Christmas tree scheme was emphasized.

The *Tewkesbury Register's* editorial of 12 March 1965 warmly endorsed Mr. Smale's presentation emphasizing the vital importance of going forward in order to avoid *"the danger of Tewkesbury becoming merely a rustic backwater"*. It said that between 1830 and 1939 Tewkesbury made no progress whatever and, whilst the admiration of visitors was comforting, their views were often qualified by remarking on Tewkesbury's amenities being *"a little primitive or somewhat backward"*. That period had passed, legislation now protects historic buildings and *"places of real architectural interest"* while *"zoning of shops and estates will prevent the mistakes made in some towns during the steam power age."* It was also remarked that the town was lucky in being a late developer because *"the supermarkets 'rarely invade' a town with fewer than 20,000 population."*

Just as this was being reported a letter to the Editor of the *Daily Telegraph* brought Tewkesbury into the national eye. Jenny Day had been a frequent visitor to Tewkesbury as a child, and she had now returned to England from New Zealand to work and on re-visiting the town was dismayed to find that: *"what used to be a beautiful town filled*

with historical interest is rapidly becoming a shabby wilderness of derelict buildings. No visitor can bear the thunder of continuous heavy traffic nor wish to gaze on once lovely buildings, now dirty and abandoned. Can nothing be done before it is too late to save Tewkesbury?" Interviewed subsequently for the *Tewkesbury Register*, she said she had been prompted to write after carrying out a survey of the alleyways in the town during the summer of 1964 when she began to notice the empty and derelict buildings and sites. She called for *"whatever plans there were for the redevelopment and improvement of the town to be made public by the authorities."*

The *Daily Telegraph* subsequently published an illustrated feature on redevelopment in Tewkesbury including a photograph of the demolition in progress in *Oldbury Road*. Local M.P., Nicholas Ridley, interviewed by the *Tewkesbury Register* said he understood that *"empty buildings in Tewkesbury...were being bought up and rendered derelict by a developer whose intention was, when they were pulled down, to build modern shops office blocks and supermarkets."* He went on to say that if this was the plan, the developer, the local council and the planning authority should state their intentions publicly. *"Some of the buildings are listed as of historical and architectural interest, and if they are to be pulled down we should be told. I am not against re-development, but I am against re-development by hole in the corner methods, it should be done in the open for all to see"*. He finished by saying he would advise the Minister of Housing to refuse permission for demolition.



Figure 18: Demolition of 80 High St.
(Tewkesbury Library).

The Town Clerk commented that he basically agreed with Miss Day's protest but that the situation was inevitable *"under the present set-up."* *This council has no control over these places of architectural and historic interest."* Commenting on Mr. Ridley's remarks, he said that it was *"...all very well for Mr. Ridley to say what he did. Is he going to open a fund for the restoration of these properties?"* The last government was criticized by Mr. Smale for not being prepared to assist with the preservation of these buildings through grant aid. The Borough Council had encouraged landlords to take up improvement grants but half of the landlords did not want them and no

applications for improvement grant had been refused. Two and a half years previously, the County Planners had been approached by the Borough Council for help with preparation of a re-development scheme for the *High Street* and *Oldbury Road* area of town. A scheme was drawn up on the lines suggested by the Planning Authority but when submitted it wasn't acceptable to them. Further discussions had taken place but the County Planning Officer had said that until the imminent study and survey of the town had been completed nothing further could be done. Mr. Smale added that the Borough Council had started to demolish property it owned in *Oldbury Road* but the developers were not prepared to demolish theirs in the *High Street* until it was agreed what planning uses would be permitted. A conspiracy of silence was denied *"we can't discuss in open council our negotiations with the developers until they have been finalised. The negotiations for the purchase of land and property were discussed in the council's meetings. ... We have not made anything public because there isn't anything to make public yet."* He blamed the County Planning Authority for not saying what its plans were for Tewkesbury. He did agree that there should be an overall plan for

Tewkesbury - there is too much piecemeal development but his council would like to know what the proposals are themselves.

A County Planning department spokesperson commented that "they could not in the very early stages publish plans for an area because experience had shown that speculators rushed in and bought up properties. When the plan was finished it would be 'put up for public view' but that this could certainly not be within the next few weeks".



Figure 19: From right to left, the rear of 88 to 91 High St c.1964. The low half timbered building is the back of the *Doddo Café*. (TBC)

Elsewhere in the *Tewkesbury Register* of 26 March 1965, members of the Borough Council welcomed the publicity brought by Miss Day's letter to the *Telegraph* drawing attention to the challenges facing the town, comment was also made that similar sights could be seen in any comparable town where efforts to clear out worn out old properties were being made. The *Register's* Editorial of that day summarised its vision of Tewkesbury as "a well appointed town", a hope that it had repeatedly advocated since 1953. "We envisaged certain central amenities, boulevards with flowering trees, a riverside promenade, and parks which could be made more attractive.....which could compare favourably with any tourist town in Europe that had a similar population and resources."

A balance of agriculture and industry was also part of the vision and expansion to strengthen the town's finances. It concluded by agreeing with Mr. Ridley that all the parties should state their intentions publicly.

In response to all this, local author and broadcaster, John Moore, expressed his views in a forthright letter to the *Tewkesbury Register* on 9 April 1965. This is interesting as an early expression of the conservation viewpoint. He agreed that much of Tewkesbury was shabby and in disrepair, but said that much that was beautiful had been vulgarized and despoiled in the process of haphazard commercialisation - citing in particular development at the Cross (the *Co-op* buildings then occupying 102 to 105 Church Street). He

characterised this as "*exploitation*" rather than "*development*". He also said that he had never opposed the development of the town and had "*repeatedly urged that a town so beautiful and so precious and so deeply involved in our history and tradition deserves to be developed with sensibility, intelligence and loving care.*" He continued to express the view that the Borough Council should have employed a top architect, such as Sir Basil Spence or Sir Hugh Casson, to create a town plan which would have provided a sound framework for the necessary development. In fact, the development had happened piecemeal with private gain being the only steady aim. "*Apart from some useful slum clearance, the changes which have happened to the townscape of Tewkesbury since the 1930s are for the most part utterly deplorable; and further destruction is now proposed.*" He lamented Trust House Forte's proposal to convert the ground floor of the *Swan Hotel* into shops and hoped that the County Planning Authority would prevent this with their position of professional disinterest, which he hoped would prevent Tewkesbury from "*becoming utterly debauched and prostituted*", as seemed likely a short time ago.

He suspected the "*parrot cry*" that the town must "*expand or perish*" meaning apparently that the town might lose some of its civic dignities and become a rural borough if it failed to reach approximately 15,000 within the next few years. He believed that civic pride should show itself in care for the beautiful town, letting it expand naturally rather than through overspill from Birmingham to which he strongly objected. He invited people to examine the town and decide for themselves to what extent the successive councils since the war have reason to be proud of their care of our beloved town. He outlined his own feelings in closing: "*I can't believe that under a rural borough we could possibly fare worse; and if the choice really lay between the destruction of Tewkesbury's loveliness through hasty, greedy and over-ambitious exploitation and the loss of a few ancient and trivial dignities. I am sure most of us would readily sacrifice any such trappings of authority rather than alter the essential character of the town. Much too often, councillors and officials are apt to forget that the town they serve and represent is more important than themselves.*"

On 23 April 1965 Tewkesbury hit the national press again in the *Daily Mail's* "*Newsight*" feature. Under a large headline of "*The Battle of the Meds and the Progs*", the feature outlined the position of the two factions with the "*Meds*" being: "*led by Tewkesbury's M.P. Nicholas Ridley, 36, and including such people as Gloucestershire novelist John Moore 57 and bookseller Phyllis Howells, keen to form a Tewkesbury society 'before we are swamped in supermarkets'. The progs are led by Mr. Smale and members of the Town (sic) Council...*" The article went on to outline both sides of the case as set out above. However, particularly interesting was the detail given about the development of the future *Bishops Walk* site in the *High Street*. Of the twelve old houses bought up for the scheme (eight of them listed) and for which a demolition order was said to have been secured, Mr. Smale is quoted as saying: "*There is no chance of their being saved because they are in such poor condition. Only number 90 (the Doddo Café) is of interest and that was tarted up between the wars*".

It was suggested that there was concern amongst people in the town about the new owners of these properties, *Tewkesbury Developments*¹³, "because they knew nothing about them". They first purchased 101 High Street in April 1963 and by the end of the year had acquired nine houses as well as the "gaunt *Sabrina Cinema*". They had since bought a further three houses. It is of considerable interest that the feature goes on to give some details about the development company. It was a subsidiary of *Casabell Properties* of 51 Grosvenor Street, London W1 which held 95% of the shares in *Tewkesbury Developments*, the other five shares being held by the five directors of the company: a solicitor who was also director of 36 other companies and his brother, a chartered accountant, who was director of 33 other companies, both of 51 Grosvenor street London W1. The other three were two farmers from the Alcester area and a solicitor from Sutton Coldfield.

The directors were quoted as saying that they owned other historic property in the town which they intended to preserve, and that the High Street houses could have been saved had only something been done 30 years ago.



Figure 20: The Sabrina Cinema, derelict and vandalised c1965.
(Tewkesbury Library).



Figure 21: The cottages by the Abbey in Church St. in the early 1960's before restoration. (Butwell)

The article also outlined the position regarding the 15 mediaeval cottages in *Church Street* owned by the *Abbey Lawn Trust* which is said to have bought them "to prevent them from falling into the hands of speculators who might spoil the precincts of the Abbey". The *Borough Council* and the *Abbey Lawn Trust* wanted to demolish the properties partly because their front doors were five feet from the A38 trunk road, the

traffic from which continually covered them in filth and, partly, to improve the view of the Abbey from the town. The attitude is said to have been one of "there are many mediaeval cottages in Britain but there is only one Tewkesbury Abbey". They were opposed in their intentions by the *Gloucestershire County Planners* and the *Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings* who were putting together a plan to secure the restoration of the cottages, a number of which had fallen into disrepair or had become disused. Nicholas Ridley is also quoted as having pointed out the dangers to our historic town centres from large scale redevelopment plans. Indeed, he pressed the Housing Minister of the day,

Richard Crossman M.P., to merge the Ministries of Housing and Works to integrate into one system the responsibility for safeguarding old buildings. He believed that the fate of old buildings should not be in the hands of local town councils, too often swayed by financial interest and a desire to raise rateable values. John Moore is also quoted as saying that "*Tewkesbury's High Street, once famous for its individual character is already beginning to look like any second rate suburban shopping centre*".

The article went on to explain that following the failed overspill bid *Tewkesbury Borough Council* had engaged consultants *Drivas Jonas and Co.* to prepare a "*Study for Expansion*". The *County Planning Committee* were said not to have favoured this because of the flooding which meant that the hoped for capacity of 20,000 simply couldn't be delivered. '*Newsight*' revealed that the confidential *Drivas Jonas* report called for three new residential areas between the new motorway and the town. 180 acres of land was to be flooded to provide a large boating lake west of *Walton Cardiff* and new industrial estates were to be provided at *Ashchurch*.

The "*Progs*" were said to blame the County Planners for much of the delay over the town's development. Norman Collins, the County Planning Officer of the day, indicated that a review of the statutory plan (the '*Tewkesbury Town Map of 1963*') was under way and that it may be revealed in the spring of 1966. The writer sums up by observing that "*The planners are certainly against putting new wines into old bottles and obviously feel it unwise to let the local council have its head*".

Listed Building and Conservation Area Protection.

One question which springs to mind in relation to this story is that of how it was possible to secure permission to demolish important historic buildings in order to carry out new building in this way. The short answer to this question is that when the demolitions took place there was no effective legal protection for any but the most important of ancient buildings which had been scheduled as '*Ancient Monuments*'.

In 1962, when *Tewkesbury Borough Council* was launching its bid for overspill status, the legal concept of the '*Conservation Area*' as we know it was still unknown. It was not until 1964 that the idea of a building being of special architectural or historic interest by virtue of its presence as part of a larger group of such buildings arose in a planning court case. On that occasion, the Court of Appeal concluded that "*a more general power was needed to protect matters of group value*".

In 1965 the famous *Council for British Archaeology's* '*Historic Towns Policy*' document was published: 324 towns were named as being of particular importance each with their particular characteristics of note enumerated. The *C.B.A.* considered that the towns in this list should have a comprehensive survey of their historic environment prepared as part of their *Development Plan* process¹⁴. This, it was intended, should be used to inform the conservation of features of importance as part of the plan's implementation.

51 of the towns on the list were considered of such importance that in the *C.B.A.'s* view, the *Minister for Housing and Local Government* should take direct control of the development control process within them rather than allow local planning authorities to perform this role as was usual. *Tewkesbury* was, of course, one of these 51.

What actually happened was that a private members' bill sponsored by Duncan Sandys M.P. (then the President of the *Civic Trust*), was passed with Government support giving rise to 'Conservation Areas'. Four pilot reports were prepared in 1966 for Bath, Chester, Chichester and York into how the historic environment could be conserved and further destruction prevented. The Bill led to the 'Civic Amenities Act' of 1967 which required *Local Planning Authorities* to "determine which parts of their areas ...are of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is considered to be desirable to preserve or enhance" and to designate such areas as 'Conservation Areas'. The historic character then became a consideration in the determination of planning applications in those areas. No new powers came with the Act, and neither did the Minister assume responsibility for development control within the 51 towns.

The loss of important historic buildings was still causing concern in the government and as a result 'Listed Building Consent' was introduced in 1968 in order to strengthen protection for *Listed Buildings*. Meanwhile, nothing further was done for *Conservation Areas*. Further public concern was expressed, and this was recognised by the Government's *Preservation Policy Group*, whose role was to consider the published outcome of the 'Four Towns' reports¹⁵. Not until 1972 was legislation introduced to provide some funding to assist with the conservation of outstanding Conservation Areas, (a distinction which no longer exists). Finally, in 1974, 'Conservation Area Consent' was introduced to control demolition of unlisted historic buildings within *Conservation Areas*.

The experience in Tewkesbury had been replicated in many towns and cities across the Country. Indeed, if it had not been for the commercial drive to redevelop historic centres in the name of enhanced retail potential and property speculation, to build roads to accommodate the private car and to modernise and expand towns in the name of civic progress, it is unlikely that the strengthening of protection for listed buildings and the appearance of Conservation areas would have occurred. They were implemented, at least in part, as a response to popular dismay at the destruction of buildings and places that were a part of local identity - and not always to obvious public benefit. Sadly, the protection our historic buildings and areas now enjoy was bought - it could be said - at the cost of buildings like those between 80 and 101 High Street in towns all over the Country. The single most high profile loss was the magnificent Euston Arch in London, the gateway to the London and Birmingham Railway, which stood where British Railways wished to build a particularly dull office block, dull, but more profitable than an iconic architectural statement.

In Tewkesbury's case the necessary redevelopment permissions had been obtained before either listed building consent or conservation areas came into existence, indeed, *Bishops Walk* was almost finished by the time *Conservation Areas* were given something like teeth as a control measure.

The County Council could not be criticized in this matter, it was very much at the forefront in preparing *Tewkesbury: an architectural and Historical Survey of Buildings in the town Centre*, published in January 1966 as part of the report of survey of the *County Development Plan: Tewkesbury Town Map Review* following the *C.B.A.'s* recommendation (although it was not legally obliged to do so).

This document makes specific reference to the *Bishops Walk* site: "Continuing northwards along High Street on the east side it will be necessary to ensure that the new buildings fronting onto High Street will complete its enclosure in an architectural form appropriate to this important street. A more sympathetic lateral road link from High

Street to Oldbury Road should form part of the redevelopment proposals. North of the redevelopment area, the red brick buildings 80-69 bring the continuity of the street to an emphatic close'.

The document closes with some specific recommendations as to how especially the shop-fronts should be improved.



Figure 22: Bishops Walk panorama c1978. (TBC)

The Development of Bishops Walk: A "Prog" Victory - by default?

In the event, the practical acts of land acquisition and a series of evolving designs and planning applications for the site carried the day for the "Progs", at least in respect of their new shopping development. The scheme as finally built evolved through a series of designs which started off in quite a different form from that which stands today.

The Borough Council's first scheme, submitted as a sketch for discussion, dated from 1962 and was for their land only. This was criticized by the County Council as having an insufficiently comprehensive approach, leaving the (mainly) dilapidated High Street frontage properties and the cinema out of the scheme and presenting its main aspect onto the Oldbury. There was to be a café with a curving glass façade at first floor level on the corner of Station Street and Oldbury Road, with an open colonnade underneath, through which there was to be a series of three small pedestrian squares with a pool and trees

surrounded by small shops with flats above. There were also to be shops fronting Oldbury Road and old Sun Street. As a result of feedback the sketch scheme was revised to show the redevelopment of the whole of the block between Station Street and the Sabrina Cinema. This included retail premises on the ground floor, first floor offices on the corner of the High Street, a first floor restaurant in front of the cinema and a shopping courtyard giving on to Station Street with flats above. There were to be two storey flats on Oldbury Road. There would also be a new pedestrian way between Station Street and the High Street in front of the cinema coming out underneath the restaurant.

In 1963 the proposals were extended to include 101 High Street and the former railway station site formerly occupied by 102 High St. This scheme further developed the ideas already proposed to include 16 individual shop units and a supermarket unit with the cinema retained as a cinema or swimming pool. Seven of the shops were to be set back at an angle from the High Street to form an irregular open space with trees and an inset echelon parking bay along the front. There was also to be a car showroom and petrol filling station on the corner of Oldbury Road and Station Street. This was rejected for both conservation and built form reasons and because of the increased traffic manoeuvring which would adversely affect free flow on the High Street, which in those pre-motorway days was a trunk road. The petrol filling station also failed to find favour with the highways authority.

Ultimately, however, the architects addressed each point made against these proposals by amendment until there was no longer any valid technical reason to refuse it.

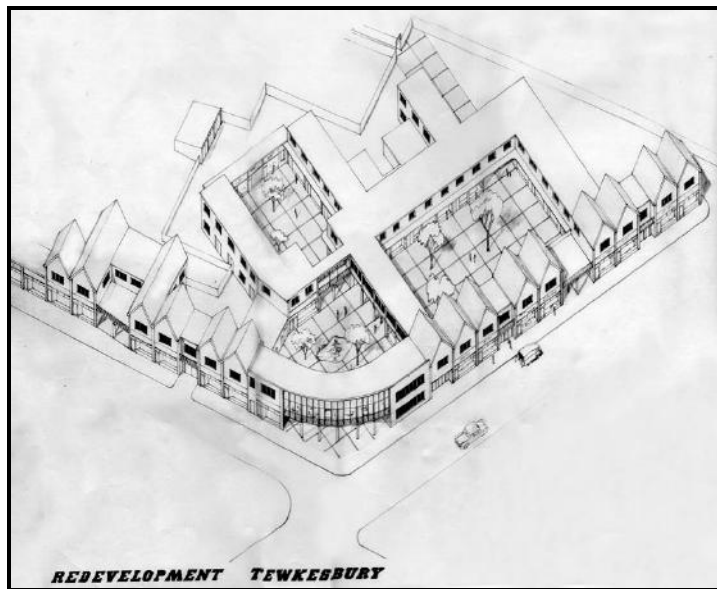
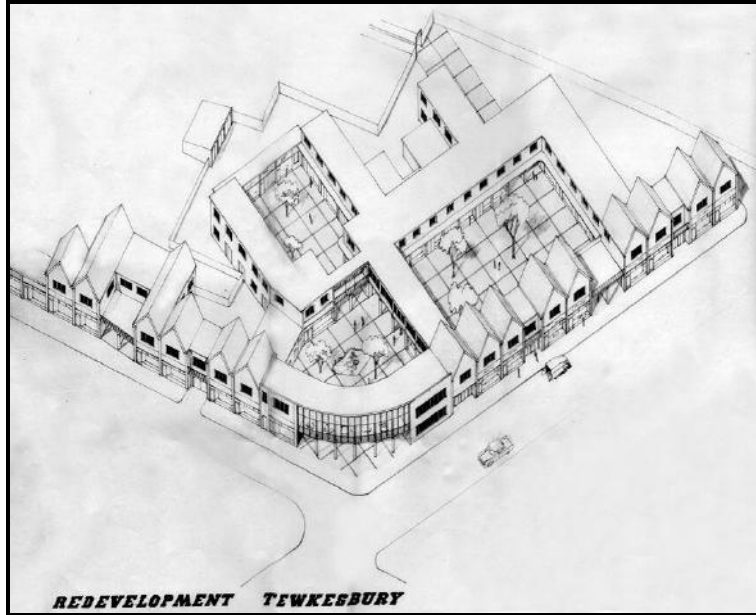


Figure 23: The first sketch prepared for the site used only the land fronting Oldbury Rd. and Station St., 1962. (TBC)

The *Royal Fine Art Commission* was one of those consulted on the planning application and they declined to comment on the proposals. It should be borne in mind that the planning

An Artist's impressions of the second sketch scheme: the redevelopment of all the land north of Station Street apart from the Sabrina Cinema.

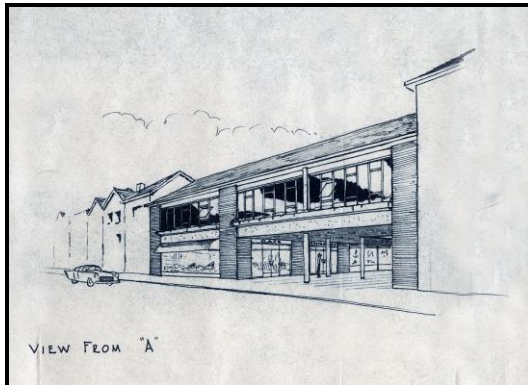


Figure 24: The view from 'A'. the front entrance of the Tudor House Hotel, this is roughly where Sun St now joins the High St. A new pedestrian way begins here and turns right at the cinema's entrance to emerge in Station St. The buildings shown to the left should be *Hereford House*. (TBC)

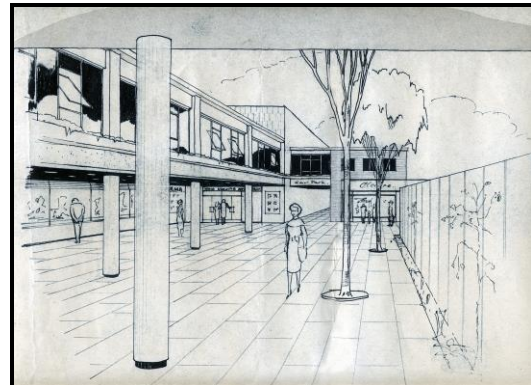


Figure 25: The view from 'B'. Crossing the High St. we enter the development and see some of its arcaded shops here. The building in the centre background is the *Sabrina Cinema*, which might have been converted into a swimming pool as part of this scheme. We turn right at the end for Station St. (TBC)



Figure 26: The view from 'D'. The other end of the new pedestrian precinct running north from, (and seen here) Station Street. The *Sabrina* is at the far end of the passage in the centre background. (TBC)

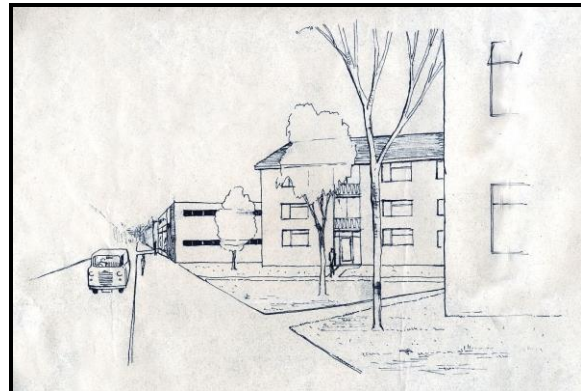


Figure 27: The view from 'C'. The residential element on Oldbury Rd. where the junction with Sun St. now lies, we are standing opposite the Albion looking south, the flats are very similar to those in Prior's Park. (TBC)

application process took place in the context of having a completely cleared site, so the principle of development was never at issue; it was a matter of uses, form and design. The crucial principle had been conceded almost by default, the *Minister for Housing and Local Government* had evidently already accepted that the buildings on the site which were on the provisional list of *Buildings of Historical and Architectural Interest* (such as the *Doddo Café*) could be demolished and, with many of the other buildings being run down or condemned and most of the others not being specifically identified as of architectural

importance, there was nothing to prevent the owners from sending in the demolition contractors as they did in 1965.

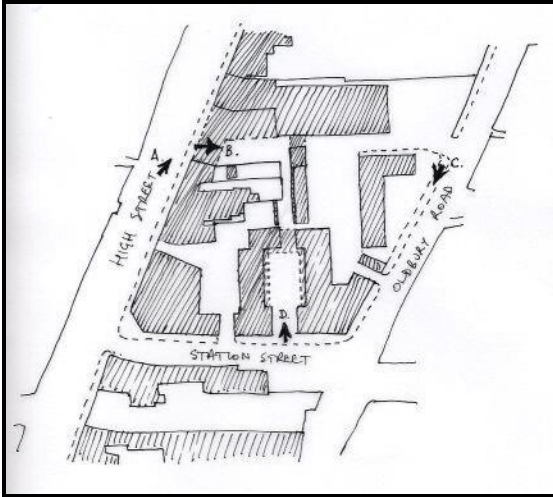


Figure 28: The second scheme in 1963 included most of the High St. frontage and the *Sabrina Cinema* but not land south of Station St.. The artist's impressions at figs 23-26 show this scheme and are keyed here. (Reproduced with the kind permission of the Ordnance Survey)

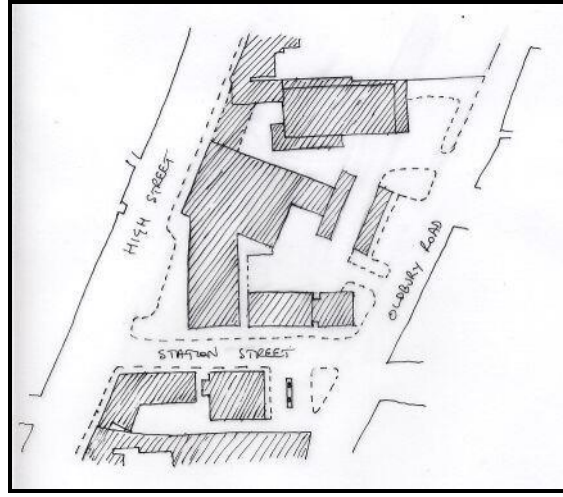


Figure 29: The third scheme: there is a central supermarket on the High St., flanked to the south by an angled row of shops with open space/parking bay and a café over a pedestrian entry to its north. Land south of Station St. has more shops a car showroom and a petrol filling station. The *Sabrina* is still retained. (O.S.)



Figure 30: Artist's impression of the Bishops Walk scheme in (almost) its final form. (TBC)

The architects of the scheme finally built were *Raymond Spratley and Partners* and it was built by contractors *Moss Construction* in 1971-72. The decision had been taken to construct a new road between High Street and Oldbury Road to replace the western end of Station Street, this created the opportunity to make a right angled junction with the two roads at an angle to the grain of the burgage plots which was presumably considered to be neater for development purposes than following the historic pattern. At the time a new Magistrates' Court was to be built on the site now occupied by the Library and the Roses Theatre and perhaps segregation of this use from the shopping area was also considered desirable. The shopping development could, therefore, enjoy a continuous block of land between 103 High Street and the new road which was to be called Sun Street. The development includes a small supermarket unit and one other medium sized shop unit. There is a pedestrian way through between High Street and Oldbury Road called 'Bishop Walk', there is a snooker hall over the latter shop unit. The southern part of the development comprises an L-shaped row of small shops with a restaurant on the corner with two storey flats above the High Street frontage which are cantilevered out over the pavement providing shelter for shoppers and a much wider pavement. To the rear there is a small shoppers' car park and well built public conveniences. The frontage to Sun Street includes two massive, and relatively blank, building ends and a substantial service yard for the supermarket.

Spoils of Victory?

The development was controversial before it was built and, some time after its completion, it appeared in the "*Nooks and Corners*" feature in the satirical magazine *Private Eye*, on 30 November 1973, on the strength of the destructive redevelopment and its ugliness in an attractive historic town. The item also stated that over a year after it was complete it was still 80% vacant. (In the article, Mr. Smale is reported to have responded to criticism of the scheme from the Civic Society by saying "*Oh you should see it from the air, it looks really nice*").

There seems to be a curious ambivalence about the way the development is regarded by people today. It is sometimes referred to as "*The Kremlin*", a label that has always puzzled me, it is clearly meant as a derogatory term, whoever coined it was possibly thinking of those grim and massive public buildings from the Stalinist period of Russian architecture rather than the glorious complex of glittering historic palace and cathedral that is the real *Kremlin*. Perhaps the buildings are more like the *Black Lubyanka* prison?



Figure 31: The real *Kremlin*Figure 32: The former *Lubyanka* Prison¹⁶

The Protagonists: The Leader of the "Progs"

A Personal Profile of Town Clerk, Ken Smale by Cliff Burd, Borough Councillor 1968-89 & Mayor 1974-5



Figure 33: Ken Smale
(TBC)

Ken Smale, a Devonian who qualified as an accountant in local government, came to the town as Town Clerk in the early 1960s. He was a man who seemed conscious of status and position and was not easily liked by his colleagues: his attitude tended to make both councillors and the general public suspicious of both him and his ideas. He tended to be scornful and dismissive of anyone who opposed him. As a consequence, he made enemies of those who questioned him, be they the officers of the *Civic Society* or members of the council. He saw them as interfering busybodies. His dislike of criticism and inclination to bear a grudge was illustrated on one occasion when he was interested in purchasing a property for his daughter. He wanted the council to accept his valuation. At the next meeting, this was refused as it was felt that he should have sought the District Valuer's price. Mr. Smale was furious, banged shut his file and stormed out of the meeting, slamming the door behind him. However, he bought the house later at the new valuation! He also had skirmishes with local and national newspapers: indeed, most organisations in the town.¹⁷

Fortunately for the town, he was a man of ideas: some very good and, perhaps inevitably, some unworkable. He asked me for a private meeting when I was chairman of the Parks Committee, with a plan to develop the Ham. He wanted to build upon it a Boating lake and a Golf Course. Flooding, he claimed, would be overcome by banking the two rivers, on this an ancient water meadow! He was helpful to new businesses, offering advice on finance and planning matters. His financial advice to the council was always sound and he moved money around to obtain the best rates. However, he also benefited Tewkesbury, giving it a much needed boost. In 1971, he was appointed the Chief Executive of the new Borough. Eventually he left, taking with him the Matron of the Hospital and they emigrated to South Africa. He died of cancer a few years ago.

The new development of the upper High Street was the response to the need to modernise the town, which had seen little or no improvement since before the war. Many of the properties at the rear of the street were in a state of decay. There was no public debate, however, regarding the properties to be removed, but a few were disturbed: they blamed the Town Clerk for this. As a result the *Civic Society* was born. Phyllis Howells and Richard Woodfin were the prime movers and were, literally, hated by the Town Clerk. They asked awkward questions and contacted the national press, M.P.s and Government Ministers, most of whom were known to Mrs. Howells. However, demolition continued; most of the buildings being demolished before any action could be taken.

The Protagonists: The Leader of the "Meds"

John Moore



Figure 34: John Moore (Museum-Library)

John Moore is now perhaps feted as Tewkesbury's most famous literary son: a school on a new estate has been named after him and there is the eponymous Museum which is a testimony to his passion for conservation issues. However, it is a *Portrait of Elmbury* from his *Brensham Trilogy* which made both him and *Double Alley* famous. He died in 1967 at the same time as the eradication of *Double Alley* and the rest of that doomed part of the High Street.

He came to local prominence in 1930-1 with the publication of his first book, *Dixon's Cubs* and a series of controversial articles for the *Tewkesbury Register* entitled, "*What's wrong with Tewkesbury?*"¹⁸ He was mainly concerned about tourism - the negative impression given by the then rubbish dump and garages near Lower Lode Lane and his fear that tourists would make Tewkesbury into a second rate Blackpool. He was also concerned with slums such as those in Double Alley:

"the slums in the old alleys would be gradually replaced by buildings in which people would live decently - instead of sleeping five and six (of all ages and both sexes) in the same smelly bedroom."

He was angry that the Council lacked the energy (or the finance) to do just that.

In April 1965, now famous, he wrote angrily again to the Editor of the successor newspaper the *Gloucestershire Echo*¹⁹. He defended the buildings of the High Street, against:

"permitting speculators to let it fall into disrepair simply because it would be more profitable for them to exploit the site values than to incorporate old buildings into their plan".

He and Lucile²⁰ were involved with the *Civic Society*, which was formed in June 1965:

*"CIVIC SOCIETY IN ACTION - STOP DEMOLITION CALL TO MINISTER"*²¹. The action was not successful and John Moore himself died soon afterwards.

Part II Heritage Defiled



Figure 35: the Upper High Street before Demolition c1964 (TBC)

79-80 High Street



Figure 36: The site today - The Library and the Modern Sun Street (Dixon)



Figure 37: Hereford House, 79 High St. in 1957 (MOD)



Figure 38: 80 High St. 1957 (MOD)

Hereford House is of such imposing architectural quality that it did not fall prey to the developers. It still constitutes a full burgage plot and, for much of its history, it has been the home of some of the town's prominent doctors. Its occupant in 1841 was the wine merchant, Joseph Sadds, but then it seemed to be a staging post in the ascending careers of two doctors, Prior and Devereux, who both moved on to *North House*²². However, when advertised to let in 1884 it boasted "nine bedrooms and servants bedrooms, w.c., two large underground cellars; large garden with ferneries, large tennis ground, croquet lawn & large greenhouse; stabling for 5 horses and a coach house". It was sold for £1,050²³ in 1921.

If *Hereford House* looks forbidding, its doomed neighbour, at no. 80, looks positively forlorn. The building clearly shows that its symmetry had been altered by its conversion to a shop. We know that it was occupied in 1935 by Mrs. Mary Ann Crisp whose husband had bought the property in 1908 for £190²⁴. In 1913 its description indicated that the ground floor was already a shop with, outside, a wash house, w.c., and a cellar. The wife of the previous occupier experienced the drama of ejection in 1901²⁵: Emily Newman was the wife of

Thomas Newman who lived in the property owned at least in 1881 by next door neighbour Dr. Devereux for whom he was coachman.

The house was also home to two heroes of World War I since their son Henry had been killed at the *Battle of the Aisne* in 1914²⁶ whilst, at the end of the war, Harry Crisp had won a *Gallantry Medal* from the RAF.²⁷

From 1841 to 1868, when they voted for the Liberal candidate, the Blizard family, who were two generations of tailors, occupied the house²⁸. In its last years, no. 80 was occupied by Stallard, the Coal Merchant, who also at one time occupied no 92 in the *Market Shops*.

81-3 High Street, Garretts Alley and Bishops Alley *Sabrina Cinema, 1934-1963*



Figure 39: 81-2 High St. November 2003:
new *Sun Street* (Dixon)



Figure 40: The *Sabrina Cinema* in the
1960s (MOD)



Figure 41: Aerial view, 1928 (Aerofilms)

The new *Sabrina Cinema* dominated a site which contained four houses, numbers 80-3. In Figure 40, a close-up of an aerial photograph enlargement from 1928, we can see *Hereford House* (79) to the left; then no. 80 which was left, somewhat strangely, intact along with 81-2 obscured by buildings. No. 83 is, fortunately, revealed by *Red Lane*.

A 700-seater cinema, with restaurant and car park, the *Sabrina* possessed, according to Linnell²⁹, a "facade of plate glass and "dazzling white concrete". Its life was, however, short and it occupied the site from 1934 to 1963 as a going concern. It was built by *Collins & Godfrey* for £10,000 and, even though he claimed it was unpopular with locals after 1940 with Sunday evenings reserved for servicemen, by 1944 it was serving 2,000 meals a month and 'GIs' from America remember its "tea room" with great affection. It replaced the "*Palace*" cinema³⁰ but its inception was not without controversy. Originally an entrepreneur *Oscar Deitch* proposed building a new cinema at 103 High Street but, despite being granted a licence, his project was defeated by that of *Harry E. Weight*.

According to Linnell, it was not co-incidence that a co-director was the then Town Mayor! It was opened on 6 May 1934 by M.P. - and future Speaker - Rt. Hon. W. S. Morrison.

The Cinema itself caused the demolition of three houses. 81 High Street was sold in 1922 by its owner the vet, W. J. Malvern, for £660. It was a substantial property³¹: comprising two floors, it had a surgery, bath, geyser, w. c. and grounds sufficient for a three horse stable and greenhouses. Its longest occupant was retired ironmonger John Price who inhabited the house, in 1868 voting Liberal, until his death in 1895 aged 88. Before then it had been occupied by Charles William Moore and his siblings, part of the celebrated local family.

Separating the two properties was *Garrett's Alley* of which little is known except that it was probably named after John Garrett and was in existence between 1808 and 1900 when it was closed before demolition for its grander future in 1932³².

A Georgian three story house, **82 High Street** was smaller than its neighbour but in 1913 it did possess a ground floor shop and bake house outside³³. Brian Linnell³⁴ has provided us with a sketch of the frontage it possessed whilst occupied by Walter Pond from 1912-1937, with an integral post office from 1922. We think it was owned by Christopher Strawford³⁵ until its purchase in 1897 with number 81. The 1891 occupant was baker and grocer Tom Young and, before that, the main occupants had been a baker or a beer house keeper.³⁶

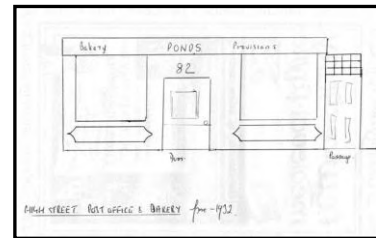


Figure 42: Sketch of 82 (Linnell)

We are more fortunate to have a close-up photograph of **83 High Street**³⁷. The best description, however, came with its sale in 1884 for £80³⁸. The notice, in the *Tewkesbury Register*,³⁹ described it as a "dwelling house occupied by Edmund Blizard; 2 excellent cellars, 4 bedrooms, closet, garden and brew house in Bishops Alley (20'8"x62'); joint use of pump & w.c..



Figure 43: Film of area taken from the air (Aerofilms)

The 1913 valuer's description was more muted: "118 sq.yds, brick & tile. 1st Floor: 3 Rooms. Ground: Small Shop, Kitchen, Back Kitchen. Condition: poor. Age: very old". One of the bedrooms is ignored while a shop appears on the ground floor. This was let to Alfred Shakespeare who, in 1917, "sells furniture etc, buys rags, bottles, bones, rabbit skins".⁴⁰ One wonders what had become of the two excellent cellars and, indeed, why such a house was graced with such a feature in the first place.

After its 1884 sale, it was occupied by John Hall, a corn porter, his four children and wife who was a green-grocer. Before that the house was occupied in 1871 and 1881 by Edmund Blizard, cow-keeper and milkman, whilst in 1841 and 1851 it was occupied by Elizabeth Bishop a butcher whose family gave its name to **Bishops Alley**, next door.⁴¹

According to Rogers, Samuel Bishop, the butcher, was the original owner, who was "old fashioned in dress manners and customs". His business was located "in house on left hand side of alley. ...(with) a slaughter house at top end, next to the Oldbury." Between 1841 and 1913 there were consistently ten dwellings although in the 1891 census it was described as Bishops Court. Nemesis for Bishops Alley



Figure 44: close up of Bishops Alley before demolition. (TBC)

was premature since it came in 1939 with a Clearance Order by the Borough Council. By then there were only four dwellings and two water closets listed.⁴²

It is ironic, therefore, that *Bishops Alley's* name was the only one to survive when it was revived as *Bishop's Walk* during the redevelopment of the area.

84, 84A & 85 High Street

A Nineteenth Century Development on the site of the old *Red Lion Inn*



Figure 45: The area in May 2003
Boots the Chemist. (Dixon)



Figure 46: 83-84 High Street with left *Bishops Alley* & right *Bedford's Court (MOD)*

This development has altered so much since the eighteenth century that it is best to look at it as one whole site.

84 and 84a High Street has been described as a "Georgian two door house of three storeys". If so, it seems to have been built long after the early 19th century Georgian fashion had vanished since there is an 1883 indenture: "*84 and 84a High Street have recently been erected upon the site of ... formerly a Public-House known by the sign of the Cross Keys but afterwards as a private house and numbered 84 High Street*".⁴³ The 'developer' was probably Mrs. Laura Predith, wife of John Predith, landlord of the *Happy Return Public House* from 1889-92⁴⁴. The site's history is less symmetrical.

It looks as if there were two adjoined houses but the 1913 survey⁴⁵ suggests that it was physically one since "*On the first floor: rooms go over the passage making it larger*".⁴⁶ We also have confirmation of the alley on the right hand side since, although the condition of the house was "good", it was "damp by the alley". The owner was also allowed a deduction of £5 for a *Right of Way*, although the 1885 map suggests that it was merely a court. In 1897 there was a dispute in the County Court⁴⁷, between the owners of 84 and 85, over access to *Unicorn Alley*, as it "*had been previously stopped up*".

However, the property was split into two for ownership and occupancy with 84 (left) owned by Charles Hurn while George Wilkins, the owner/occupier of 84a (right), was treasurer at the Baptist Church with his daughter as organist in 1919. How the two households maintained their independence on the first floor is not known. In 1894⁴⁸ Hone's sold "*two new properties on site of old Red Lion, High St.*," which were bought for £500 from the Prediths by C.L. Dyer. The property was sold again in 1902.⁴⁹

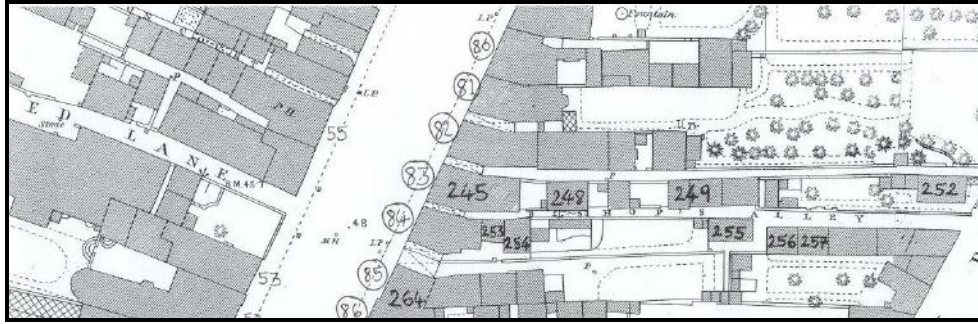


Figure 47: Map to show Red Lane & Red Lion Alley in 1883
(Reproduced with kind permission of the Ordnance Survey)

Most writers seem to agree that the *Red Lion* was situated opposite Red Lane⁵⁰. The 1811 enclosure map shows a very narrow plot, owned by James Law, which seems to occupy the route of *Unicorn/Red Lion Alley*. However, there is much confusion over the name and I am not sure if we have resolved it: it may well be that the *Lion* and the *Unicorn* were one and the same, as well as being others! Details I have unearthed:

- 1780-1781: **Workhouse**
- c1788: "When the new Town Hall was built, one of the houses demolished was the **Red Lion**, but no sooner demised than resurrected on the other side of the Street and shortly afterwards renamed the **Bolt and Turret**."⁵¹
- 1787: **Red Lion**: "the church paid for alterations to be workhouse until union workhouse opened in 1790s"⁵² Linnell claims that it was not mentioned at all as a pub until 1837
- 1793-4: known as **Horse & Groom**;
- 1795: **Bolt & Tun** occupied by R Day⁵³;
- 1800 **Red Lion** again;
- 1819-1832: **The Unicorn?** In 1819 "J Long was assessed for rates; possibly then Unicorn Inn as stock & effects sold to Isaac Potter; John Perkes 1822-32 when effects valued"⁵⁴. However, Perkes was also stated to be from the **Red Lion**.
- **Red Lion**: 1830-7 when Pigot had John Perkes as landlord while Bennett notes that his widow Sarah died on 31 January 1837;⁵⁵ there was then another valuation and sale possibly to George Fouch⁵⁶
- **Red Lion**: 1851 Edwin Merrick, broker, sold contents via Weaver & Moore at auction for £39.53p to pay debt. Bill of sale extant for securing £39-10s-6d and interest⁵⁷. We know that the *Lion* continued existence from a court case in 1854 when Amelia Philpotts, was charged with assaulting Harriet Phillips at the Inn⁵⁸.
- **Red Lion**: "demolished in 1867 and pair of semi-detached red brick cottages built on the site"⁵⁹.
- **Cross Keys** 1871 with Ann Wakefield⁶⁰ as the publican after the pub of that name was closed on its site at 13 High Street⁶¹. It was offered for auction in 1872 with the same occupant.⁶²
- **Common Lodging House**: 1881 James & Mary Maria Keating, both born in Ireland kept the house - along with nineteen lodgers!⁶³
- 1889 "at the top of what was formerly a certain alley or passage called **Old Unicorn Alley** but which has since been closed"⁶⁴

After such an asymmetrical history, one can only surmise that little objection was made to the demolition of the old **Red Lion/Unicorn Inn**.



Figure 48: 1925
Photo of *Bedfords Court*. (Ross)

Soon after the old *Cross Keys* site was redeveloped, there was a dispute between the owners of the neighbouring properties over the way in which no. 84 incorporated the old *Unicorn Alley* in its design; no. 84 won!

However, a study of the 1883 map suggests that no. 85 incorporated the former *Bedfords Alley* in its own development. Also known as *Marshalls Alley*, Rogers⁶⁵ wrote: "I knew Mr. Marshall (with) a shop in the front house and sold provisions, vegetables etc. .. a respectable looking man. When I returned in 1834 he had either left the town or was dead." He added that it was later known as *Bedfords Court* "because upper part leading to *Red Lion Alley* [has been] stopped".⁶⁶

The 1891 census confirms that the premises were occupied by Henry Bedford then a grocer but in 1881 he had been described as a painter as was his son George who occupied the property in 1913 and 1935. In 1913 the owner was his sister Sarah Bedford and the description confirms the prominent attic. In its last years, the shop was occupied by William Shakespeare & Son⁶⁷ when car parking was already a problem.

85 High Street was, by contrast, very much a Gothic building. We cannot be sure because the building was not named but it may well be that no. 85's appearance was sufficient to impress H. P. Moore & Frederick Moore who wrote in about 1881 a paper entitled *Old Houses of Tewkesbury*.⁶⁸



Figure 49: Unicorn Alley & Bedford's Alley (MOD)



Figure 50: 85 High Street (MOD)

"Descending down *High Street*, opposite the *Red Lane*, is a house with a quaint gable, in which is carved an oak beam, forming a Tudor arch, having a floreated boss in the centre covering the intersection of the moulded ribs. . The Bosses on the other beams have evidently been chopped off. Up the passage leading to this house is a curious old three-storied building, the lower part being built of great blocks of stones, upon which rest very heavy overhanging oak timbers supporting two other stories (sic). In the first of these may still be seen the remains of the 15th century traceried carved oak window frames, which formerly went all along the front".



Figure 51: Newspaper picture during demolition (Linnell)

This building was recorded by the *Royal Commission for Historic Monuments* for England

prior to demolition; the interior photographs show a fine carved and gilded *Tudor Rose* boss on a beam in the ceiling of one of the ground floor rooms. The quote is ambiguous, the beam and boss were inside the building rather than in the gable. The "curious old three storied building" to the rear is the one shown in figures 49-50 above. In 1881 the façade of this building looked different, because the ground floor was re-fronted, probably in the early 20th. century, closing off the entrance to *Bedfords Court* which had been an unusually wide opening within the left hand side of the ground floor elevation, and also replacing the earlier door and window arrangement. The upper floors had been refaced with brick, perhaps in the late 18th. or early 19th. centuries, replacing a late mediaeval timber façade probably more like that of the *Doddo Café*.⁶⁹ (Continued on p. 41)



Figure 52: The Sabrina Cinema seen c1960 when it was still open. The house on the left is No. 80 High St. The building to the right of the cinema fronts onto Oldbury Road immediately to the north of Bishops Alley, which begins just behind the VW Beetle in the right foreground. This cottage will be one of the last buildings standing on the site in 1965. (Butwell).



Figure 53: The High Street frontage buildings demolished in order to build Bishops Walk seen from the north c.1960. No 83 is the first one on the left, the light coloured building close to the right of the picture is the *Tewkesbury Car Mart* No. 101 High St. (Butwell).



Figure 54: 88 to 91 High St. c1960. The *Doddo* can be seen in the centre of the group, it was the most obviously mediaeval of the lost buildings, but was not the only one. (Butwell).



Figure 55: The charmingly quirky row of tiny shops developed during the 19thC. on the sliver of land left over when Station Street (formerly known as Sun Street) was created in the early 19thC.. The mid 20thC. public conveniences can just be glimpsed beyond the shops. (TBC)



Figure 56: No. 101 High St. The *Tewkesbury Car Mart* in 1951. This photograph also shows some traces of the 1839 railway station on the gable end of the building including the vertical ashlar strip which used to mirror the one surviving today attached to 103 High St. The gabled platform shelter is also seen as are the railway lines, set in cobbles, crossing the High St. towards *Healings Mill*. (TBC)



Figure 57: A general view looking north from the corner of Spring Gardens at the junction of Oldbury Rd. and Station St. c.1960. The public conveniences are in the foreground, this and all the buildings beyond were to be destroyed in the name of progress five years later. (Butwell)



Figure 58: View down the old Station St. towards the High St from Oldbury Rd.. The workshops at the rear of the *Tewkesbury Car Mart* can be seen beyond the car in the centre of the picture. C1960. Again, almost everything in the picture was to be destroyed during the redevelopment. (Butwell)



Figure 59: The mediaeval rear wing of No. 85 High St. seen from the north across the *Sabrina Cinema* forecourt. C1960. This building was perhaps the most important one to be destroyed. This part of the building had become known as *Sally Watkins' cottage* in connection with the novel *John Halifax Gentleman*. Bedford Court lies immediately in front of the building in this view, it used to come out onto the High Street just opposite The Tudor House Hotel where John Halifax was supposed to have lived in the book. *Bishops Alley* passes between the two brick walls in the foreground. (TBC)



Figure 60: The scene of devastation in 1965 as all trace of the backland buildings and alleys is removed, soon to be followed by the High St. frontage buildings beyond. The timber building on the left is 91a and 91b High St. (91 is the tall building in the centre). The *Doddo Café*, No. 90, is the lowest of the timber gables with the single storey extension. (TBC)



Figure 61: 89 to 83 High St. (LtoR), seen from the Oldbury during demolition in 1965. (Bigland)



Figure 62: The calm after the storm? In misty early morning light a fence marks out the path of the new Sun St. whilst the site for the new development is being levelled. C1970. (Bigland)



Figure 63: The development under construction c1971. The view is across the site from an upper floor in one of the buildings on the west side of the High St.. Station St. is on the right, *Martin and Bennett's* corn mill is the large building beyond. In the background, the swimming pool and Spring Gardens can be seen. (Bigland).



Figure 64: *Bishops Walk* resplendent in its original 1970's colour scheme and, with the stair tower still in situ, pictured here in 1989. (TBC)

(Continued from page 36) Further intriguing information emerged at the time of demolition and this newspaper cutting caused quite a stir with its headline: *STONE FROM THE ABBEY*. The "demolition of 81 to 91 [High Street] started a week ago -[and] concerned Civic Society because of the revelation of 'some ancient stone, later identified as of the same period as the Abbey' on the ground floor. Mrs. B. Linnell noticed that one of the dividing walls of 85A was made of similar stone; the cellar contained more stone; [they] approached the Vicar who arranged with the Town Clerk Smale to gain permission to remove stone back to the Abbey for repairs. C. R. Elrington of the County Record Office said that the stone could have derived from the Cloisters. The wall was two feet thick and workman noticed 'an immense fireplace' before it was pulled down."⁷⁰

Brian Linnell considered that *Sally Watkin's cottage* was part of 85 High Street. He writes of the fictitious name that there were two contenders for the title⁷¹ but that *Unicorn Alley* could well be the model. He derived this from a verbal description 1970 by the last owner/tenant, Mr. Wilfred Jackson who re-converted two dwellings into one, with some financial aid from the *Society for the Preservation of Old Houses*. He spoke of a "Tudor Rose in upper window frames and on downstairs centre beam. In the stone cellar were wall niches containing the remains of small figures". He added that in "1965 it was demolished with stone taken to the Abbey for use in the repair of the vicarage". This is very similar to the building described by the Moores.

If all our descriptions can be tied to *85 High Street* then a very historic building was demolished by the indiscriminating bulldozers.



Figure 66: Rear of 84-7 High St.,
during demolition 1965



Figure 67: The future being developed c. 1971 (Bigland)

86 High Street & Steels Alley



Figure 68: *Boots* (south end)
in May 2003 (Dixon)



Figure 69: 86 High St. with Steels
Alley entrance (MOD)



This apparently substantial building was described as a "two storied Georgian building" and it may well have acted, for a short part of its life, as a public house, the *Quart Pot*. It also served as a substantial family home to William Cullis, a partner of Thomas Collins, whilst the family of its owner of 1881 numbered thirteen persons! The second door at the right is not a house entrance but once again is an elegant entrée into *Steel's Alley*.

In 1913 it was described⁷² as being constructed of "brick, painted cement and tile" with a bath and w.c. installed on the first floor and a cellar "in good condition". It was owned by Thomas Walker⁷³ and occupied by George Pearton, an engineers' clerk in 1891 who became a sergeant in the Army Volunteers before dying in 1930. Although the property was then valued at £250, it was sold in 1919 for £500 to Sidney Baker⁷⁴, the

solicitor son of the oft-times Mayor, Alderman Alfred Baker. It was sold again in 1933 and its last occupant was *Hilson Antiques* before its demolition in 1966.

In 1891 the house was divided into two unmarried households, that of the laundress Miss M. J. George and the veterinary surgeon W. J. Malvern. It was, however, the previous owner/occupier, Robert Graham who populated the property with his wife and ten children, aged between two and seventeen. Sadly for his family⁷⁵, the hay and coal dealer had to sell the house to meet his bankruptcy obligations in 1883.

The family which occupied the home for longest was that of William Cullis, a partner in *Collins and Cullis*, building contractors, from 1859 to 1877. In 1861 his family numbered nine with the addition of a servant. The family lost two children in infancy and one in adulthood but, although the partnership dissolved and, by 1881, Cullis had left the town⁷⁶, his elder daughter Caroline had married Francis Godfrey who became Thomas Collins' most famous and durable partner until well into the twentieth century. Cullis started his career as a bricklayer. In 1841 the occupant gave his name to Steel's Alley.

Steels Alley

John Rogers⁷⁷ claimed that the alley was named after *Stephen Steel who owned "the front house and property through to the Oldbury. A builder, his health failed and he died suddenly; he was highly respected. His son worked for Mr. T. Collins and then commenced business in Worcester."* It was called an alley up until 1871 but Steel's Court thereafter suggesting that it was blocked up.

The property's short life as the *Quart Pot Public House*⁷⁸, from 1872-9, occurred after the original was closed after the building of the Methodist Chapel at the Cross. Samuel Hodges, an itinerant landlord, was mine host. It was, therefore, a property whose life did not match its architectural elegance; it has now disappeared under the anonymity of equally inelegant *Bishops Walk*.

87 High Street incorporating Double Alley



Figure 70: The view from the Tudor House which would have upset John Moore. However, the stair has since been demolished (TBC)



Figure 71: 87 High St. with *Oldbury Walk (alias Double Alley)* as John Moore would have seen it - though more dilapidated? (MOD)

We now enter an area with some mystique because integral to 87 High Street is the infamous "*Double Alley*", brought perhaps to notoriety through the prose of John Moore in *Portrait of Elmbury*.

There is, indeed, a clear architectural distinction between this house, which seems to have been an old building which had not been improved, and its northern neighbours which had been rebuilt. In 1913,⁷⁹ it was also said to be "*very old*" with a w.c. but "*no flush*". We do not know its use in 1913 but, in 1935, it was occupied by W. Seabright who made cattle medicine⁸⁰ while, for most of the nineteenth century, it was

occupied by the Davison, the butcher: in 1871 he lived in these small premises with his wife and seven children⁸¹. In 1868, he saw himself as a Conservative voter for Lechmere.

In 1851, it was the home of Richard King Fletcher, described as one of only two *brightsmiths* in the town. As he was a son of William Fletcher⁸² the gunsmith, it is likely that his job was as a metal polisher. In 1841 it was occupied by Isaac White a 'carrier', later moving to 4 Church Street as a fishmonger. It is ironic, therefore, that, as late as 1958, planning permission was sought for its use as a fish and chip shop. The opposition, led by the owner of the Tudor House, was successful! Eventually permission was granted for the conversion to a cabinet maker's shop.⁸³ This house, therefore, may not have possessed an exciting history but the same cannot be said for its integral alley.

Oldbury Walk, alias Double Alley

As a child John Moore lived at the *Tudor House* opposite and was captivated by the activities of the alley dwellers; he described the Medieval flavoured entrance as "*not unlike the yawning jaws of hell*"⁸⁴. He went on to relate amusing stories of the *Hook* marriage, the infamous *Black Sal* and the loyal, but drunken, "*Nobbler Price*":

"One more Hogarthian figure, 'Nobbler' Price did not exactly inhabit Double Alley but kept a tiny greengrocer's shop nearby; he also possessed a weedy patch of back garden, abutting the alley and a miserable looking nanny goat which was tethered to a peg and which demonstrated by its circumscribed nibbling the great truths discovered by Euclid and Pythagoras."

John Rogers⁸⁵ tried to paint a more prosaic picture of this alley: it was "*very old [and] so called because there were two entrances at the High Street end. A wall went up the middle of the alley in line with the four brick pillars which support part of the house now used as a tramps lodging house (when I was a boy). A long time ago the wall was removed to give light to the cottages on the right side. There were often rows and sometimes lots of fighting in it. In the Alley lived five soldiers and one sailor who had served in the French war.*" Linnell⁸⁶ agrees with the photograph that it was officially known at the end of its life as *Oldbury Walk*; in 1830 it was *Castles Alley* and, in 1819, *Harris Alley*.

Perhaps some of its notoriety stems from the fact that it was populous compared with others. In 1891 the cottages were numbered for the first time and there were 17, while in the 1913 survey there were at least 19 dwellings⁸⁷. The smallest comprised 22 square yards and merited a gross rental value of £20⁸⁸. There were several owners, the more prominent being Ralph Chandler,⁸⁹ Mary Ann and Janet Jones⁹⁰ and Richard Green.

Records available indicate that the state of the alley caused concern: in 1857⁹¹ a surveyor reported that "*to abate the nuisance in double alley, it would be requisite to cover over a portion of the open drain and remove the 'trap' somewhat higher up*". In the Cholera epidemics three and two had died in 1849 and 1832 respectively, one of whom was Margaret Jones a 23 year old 'prostitute'. Neither of which is a significant proportion of the total. In fact, water was brought to the Alley in 1871⁹² and, in 1878⁹³, it was still a problem, exacerbated by stable owned by Thomas Whitehouse. The water problem persisted intermittently since, in 1921, "*nine houses owned by several owners have defective and insanitary w.c.s.*"⁹⁴ We should be unfair if we did not point out that in 1868, when skilled artisans first won the vote, a third of the total householders qualified for the vote; they voted five to two in favour of the Conservative Lechmere.⁹⁵

It is, however, the characters of the people which have perhaps been so influential over the years. In 1840, James Bennett⁹⁶ reported a

"Death in Double Alley: Considerable Excitement:

a poor decrepit woman, Hester Evans, was murdered by fellow lodger Elizabeth Lane. She was aged 85 and crippled as was Lane, aged 63, [who was] nearly as imbecile in the mind as the other. Both were widows and paupers; they slept together and quarrelled every night but the jury decided that she died of 'dropsy', exacerbated by the violent quarrel in which her fingers were bitten. Lane displayed 'apathy and want of feeling' (as she had with her husband and son both transported for sheep stealing). She had prepared her breakfast 'by the warm corpse of her late bedfellow' and she cooked and ate dinner while the post mortem took place 'with the most perfect unconcern'.

It was not, however, just the tenants who caused morbid interest. One owner, Richard Green, seemed to possess a fascinating character, judging by his conflicts with the law. Born in nearby Bishops Alley in 1848, he appeared twice in court⁹⁷ in 1865 aged seventeen; once charged with ill-treating a calf and the other with assaulting a policeman. In 1874 he had graduated to prison for stealing "Indian meal".⁹⁸ Described as a cattle dealer, in 1881 lived in his five roomed house with his wife and nine children. In the next two years either he or his eponymous son was convicted of "racing on horseback in the High Street"; creating a "nuisance with pigs, dead cow; entering a railway carriage whilst in motion" and for refusing to support his child.⁹⁹ The newspapers did have more positive news to report, however, in 1915 when Richard and Ellen's Golden Wedding was announced¹⁰⁰. However, that positive reportage was undermined the following year when son Tom, another cattle drover, was named as co-respondent in a divorce petition by a Gloucester butcher; he was forced to pay £250 damages by the jury.¹⁰¹

One wonders if it was the antics of Richard Green who inspired the character 'Nobbler Price' when John Moore¹⁰² watched with fascination this very different world from that in which he was reared before the Great War.

88 High Street and Glovers Alley



Figure 72: 88 High St., 1958 (MOD)



Figure 73: Detail of 1958 (MOD)



Figure 74: Bishops Walk in May 2003 (Dixon)

This property was as undeveloped as its neighbour but even smaller; this is perhaps surprising since part of its life was devoted to the status of lodging house. In 1913¹⁰³, it did possess a second floor with one bedroom with three on the first floor. It did boast a w. c. but, although its rent was higher, its gross value was deemed to be lower

than no. 87. The 1913 owner was the Baptist tea dealer W. H. Wilkins of 57 Barton Street who owned five properties but, to date, we cannot ascertain what tenant, Edward Griffiths, sold in the shop.

In the 20th century we can see that it ended its life as M. Attwood's grocery shop with its evocative adverts emblazoned across its frontage. Between 1935 and 1939 it had been the dairies of J. H. Dudley and J. W. Counsell¹⁰⁴ successively. However, lodgers were a part of the story as late as 1919 when the tenant was the widow Mrs. Millicent Green since, in 1921, Charles Wood was sentenced to eighteen months hard labour for using false pretences to obtain board and lodging¹⁰⁵. Furthermore a lodger, Elizabeth Newman, died there, aged 83 in 1899.¹⁰⁶

We do know, however, that from about 1876 to 1893 it acted as a lodging house occupied officially by chimney sweep Thomas Moss but operated as a lodging house by his wife Phoebe. At census time the husband was absent both times but, at its apogee in 1891, it is incredible to modern understanding to accept that the house contained officially eighteen persons; Phoebe and two sons plus fifteen lodgers, amongst whom there were at least two families! Between 1851 and 1871 the married couple lived together and produced seven children, having additionally suffered the burial of two infants in the same month in 1865¹⁰⁷. Always described as a chimney sweep Thomas and Phoebe may well have become lodging house managers in 1870 when he took over the old Red Lion, at the top of Unicorn Alley.¹⁰⁸

Keeping a lodging house was evidently a precarious existence since in 1884 Thomas was attacked by one of his lodgers¹⁰⁹ whilst in 1885 there was "*serious electoral rioting*" when thirty "*radical roughs*" attacked the houses of T. W. Jordan and Thomas Moss. Only 5 or 6 police were available and they were deemed "*useless*"¹¹⁰ Despite this alleged negligence, the claim for "*compensation for electoral violence*" was rejected by Magistrates - even though Moss had voted Conservative in 1868! The younger son William also had to go to court to accuse his wife of committing bigamy.¹¹¹

In tune with his dual career we find that, until his death aged 62, the chimney sweep had also acted as the '*New Fire Engineer*' for the '*Urban Sanitary Authority*'.¹¹² Not only that but a chance find revealed that his son *Joseph* was also a fireman at the time of horse drawn engines when horses, kept on Ham, had to be rounded up before work!¹¹³

Before all this excitement, it has proved a little difficult to track the buildings early history¹¹⁴ but it is likely that before the Mosses took over it was occupied by boot maker Thomas Cox.

Glovers Alley¹¹⁵

This alley is integral to 89 High Street and it took its name from the owner in 1841 of the front house, Joseph Glover who was a 56 year old carpenter and widower who lived with his married son, his wife and three children¹¹⁶. There seem to have been between 10 and 13 dwellings in the alley; in 1842 for example the front house had an annual rent of £10 while the alley houses were valued at c£2 although there was a shop valued at £5¹¹⁷. Two people from the alley died in the 1849 cholera epidemic while in the 1868

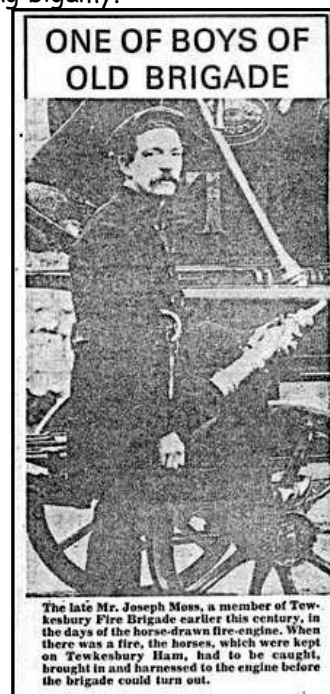


Figure 75: Joseph Moss, fireman.

elections: five so called 'skilled artisans' were entitled to vote; in this case labourers, a boatman and a tailor.

In 1905 John Rogers¹¹⁸ described the alley in his puritanical way:
Glover was a carpenter .. "very respectable.. he died many years ago" one son left the town; narrow only 4 feet at widest, houses very small, dirty, dark "something like holes in the wall.. filled with stocking frames, winding wheels and bobbins. Many families lived and worked and got good livings .. and were not very particular how they spent their money. It was often spent in drink and other bad ways and their children were let run the streets dirty and ragged. The last workman that wore a pigtail lived.... his name was Fame and he was a stocking mender".

In 1898 the Medical Officer of Health had already charged the owners with remedying the defects in sewers¹¹⁹ but in 1922 there were still problems as two parents were charged¹²⁰ with cruelty to their six children ranging from 1-15 years. The children were well nourished and there was no sign of violence but the house was in a "horrible condition". Three rooms were in a "dreadful state" with one occupied by the infamous lady called 'Black Sal'. She was conferred posthumous fame by John Moore in *Portait of Elmbury* whom he thus described: "Her appearance, in the days when she dwelt in the filthiest cottage of all Double Alley, was horrific in the extreme".¹²¹

This alley, perhaps made infamous in fiction, suffered the fate of the front house when it was demolished in 1966.

89 High Street



Figure 76: 89 High Street showing also *Glovers Alley* (MOD)



Figure 77: Shop Detail in c 1958 when occupied by "Nellie Jones", (MOD)



Figure 78: The site in May 2003; *Bishops Walk* (Dixon)

It is, perhaps, photographs of this shop which could convince posterity that there was no other option but to demolish these old but undistinguished buildings. All that does mark this building is the two steps one had to ascend to enter what must have been a fascinatingly old fashioned shop, occupied by two generations of Jones.

As we have noted in 1841, the house owner had given his name to *Glovers Alley* but for much of its history, from c 1842 to 1880 it was occupied by the shoe making family enterprise of Thomas Cox. By 1871 his grandsons¹²² were employed and by the time of his death in 1880 he had achieved the dubious celebrity of being a *bedesman*, a recipient of *Queen Mary's Charity*.¹²³ It could be that the property was still owned by the family since in 1913 it was owned by "George Edward Cox, c/o John Mcdougall,

Anglesey'.

Not surprisingly, the property was unoccupied in 1881 but, by 1891, the Jones family had arrived and would stay as occupants until 1957. Ellen Jones was a 41 year old

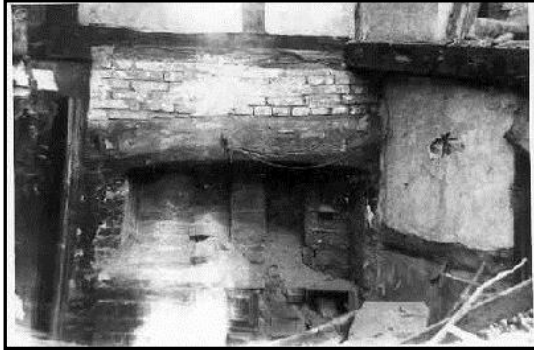


Figure 79: photograph of interior during demolition (Library-Museum)

self-employed green-grocer who was also the widow of Thomas Jones, a steam tug engineer, born in 1851 son of waterman, Edward Jones. We cannot be certain that it was the same person but twice an Ellen Jones was brought before the courts¹²⁴. The first time was in 1872 when the charge was assault while in 1876 an Ellen Jones was sentenced to "one month in prison with hard labour for being drunk and incapable at Bell Inn". By 1913¹²⁵ the shop-keeper was paying £11 in rent - the lowest in the vicinity - and the tax survey described the property as

being of 80 square yards in area and being made of "half timber and tile. There were two attics and a w.c. but the condition was said to be "poor" and the age "very old". The photograph¹²⁶ suggests that the building might have been more interesting than outer appearances would suggest.

By 1935 an Ellen Jones was a tobacconist in the same property but this was "Nellie" the unmarried daughter of Ellen and Thomas born in 1885. She kept the business going until 1957 when she would have been 72.

Ellen Jones seems to have been a remarkable woman in Tewkesbury folklore. Everybody remembers the quality and size of her ice creams. Her niece recalls:

"She made her own ice cream and I don't think I've ever tasted any as good since. She also sold groceries, vegetables, sweets, tobacco, jewellery, bread, in fact anything she could earn a penny with.-I remember marbles, and fishing tackle!"¹²⁷

However, others remember that she was an agent for *Midland Red* buses and that locals deposited parcels of live elvers with her and then telegraphed ahead to Birmingham for the recipient to meet the bus with its precious cargo! Jean McNiven also remembered her character: she was

a very "feisty" lady, one of the first women's "Libbers". She was a very generous lady, and extremely good hearted but would take on anyone. One of the things she was most proud of was the fact that she kicked Mosley's soapbox from beneath him, when he and his "Blackshirts" held a meeting in Quay Street.¹²⁸

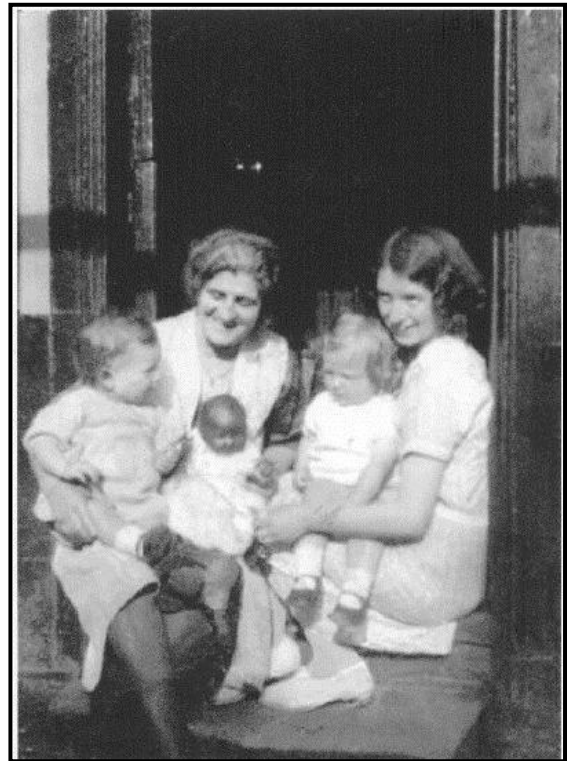


Figure 80: Ellen Jones & her family - the girl on the right is Jean McNiven (Edward Jones)

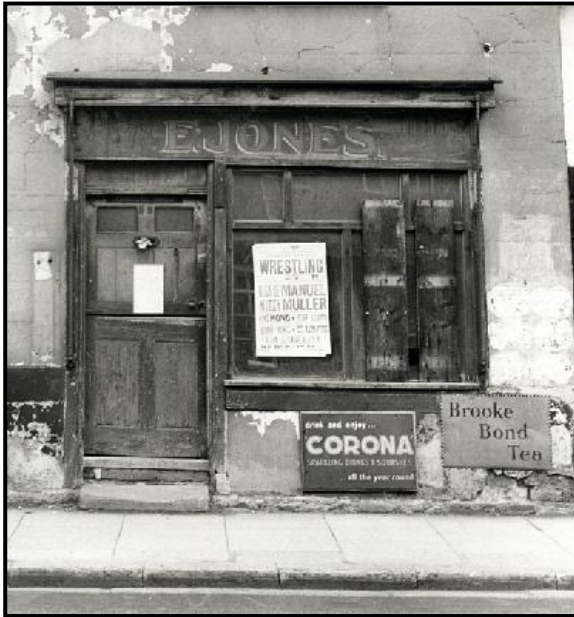


Figure 81: Just before demolition (T.B.C.)

Now forsaken for nine wasted years by Nellie and her ice-creams, the building was then left unoccupied until it was demolished in 1966. It certainly did present a forlorn and unloved sight - except for the eager developer.

However, scathing Nellie might have been about her neighbour, it was the next door property of "Colonel Chinstrap" which proved to be the running point in conservation politics in the town.

90 High Street and Mayalls Court

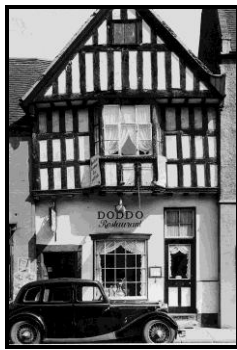


Figure 82: Doddo's Café

The car was said to be owned by Mr. Pinfold whom Ellen Jones referred to as "Colonel Chinstrap"¹²⁹ Mayalls Alley entrance is to the left. (MOD)



Figure 83: Site in November 2003 which shows a change since May 2003 - cafés of various names have failed to achieve the fame - or success- of Doddo. (Dixon)

Even Ken Smale is quoted as saying: "Only No 90 is of interest and that was tarted up between the wars"¹³⁰ The Town's people certainly thought it was of real interest since it was the threatened demolition of this building which inspired them to found the *Civic Society*. In 1965 the newspaper headline was stark:

DODDO DEMOLITION: ADVISED THAT IT WAS "LEGAL, & ABOVE BOARD"

Despite its being a listed building, when asked permission in April 1964 to demolish, the Minister replied that it was "regrettable" but the onus was on the County. The latter replied that it had to go through "because retaining one old building would be detrimental to any redevelopment of the site." Councillor Brown thought this "a very satisfactory

answer".¹³¹ Another clipping reveals perhaps why it raised so much anger:

UNIQUE DOOR DISAPPEARS

Mrs. Howells of "this new organisation", the *Civic Society* had arranged with contractors to save it but they had reneged and it had possibly been burned. Further controversy dogged the demolition since the Society was concerned about the revelation of "some ancient stone, later identified as of the same period as the Abbey" on ground floor. Apparently, the curate suggested that "the church wardens had sold job lots of Abbey stone to raise the £453 needed... to buy the Church" and that, possibly, some had been removed from the doomed Lady Chapel.¹³²

Was the Town Clerk correct in his assertion that it was "tarted up" in the 1930s?¹³³ Oral knowledge suggests that it only became a café sometime in that decade since in 1935 the owner responsible for the conversion to a café/restaurant, William Pinfold, was described as a shop keeper which fits into the pattern of 1921-3 when Rowland operated a confectioner's shop.¹³⁴ The name *Doddo* was taken from the alleged Saxon Duke of Mercia who "built a great house transforming *Theod's* cell".¹³⁵ However, when it was put up for auction in 1914 it was described as "Black and White Dwelling House"¹³⁶. In the 1913 tax survey it was valued at £165¹³⁷ and was said to be of "Brick, Half Timber & Tile" construction with an outside W.C.: it was in "fair condition for its age". Despite trying to sell it several times, it was owned and occupied by the Broad family, which derived its income from a plumbing business from 1879 to 1923 but before that it was at least occupied by Christopher Mayall from 1841 until his death. He was a greengrocer and his family caused the naming of the integral Mayalls Alley. From 1842 until 1854 at least it was owned by Sir Christopher Codrington and may have been part of the landowner's political patronage system¹³⁸. It is interesting that in 1842 the rent was assessed at £12 per year whilst in 1913 it was only £15: this represented an increase in income from property from £490 to £715 at 2003 prices.

Mayalls Court

This court mysteriously does not appear in Rogers' book¹³⁹ until one realises the error with *Bronds Court* - which should be *Broads Court*. Every one else uses the name Mayall. In 1913 there were three dwellings but two seemed unoccupied; two were very old but one small one was made of new brick. All seemed to share "small yard & w. c. & piece of garden in front... water from main".¹⁴⁰ In 1842 there were four dwellings all owned by Codrington with one occupied by 1832 pauper, widow Ann Taylor and three children, who received 4/6d out-relief.¹⁴¹ There was some continuity of population since Mrs. McNiven remembers the "small court and the family living there were called Sallis, the mother's name was Vera, with a son called John". In 1918 a Sallis family was living there since Pte. Arthur Francis Sallis - the third son of Mrs. E. Sallis, washerwoman and widow of William Sallis, a sack carrier - was killed during the German Hindenburg Offensive of March 1918. Arthur was a former pupil of Abbey Schools and had been employed for 14 years by Mrs. Sherwood of the Cross - he was said to be "a very steady, worthy young man and was for many years a teacher at the Abbey Sunday School"¹⁴².

By 1920 the alley was not in a good condition as "defect notices served for 2 cottages"¹⁴³. But it still survived until its final demolition with its host, the *Doddo* in 1966.



Figure 84: *Dodds Demolition*

This 1965 photograph was confirmed by oral testimony that *Doddo* is the property in the centre with *Mayalls Court* on the right. (TBC)

91 High Street and Waldrons Court



Figure 85: 91 High Street: *Happy Return Pub* with *Waldrons Court* to the left (MOD)



Figure 86 in Nov. 2003 *Waldrons Court* is located through the *Café* and the pub took up half of the **Winerack!** (J Dixon)

Our photo taken towards the end of its life shows it as a shop: it was then *Edie Attwood's Furniture Shop*¹⁴⁴ but, soon after its conversion from a public house, there was a newspaper notice from 1919 advertising "*Rags For Paper: Government buyers permit held by A. Shakespeare*".

For most of its life, however, this building was the *Happy Return* public house. Linnell¹⁴⁵ has a theory that it was one of the "lost" pubs before 1837 when it was taken over by *Primitive Methodists* between 1836 and 1838.¹⁴⁶ Linnell records that it was known as the *Happy Return* by 1869 but census evidence uses that name in 1861 when *James Huntley* was listed as a "*Beer house keeper*". He seems to have been listed as "dead" in the 1868 Voting list - although he is also cited as having voted for the Conservative, *Lechmere*¹⁴⁷. *Thomas Rice*, the first formal¹⁴⁸ landlord, survived for twenty years. Described also as a "*fishmonger*" in the 1881 census, he started life as a fisherman living in *Double Alley*. Living conditions may not have been much better in the

pub since Thomas lost two infant children in 1870-1. After quitting the pub in 1889, he moved into *Waldrons Court* and died in 1893 aged 64.¹⁴⁹

His successor was *John Predith*, formerly landlord of the *George* across the road. He was initially a wheelwright by trade and son of an ostler, living in 1871 at the *Kings Head* in Barton Street. After taking over the *Happy Return*, he and his wife were involved in property deals, owning for a time the newly built houses on the site of the old *Red Lion Pub*. When they and other properties were sold in 1894, they raised £775.¹⁵⁰

William Crockett had taken over the pub in 1892 and remained there until 1903. He was by trade a shoeing smith like his father *Charles* and, like *Thomas Rice*, he lost an infant child to illness whilst living there.¹⁵¹ The only other event of note during his tenancy was that he was fined £3.15s in 1901 for keeping "a Public House pen during Prohibited Hours". The only other recorded crime was in 1883 when *Thomas White* was convicted of "breaking glass."¹⁵²

In 1913 it was owned by *Arnold Perrett and Co* and was valued at £751. On the first floor there was a club room and in the basement a cellar.¹⁵³ By 1917, however, there were no happy returns as in 1916 daily takings were so low at 37p that its license was refused in 1917 and the property was sold to become a shop for the rest of its life.¹⁵⁴

Waldron's Court

Said to be "another small court I think this held just one small cottage, the only people I remember living there were the Colley Family". In the mid-nineteenth century, there were three dwellings but by 1913 there were only two, although both were valued together. There were of brick, half timber and tile construction and said to be "very old". The kitchen was outside and there was a shared wash house and w.c..

John Rogers, writing in 1905, claimed that it formerly led to the Oldbury but, since the cattle market has been enlarged, the thoroughfare had been stopped. He also reminded us that it was once known as *Rices Alley* because of the 'fisherman' who lived in the 'front street house': "Alleys used to change names when the end house changed tenants".¹⁵⁵ It would, therefore, be logical still to call the alley after the fisherman and landlord of the pub because *Thomas Waldron* lived down the alley much earlier. There is, in fact, no evidence that Waldron lived in the front house; rather, in 1842, he was the owner of the two houses in the alley.¹⁵⁶

One of the tenants in 1842 was eighteen year-old waterman, *William Hollands*, who was the only member of the court to succumb to the Cholera outbreak of 1849.¹⁵⁷ The *Hollands* still lived in the court in 1861 but other tenants changed, although they were mainly watermen. By 1891, pub landlord *Thomas Rice* had retired to houses 1 and 2 which were presumably incorporated into one home of more than five rooms.

During World War One, the court was to produce two heroes. *L/Cpl. William Hawker* was the 23 year old son of *William Hawker* of *Waldron's Court* but who had been adopted at three years of age by aunt, *Mrs. George Healey*, a widow of *Gravel Walk*. He was an ex-pupil of the *Chance Street Council School* and had then been employed by ironmonger, *T. B. Milner*. He was also a former teacher in the Wesleyan Sunday School where he was regarded as a "steady respectable young man". Known as "Shiner", he was wounded in the leg in the autumn 1916 but was killed at *Ypres* in 1917: "our dear old scholar Willie Hawker...taken to a better country".¹⁵⁸

Mrs Hawker, who was a tenant of *Happy Return Cottages* in the Court in 1913, was

also the mother of the *New brothers* who fought heroically together at the *Battle of Loos* in 1915. In the words of the *Tewkesbury Register*:

*"Fighting side by side were two Tewkesbury brothers, Sgt. Tom New and L/Cpl. Ernest New were caught up in the thick of the fighting. Tom was mortally wounded and removed to a casualty clearing station where he died the following day. Ernest wrote to their parents: 'He was shot with a rifle bullet through the lungs; he got excited and got on top of the trench so that he could play more havoc with them and that is how he was hit having exposed himself too much.'*¹⁵⁹

The *Happy Return* with *Waldrons Court* was the last building of the ancient part of the High Street because the buildings next door remind us that redevelopment was not merely a disease of the 1960s.

92 High Street: *Sun Inn*, *Sun Street* and the *Market Shops*

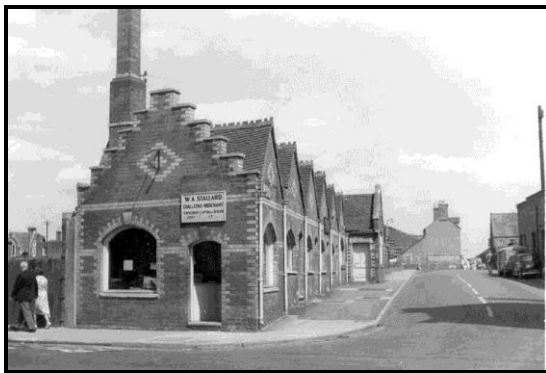


Figure 87: *Old Sun St.*, *Market Shops*, the *Railway Inn* (back centre) & *Car Mart* (right). (MOD)



Figure 88: *Housewives Choice* & the *Nutrition Centre* in Nov. 2003 which now bestraddle *old Sun St.* (Dixon)

One of the most confusing - and clever - achievements of the 'Kremlin' developers was to move *Sun Street* about a hundred metres to the north where today it houses the *Library* and the *Roses Theatre*. Please study the map on page 6, which demonstrates this - and also the re-alignment of the whole area to that the *new Sun Street* is at right angles to the *High Street* and *Oldbury Road* - which it never had been hitherto.

However, there is more confusion since roads in Tewkesbury have been subject to frequent name changes in History¹⁶⁰. For example:

2003	Before 1971	Pre 1871	1811 Enclosure Award
<i>Sun Street</i>	Houses <i>81-83 High Street</i> & <i>Bishops Alley</i>	Houses <i>81-83 High Street</i> & <i>Bishops Alley</i>	1811 land owned by Thomas Vernon
Shops: <i>Housewives Choice</i> & <i>Nutrition Centre</i> - rear car park	<i>Sun Street</i> Then after 1900 <i>Station Street</i>	<i>Sun Inn</i> & <i>Sun Alley</i> (to 1860)	1811 land owned by James Law
<i>Station Street</i>	<i>Station Street</i>	Pre 1860 <i>Middle Road</i> 1825 <i>New Road</i>	1811 <i>No III Street</i>

Sun Street originally took its name from the *Sun Inn*. Linnell claims that it was

not registered as a public house until 1819 but, in 1785 it was rented by William Moore, the liquor merchant and sheriff's officer while in 1790 an auction took place there.¹⁶¹ By 1820 both Linnell and Bob Woodard agree that John Insall was the landlord until his death in 1837 while the Inn continued under son Henry until 1854¹⁶²; in 1851 it housed eight family members and three servants. The last landlord, Dan Kitton was assaulted in 1857¹⁶³. The *Sun Inn* was named after the emblem of the *Yorkists* of 1471 but was, according to Linnell¹⁶⁴, "of doubtful reputation; said to be the haunt of highwaymen". *Sun Alley* was the southern boundary of the inn: it ran in a gentle curve from the Oldbury opposite the Northern side of Station Street into High Street directly opposite No.44. This was made the line of the new Sun Street when the inn was demolished in about 1860." In the 1851 census, five households lived in the alley; in 1816 there was one.

The *Sun Inn* thus became the first incarnation of *Sun Street*. At the Oldbury end on both sides the 1883 Map reveals sheep pens on either side belonging to rival auctioneers but, on the north side, the Urban District Council showed great enterprise in developing the Market Shops which were lock-ups built in a delightful Gothic style until their own demolition in the 1970s¹⁶⁵. Because no one lived in them, they do not appear in the censuses but, in the 1913 tax survey, we learn more about them.



Figure 89: Market Shops before Demolition. (Butwell)



Figure 90: Frederick Preston at No 1 & Cyril Fellows standing in the doorway of No 2. Station St. in on the name plate. (TBC)



Figure 91: 1-2 Market Shops with outsize chimney (P. Preston)

In the photograph, there are five shops with the *Borough Surveyor's office* (later *National Insurance*) and public toilets behind them just before demolition. For most of its twentieth century life, the shop fronting the *High Street* and the shop behind (no 2) were occupied by Frederick Preston, tailor to the county gentry until his retirement.¹⁶⁶ Number 3 was occupied by Reg Brick, a very respectable shoe mender who also doubled as a part-time country postman¹⁶⁷

while the next was occupied by Barber Stokes, also a part-time country







postman. Number 5 contained shoemaker, Hodges¹⁶⁸. These shops were 21 square yards in width but number 6 was three times bigger; it was occupied firstly by Mr. Ridler, *the Borough Surveyor*.¹⁶⁹ Finally there were the public toilets which replaced the sheep pens after the war.



Figure 92: Sun/Station St. looking to High St. in the late 1950s. (Butwell)

What is not shown in the photos is the *weighbridge* constructed in the *High Street*. Echoes of the old *Sun Inn* have been recorded by Norah Day¹⁷⁰: "*Mr. Didcote who worked at T.C.M., where the cellars were used as workshops. This garage was at 101 High Street next to the old Sun Street and he told me of the mysterious humming and banging noises that they used to hear at times and could not account for. Eventually they discovered that the shoe mender's shop on the other side of the street also had cellars that the owner used as this workshop together with various bits of noisy machinery. The two sets of cellars actually extended under Sun Street and met in the middle of it. No doubt they were the last remains of the old Sun Inn.*"

Oldbury Road

<u>High Street</u>	<u>1913 Survey- Ref: (rent)</u>	<u>Mrs. McNiven 1930s</u>	<u>Photographs (Figures 93-97)</u>
81-2	244: ex vet's garden & stables (£50)	Sabrina Cinema	
83	252: Sprague's house (£11.20p)	Perry's House	
<i>Bishops Alley</i>			
84	283: Burston's house (£6.50p)	Waste Ground <i>Photo: Rear of Glover's Alley from waste-ground</i>	
	282: Jordan's House (£6) <i>see photo</i>	Tustins: Fish Shop	
85	281: Jordan's shop (£10) <i>see photo</i>	Lanes' Shop	
86	280: Compton's Shop (£12)	Sears' House	
87	279: Parker's house (£13.65)	Bourne's House	
<i>Double Alley</i>			
88	284: Foresters' Hall & Handley warehouse (£14.35p)	Foresters' Hall In the photo, Station/Sun Street and the railway are hidden but Martin & Bennett's Corn Merchant is visible.	
<i>Glover's Alley</i>			
89	295: Jackson's house & garden (£5.85) <i>photo: rear of Mayalls Court, 1945</i>	Hale's Shop	
90 Doddo		Garden	
<i>Waldrons Alley?</i>			
91 Happy Return	1686: G Hone's land (n/a)	land	
92 Market Shops	319: Hones' sheep pens (£25)	Sheep Pens/Air Raid Shelter	

The ancient *Oldbury* was not the fashionable area of town. Originally an open field for the agricultural use of the town dwellers, it was enclosed by 1811 and, as gradually the hunger for land predominated, it became the industrial area, which then required "homes for working classes".¹⁷¹ The building of *Trinity Church* after 1837 was an indication of the change in balance of population. The burgage plots which lay behind the front houses on the *High Street*, also designed for self-sufficiency, were consumed by land hunger for the building of the alley dwellings.¹⁷² Eventually, it was logical to sell off the end of the long plots which backed onto the Oldbury for dwellings, shops or industrial premises.¹⁷³ Because of the haphazard nature of development, we are very dependent on the



Figure 98: Rear of Mayalls Court & Glovers Alley (TBC)

accounts of eye-witnesses such as Jean McNiven and Peter Preston.¹⁷⁴

Moving from north to south, the townscape revealed the rear of the 'grander' houses as this photo reveals. Houses had been built but others demolished.

Billy Tustin's fish and chip shop is well remembered: "as children, we tormented him by cat calling; it seemed funny at the time."¹⁷⁵ In fact, his lean figure can be spotted in the photograph. The development seemed quite grandiose and was probably owned by the family of Abel Jordan, who started dealing in cars from here. However, it was later occupied by Mr. Lane, described as a former "gentleman's gentleman" who sold general groceries.¹⁷⁶

One of the more stark buildings was that of the *Foresters' Friendly Society*¹⁷⁷ upstairs with the ground floor let to engineering factories.



Figure 100: looking south in 1949 (TBC)

This is the tall building with, in the foreground, a restored 22. In about 1949 the photo shows the dilapidated state of the buildings at the corner of Station Street/Sun Street. The railway is hidden and the large building to the rear is a warehouse¹⁷⁸. It must have been soon afterwards that this land, earlier occupied by

sheep pens was for public toilets which graced the area.¹⁷⁹



Figure 101: Sun St. public toilets in c1960 (Butwell)



Figure 99: No. 22 (Harry Didcote)

Fascinating as is the rear of the High Street, it is surely difficult for anyone to argue that such buildings should be preserved for their aesthetic value.

101 High Street from Manufactory to Car Mart

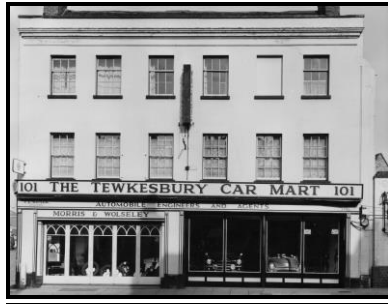


Figure 103: *Tewkesbury Car Mart* (MOD)



Figure 104: Post Office in May 2003 (Dixon)

This is the impressive building of the Car Mart where Harry Didcote was the manager who heard the subterranean noises!



Figure 105: Abel Jordan (Burd)

We think that it was Abel Jordan¹⁸⁰ who set up *Tewkesbury Car Mart*. Abel Jordan does not feature in the 1891 census but by 1913 he owned allotments along with Thomas Cecil Jordan who is presumably his father. As Abel was involved with 22 Oldbury and, in 1891, Thomas Jordan occupied that property, then we can assume that Abel was the son of this hay-trusser, born in 1866. By the 1930s he was the operator of *Gloucester Road Garage*. Abel was involved in the car trade by 1921 when, from 22 Oldbury Road to the rear of the garage, he was offering vehicles for hire and he inaugurated "New motor mail van". Abel Jordan was also landlord of the *Odessa Inn* from 1923-4 and was then replaced by Thomas Jordan. The garage, the first of 1922 and, subsequently, the *Car Mart*, still in Abel Jordan's control according to the 1935 Directory but it was subsequently owned by Vic Watson.¹⁸¹

More modern events are notoriously difficult to research precisely but it is likely that Vic Watson took over the garage before 1946 because there remains a postcard addressed to him at 101 High Street and dated 23/05/1946. Originating from Birmingham, Vic Watson's father, it seemed, travelled the world on government service as Vic was born in Cork, Ireland while another sibling was born in Jamaica. In India before 1947 the father was an armourer to the government. Vic Watson married in 1948 a nurse who was a senior health visitor based in Cheltenham and whose family, originating in County Durham, had horticultural interests in Pershore. They met when her car needed repairing. Although his mother and sister lived in the building, his daughter, Ann¹⁸², told me that she and her family bought Blenheim Villa, Bredon's Hardwicke. Vic Watson himself died in about 1961 but the business survived his death.

The garage was, however, but a development of an older building whose magnificence is spotted on a photograph of the railway station next door, taken in the 1860s. This building originally was *Thomas Sharpe's Coach Manufactory*. The first reference to Thomas Sharpe came when he failed to vote in the 1837 election, although it is significant that he was rich enough to qualify for the



Figure 106: Vic Watson c 1960 (Ann Collings)



Figure 107: Sharpe's Manufactory c. 1860 (enlargement of Kidderminster Railway Museum)

vote¹⁸³. However, there is also some intriguing speculation inspired by the *Linnell*¹⁸⁴ because he suggests that the site was originally that of the *Feathers*, or maybe even the *Pelican Public House*. It may be, however, that the façade is that of the inn. The link is given substance by the appearance of one Thomas Sharpe as the last recorded landlord. Confirmation of this information is provided when Richard Fryzer (landlord, 1812-21) was included in the list of rent payers in 1821 to the Grammar School.¹⁸⁵ However, I am indebted to Wendy Snarey's discovery of the will Henry Insall, the landlord of the *Feathers Inn* before Sharpe - and as we have already seen, the *Sun Inn* - which stated that: "All that tenement or Public House situate in High Street otherwise the Oldbury Street¹⁸⁶ extending from the said street to the road called the Oldbury Road and known by the name of 'The Plume of Feathers' with the exception of extending only as far as the said garden been conveyed unto the use of William Moore Wine Merchant his heirs etc., in trust for Thomas Sharp of Tewkesbury, Coach Builder his heirs etc."

Thomas Sharpe carried on the family business until he died somewhere between 1868 and 1871, after which his widow Sarah maintained the business in her name until she died in 1894. However, his nephew, James Sheward, had been working for the firm since at least 1861 and by 1881 he was living in Barton Road, presumably with his aunt, Mrs. Sharpe in Elmleigh, Barton Road where he described himself as a 'Coach builder'. In 1913 James Sheward was the owner occupier and the building, a house as well as 'blacksmith's shop' comprised 617 square yards. It was two storeys high and the front of the building was used as a home with, on the second floor, four Bedrooms along with another three plus w. c.. The Blacksmith's Shop and 'Long Workshop' together with sitting rooms and kitchens were located on the ground floor. The condition was described as "fair" but "very old". It was valued at £850¹⁸⁷, the price at which it was withdrawn from auction when James Sheward tried to retire in 1917. However, it was sold in 1918 and Sheward died in 1919.

When Harry Didcote was working in the building in the 1930s he discovered a room with supplies of red fabric, presumably used for coach interiors.¹⁸⁸ By the time of its demolition, the garage had built workshops on the site in Sun Street of the old sheep pens.



Figure 108: The Sun St. aspect of the Garage in c.1960 (MOD)

102 High Street: Tewkesbury's First - and Forgotten - Railway Station¹⁸⁹



Figure 109: Station remains in c 1960 with platform occupied with Car Mart petrol pump. (MOD)



Figure 110: In May 2003, *Travel Care* and *Toyzone* - but the building of 103 High Street is virtually unchanged (Dixon)

It is not surprising that the *Car Mart* filled part of the void left by the demolition of the railway station which took place during an unspecified time in the 1930s. In this photo from 1951, the rails can still be detected where once traffic was held up for trucks to cross the High Street. Forbidden by law when the station was opened in 1840, steam trains terminated just before the High Street while horse drawn trucks used gravity to reach *Healing's Mill*.



Figure 111: Car Mart and former station in 1951 (MOD)

This station had been redundant as a passenger station since the building of the Ashchurch to Malvern Railway Line which effectively bypassed the



Figure 112: the abandoned station in 1953 (Morgan)

the building of the Ashchurch to Malvern Railway Line which effectively bypassed the town centre with a new station being opened in 1864 in Station Road behind *Safeways*, where the platform can still be discovered in the undergrowth. The site did, however, remain a goods station especially for corn merchants Martin and Bennett. A specially built connecting entrance can be seen to the right with the old platform waiting room on the left.



Figure 113: enlarged photograph of aerial photograph of the Station in 1928 (Aerofilms)

So much for the remains of the station but it has been a most difficult task to ascertain just what this forgotten station looked like. The latest

photograph discovered was taken from the air in 1928 and it reveals a Tudor Gothic façade and a lantern roof which seemed far too grand for such an unimportant station. Dubbed as "*substantial*" by James Bennett, he describes it as "*a lantern roof of forty feet span and upwards of one hundred and sixty feet long*".¹⁹⁰ 1928 brings the station

within living memory but witnesses disagree about when this outstanding building being demolished¹⁹¹. Harry Didcote started work at Abel Jordan's garage in 1930-1 and does not recall the building. However, Mr. A.H. Page recalls the demolition in about 1930...and tells a fascinating story: "*In the late 1920s, the building was used by the Tewkesbury Working Men's Club, as a meeting place (in the upstairs room). This use obviously ceased when the building was demolished. It was made unsafe when the railway company, the LMS, decided to engage a larger than usual steam engine from its Gloucester shed to haul the raft of railway wagons, loaded with flour sacks, up the gradient from the Mill to the Goods Yard, where Tewkesbury Day Centre now stands, for shunting, to make up a longer train. Previously the task had been undertaken by Belgian Shire horses, pulling one wagon up at a time. The engine was unfortunately too large to pass under the central arch of the station facade on its way down to the Mill which caused the smokestack of the locomotive to be knocked off, removing the Middle stone of the archway.... Luckily no-one was hurt but, in the interests of public safety, the whole structure was razed to the ground.....*".

A picture of the station, when in use, has taken ten years to come into the public domain¹⁹²; its identity - and especially that of the engine - is still somewhat controversial. This photograph was probably taken in the 1860s, during the infancy of photography but we do feel confident that the building to the left is *Sharpe's Manufactory* and that to the right just indicates the familiar spars of 103 High Street, now the '*Cookshop*'. The left entrance would have been for passengers while the right entrance indicates that modifications had been made to try to enable a steam engine to pass underneath.

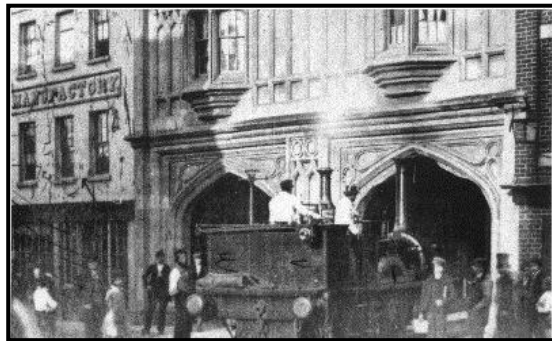


Figure 114 High St. Station in c. 1860
(Kidderminster Railway Museum)



Figure 115: Photograph of the station's demise 16/04/1955 (Reproduced by kind permission of English Heritage.NMR)

Information concerning the former Railway Station site is difficult to obtain but Bob Woodard's researches¹⁹³ have indicated in 1842 that the occupier and owner was the infant, John Alexander Gregory and it was occupied by William Moore¹⁹⁴ whose 5p rent was more than that paid by his two neighbours. Indeed, by 1842, the Station site had a notional rent of £110 and a Poor Rate Assessment of £77 while that for *Thomas Sharpe's Manufactory* was worth only £40 and £28 respectively. According to the census data from 1841 to 1871 the inhabitants of the station were railway workers: a book-keeper, porters and guards. We must remember that Bennett had written about "*four airy upper rooms, forming a comfortable residence.*" Thereafter, it was officially unoccupied. The station continued to be used for goods and the building for a Working Man's Club from 1884 to, at least, 1919 after which it may have been the base of the British Legion.¹⁹⁵ Thereafter, its demise is still shrouded in mystery.

John Dixon's Personal Conclusion

It is perhaps bizarre to contemplate the historical perspective of the Re-Development of Tewkesbury whilst walking round Paris. However, it is a salutary reminder that one should not rush to judgement about the desirability of architectural styles. The Paris beloved by the tourists was a modern concept between 1854 and 1870 when Baron Haussman swept away medieval Paris in order to provide geometric '*grands boulevards*' which would facilitate the suppression of socialist rebellion by the military. There must, at the time have been a furious reaction to the destruction of the Paris of the *Hunchback of Notre Dame*. Today, however, all that is forgotten

It is perhaps inevitable that the medieval Upper High Street was swept away by 'progress' because it was evidently a neglected quarter: it did not feature one building in Gardner's Guide of 1903. Had there been private and public investment in restoration of the individual buildings such as has taken place recently when the alleys have become gentrified, desirable properties then the "*Meds*" might have won.

That having been accepted, it is so disappointing that the generation of planners and architects did not have the imagination to base the redevelopment of the area on the *Doddo*. Instead of being a symbol of reaction, it could have been a beacon of progress.

It is my impression that lessons were quickly learned which is why I have decided to focus upon the Library. It is a building in which I love studying; which has provided the H.Q. for T.H.S. meetings and in which I have developed my web designing skills! In short it is functional. More than that, however, it is a building which lifts the spirits because the architect, Bob Beswick, designed it to be part of Tewkesbury's heritage. It is progressive; it is functional but it does not defile the heritage. Let us hope that if the *Kremlin* is flattened, the re-development will be inspired by this very historical concept.



Figure 116: The High Street Profile of the Library alongside Hereford House (Beswick)



Figure 117: The Sun Street Profile (Beswick)

P.S. Should not we preserve some part of the redevelopment so that we never forget the heritage our Kremlin?

Toby Clempson's Conclusion

While possibly disliking the architectural style, the people using the shops seem to appreciate the Development: it is close to the main bus stop, it houses *Tesco*, *Boots* and the *Post Office* amongst other things and it now boasts a low rate of vacancy. It also offers the facility of a *Snooker Hall* and award-winning *Public Toilets*. It is conveniently close to the main car parks for the town centre as well as the *Library*, *Theatre* and *Swimming Pool*. It, therefore, provides a very definite 'full stop' to the northern end of the shopping centre and, arguably, helps to maintain the retail vitality of the northern part of the *High Street*. People do sit on the benches in the pedestrian way through the shops, which is itself very well used. The development does appear, at least to some extent, to have fulfilled the hopes of the Borough Council of the early 1960s in seeking to create some modern retail floor-space in Tewkesbury in order to help maintain its importance as a retail centre.

In terms of its appearance, it is interesting as much for how it struggles to fit in with the street scene as for its undoubted ugliness. It is inconceivable that such a development would be permitted in such a location now with that kind of design approach. However, if analysed, it does complement in some ways.

- It is the right sort of height at the front, having a similar effect at the top to the *Georgian* parapetted facades so common in the town.
- It is divided visually into bays not too dissimilar from the width of the old shops
- its brick attempts to be something like the soft orange red of the local Tewkesbury Brick.
- There is also some high quality slate on roofs and canopies.
- Apart from the cantilevered first floor, with set-back at ground floor level, the frontage continues the building line of shops to the south along the *High Street*. Although some attempt was made to break up the mass of the building by splitting it into three blocks and by staggering parts of the façade, it cannot escape the problem of its visual uniformity.



Figure 118: Typical late 18thC. parapetted facades.

One of the main glories of the three principal streets of the town is the constant variety of height, style, materials etc between neighbouring buildings, all combining into a generally harmonious whole. *Bishops Walk* is all too much of the same thing visually, this makes it stand out from the rest, and although useful, it is certainly not very beautiful.

What does the future hold for this area?

From time to time there have been suggestions as to whether *Bishops Walk*, in particular, could be improved, perhaps by re-facing the *High Street* frontage with a more traditionally inspired treatment. However these schemes have never left the drawing board. The idea of redevelopment of the *Bishops Walk* site, perhaps together with adjacent land, has been explored through the Tewkesbury Borough Local Plan process. This is in the form of a policy for the area aiming to encourage redevelopment proposals

which would maintain the sort of uses there at the moment but which would produce something which looks better than the existing building.

To bring this account up to the present day, Tewkesbury Borough Council is currently in the process of agreeing a planning brief for consultation on the future land use and planning approach for a larger area of land including *Spring Gardens*, *Oldbury Road* car park, *Bishops Walk* and the *Kwik Save* store area. Once agreed, the brief would guide the designers of development schemes within this area, in terms of what features would need to be included in order for it to be acceptable to the Borough Council. It is a matter of considerable importance to the town that any future redevelopment of this area adds to the aspects of the scheme which work well whilst improving its appearance and achieving the other targeted improvements.

Thirty-eight years ago they bulldozed the Doddo and built "the Kremlin": imagine how good it would be to replace it with something our grandchildren would really be proud to have in Tewkesbury. What would you build instead? Is it time to *bulldoze the Kremlin*?



Figure 119: Bishops Walk from the north in 2003. Together with land to its south east (i.e. to its left in this picture), it still offers the greatest available opportunity to make a major improvement in the town's built environment. But then that is what some thought in 1962: how much have we learned in the last 40 years, and can we use those lessons to good effect? (TBC).



Figure 120: High St 1983 (TBC)



Figure 121: High St c.1960 (Butwell)



Figure 122: 85 and 86 High St c1958 (MOD)



Figure 123: Tesco c 1980 (Butwell)



Figure 124: Contractor's earth mover 1965 (TBC)



Figure 125 High St, Station St corner c1960 (TBC)

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Endnotes

Abbreviations: **TR** (*Tewkesbury Register*)

Part I: the Planning Context

¹ The best book for Tewkesbury place names is *B. Linnell, Theot Wulf and Guppy* (Theoc Press, no date)
² p.11. Hereinafter cited as **Theot**
³ For an in-depth discussion see J Dixon, 'Fascinating ... Alleys' (THS Bulletin Vol. 8 p13).
⁴ Gordon Payne OBE, FSI, MTPI, FRGS, FREconS. 1947
⁵ Rothenburg is one of Germany's most outstanding historic towns, it is full of ancient timber buildings.
⁶ Between 1945 and 1951 the government was that of the Labour Party led by Clement Attlee.
⁷ 102 High Street, see page
⁸ Stroud had expanded since 1801, whilst Tewkesbury stood comparatively still. Stroud Urban
⁹ District Council still lost its independent status in 1974.
¹⁰ under the *Town Development Act 1952*
¹¹ of 30.11.62
¹² The draft agreement was detailed & involved cash payment per capita for population transferred.
¹³ then within Cheltenham Rural District
¹⁴ At that time, the M5 came only as far south as the Strensham junction with the M50 – M5 junction 8.
¹⁵ They were incorporated in November 1962.
¹⁶ This was the pre-1974 fore-runner of '*Structure Plans and Local Plans*'.
¹⁷ 'Bath: A Study in Conservation' HMSO 1968, the other 3 reports being similarly titled & published.
¹⁸ Downloaded from websites: <http://www.wayan.net/photos/rusbig/lubyanka.jpg> &
¹⁹ <http://www.peter.com.au/photos/day/2002-08-14-Kremlin.html>
²⁰ Bill Rennison, himself a Town Mayor, recalls the epithet "*Chairman Mao*".
²¹ *TR* 7/2-18/4/1931. I am deeply grateful to *John Shakles* of the *John Moore Society*.
 26/4/1965. I am grateful to *Lucile*, John's widow, for sending me a copy of this letter.
 Sadly, *Lucile Bell* died in September 2003 but before her death assisted the authors.
TR Editorial 18/06/1965 contained in the Archive of *E & B Linnell*

Part II

79-80 High Street

²² This Gothic building, now demolished, is occupied by semi-detached houses opposite '*Twixtbears*'..
²³ £20,674 in today's money.
²⁴ £8,966 today.
²⁵ *TR* 12/10/1901 p1/4. By 1913 she was living alone at the back of the *Oddfellows Arms*, 109 High St..
TR: "pro Patria Mori"; Record of Deaths of Local Servicemen (those who are not included in Abbey
 Memorials); *whilst serving for the Loyal North Lancs. Regiment*.
²⁷ *TR* 10/01/1920 p4/4
²⁸ Censuses 1841-61; Poll Book of 1868; in 1871 temporarily occupied by corn merchant, Joseph Rice.
81-3 High Street and Bishops Alley and the Sabrina Cinema, 1934-1963
²⁹ Bryan Linnell, *THS* Vol. 1 (1992) pp. 12-14 This article describes the Cinema & its predecessors.
³⁰ on Walker's old Factory, Oldbury Road (now the Ambulance Station) which burned down 06/12/1932.
³¹ 1913 Tax Survey, Reference no. 244 hereinafter 1913 Survey
³² Theot
³³ 1913 Tax Survey reference no 245
³⁴ The passage could well have been the former *Garretts Alley*
³⁵ He was the Borough Mace Bearer. The property was possibly owned in 1842 by the *Codrington* family
 who bought properties to aid their election campaigns
³⁶ 1851 census – see *Woodard Database*
³⁷ Aerofilms
³⁸ In 2003, worth £2,624
³⁹ *TR* 12/04/1884 (1d) p1/5
⁴⁰ *TR* 17.03.1917 p4/2
⁴¹ **John Rogers** (Short History of Tewkesbury Alleys (1sr Ed. 1905, reprinted by Collections, 1995;
 hereinafter **Rogers**) claimed that it was named after Samuel Bishop the butcher with his business on left hand side
 of alley while the slaughter house was at top end next to the Oldbury. However, Rogers could be wrong in that
 Elizabeth Bishop, daughter of Joseph Bishop, lived at 83 High St. in 1841 & 1851 censuses.
⁴² I am grateful to **Wendy Snarey** for drawing my attention to this document. The alley reached the
 Oldbury at No 24 Oldbury Rd. inhabited by Mrs. Annie Jordan. Thomas Jordan owned all the properties except no
 6 (with its share of water closet), owned by Emma Jane Jones
84, 84A & 85 High Street, Bedford's Court & the old Red Lion
⁴³ Colin Wicken, *THS* Vol. 3 p23
⁴⁴ Toby Clempson, TBC archive from deed dated 27/07/1889.

- 45 IR58/33072 Particulars and Notes on Inspection **254** 12.9.19U 84a High Street
 46 Toby, the Town Planner, does not believe that the building was divided in this way.
 47 TR 25/9/1897 Supp/2: Bedford v Dyer County Court: Adjourned Dispute Over Unicorn Alley; according
 to TR 30/10/1897 p1/4, "*the house on left hand side has right of way and won costs*". That would be no 84 with the
 integral alley way entrance.
 48 Property Sales, Black Bear, By Mr Hone: *Late Owners Mr. & Mrs. John Predith. occupants Mr. Rudge &*
Mrs. Sweet. 30/06/1894 p1/5
 49 1913 Survey above
 50 Theot' 1978: p6 1542; 1860 George Lane (George Inn?); 1900 Quay North 98: Red Lane "2 dwellings
never heard any suggestion why.... nothing very red except red sandstone in the wall at the back of the
Tudor House garden. I think it was because there used to be a public house nearly opposite called the
Red Lion... corrupted to Red Lane."
 51 Red Lion THS Vol. 5 p52: Norah Day:
 52 Linnell: 'Tewkesbury Pubs' 1996 Edition ref. no. 86. Hereinafter **Linnell Pubs.**
 53 1793 & 1795 references from *Red Lion THS Vol. 3 p23 written by Colin Wicken*
 Note the clash between Norah Day and Colin Wicken over what accompanies the "*Bolt*"!
 54 Wicken above
 55 Pigot's Directory for Tewkesbury 1830 GFHS Website & Volume I p316 J. Bennett " Register &
 Magazine" (Town Library)
 56 Wicken above: Fouch (who was at Unicorn according to Robinson's Directory.
 57 Linnell Pubs above
 58 'Tewkesbury Monthly Record' Borough Police 9th February 1854 transcribed by Wendy Snarey.
 59 Linnell Pubs above
 60 Census 1871-b71050
 61 11 High Street? In 1791 Samuel Ricketts was charged Poor rate at this address. (Woodard from P329 Ov
 1/1. Poor Rate Assessment. 20/10/1791.) In the 1785 Poor Rate Assessment -of which he was also the official
 collector - **Samuel Ricketts** was also 'Innholder' for he *Red Lion* – this was only a few doors from the site cleared
 for the Town Hall at 18 High St..
 62 Auction - Weaver & Moore: " Cross Keys Inn", High St., Occ. Mrs Ann Wakefield, 04/05/1872 p1/1
 63 Census 1881-b81050 84 High Street, Common Lodging House
 64 Clempson, TBC archive from deed dated 27/07/1889
 65 Rogers p 7
 66 C. Burd 'Around Tewkesbury' p97 published by Tempus 2001; available at local bookshops;
 67 His son was *Bill Shakespeare* who set water speed records and was killed whilst doing so.
 68 B1/2a: Old Houses of Tewkesbury & Holme Castle published by W North (2nd edition) price 6d (2a)
 c1881 (Tewkesbury Borough Museum Upstairs Room) next paragraph: "*On the opposite side adjoining the Red*
Lane, stands the old residence of the time of Elizabeth...." Is this the modern Tudor House Hotel?
 69 I am grateful to Toby Clempson, the Town Planner, for the information in this paragraph.
 70 Linnell Archive: A3/5d3A: Notes on streets and premises 1965 file on restoration and conservation issues
 mainly by Mrs. E. Linnell.
 71 Linnell Archive: A3/5c2: Notes on streets and premises file on restoration and conservation issues mainly
 by Mrs. E. Linnell. Re **Sally Watkins Cottage**: the other contender was in Church Street but it was "*impossible to tie*
in with the text". Additional description: "*Downstairs, there were eleven 4" beams on either side of the centre beam*
& twenty-two similar ones on either side of the upstairs beam. Vertical wall beams were all round. One single
stone in the dividing wall was 4.5'x1.5'x1.5'." B1: House by house street profile: High Street – 85 In his
 description of properties, Linnell thus describes no 85: "*quaint gable; carved oak beams within, one having floral*
boss in centre covering the intersection of a Tudor Arch (Rose); most bosses had been chipped off; one beam may
have been used in renovation of Abbey Vicarage, 1965".
- 86 High Street & Steels Alley**
- 72 1913 Survey, reference number 264.
 73 Said to be "an agent for Mrs. Matthews"; was this Thomas Walker the Engineer?
 74 In 1919 it was occupied by the family of Mabel Hewlett, the music teacher who had suffered a limp since
 a child hood accident: Rose Hogan, "First British School in Tewkesbury" (private, no date). In 2003, worth
 £11,053. Sidney Baker, whether professionally or personally also traded interest in the *Railway Inn* (TR
 03.10.1914) and the *Teddington Inn* (02.11.1918). Theot p13 claimed it was so called after 1830 and demolished
 in 1965. He had the incorrect address of 84-5 High Street
 75 In 1891, Robert Graham was absent from the census but his wife was living with seven children at 64
 Barton Street, the present Town Museum.
 76 He migrated to live in 17 Victoria Street, Hereford where he was the employer of 58. (1881 census on
www.familysearch.com)

77 Rogers no. 4; he said there were two dwellings in the alley. In the 1861 census his children Dinah and Stephen were still living in Steels Court. In 1919, the two cottages were sold along with the front house; “*brick & tile cottages at rear, approached from Steels Court, Tenants Newman & Taylor.*”

78 Linnell Pubs no. 81 p66. Samuel Hodges, son of a stocking-maker occupied the Brewer's Arms, of 122 High St. and known as "*Hodges' Beer House*, in the 1860s while he later moved to the New Inn, 28 High St.. Mrs. Hodges made and sold clay pipes.

87 High Street incorporating Double Alley

79 1913 Survey: although the condition was described as “*fair*.”

80 1935 Kelly's Directory

81 There were two generations of Samuel Davison who died in 1895 and 1918. Mike English, Borough Cemetery records, ref. 1110: an eighth child, Laura Mary Ann was buried in 1868 aged only 10 weeks

82 Will of 1840 supplied by member Michael Stenhouse of Norway.

83 Toby Clempson notes: Application (1) 14th Aug 1958; refusal 21st 1958. (2) November 1958 antique shop with the present use stated as residential. “*This is slightly puzzling as the application in September had stated that the premises were an empty shop, which would not have required permission unless it had been out of use for many years. In any case, permission was granted unconditionally on 1811/1958.*”

84 John Moore ‘*Portrait of Elmbury*’ Gloucestershire 1995 edition, P12-15; hereinafter **Moore, Elmbury**

85 Rogers Alley no: 8 **Double Alley** High St. (east) (87-88) No of houses 1905: 20. He claimed that” **Mr. John Collins*** a respectable builder lived at the top house enclosed in walls. One grandson is Leamington Collins a bricklayer. However, from the database I can find no evidence of this – the Collins father and son inhabited 77 High St. for a time. He would mean **Lewington** Collins

86 Theot: p5 & 11 site redeveloped 1972 and renamed 1973 as *Bishops Walk*. There are only three references to Oldbury Walk in the whole of the database! There are no references to its older names.

87 Clif Burd has calculated about a 100 people living in the alley in 1841. (THS Vol. 11, p53)

88 In 2003, worth £174. It was let at an annual rent of £3.64p

89 Born in 1844 and son of Maltster Daniel Chandler, he was a freemason and accountant who was a collector of poor rates and secretary to the Hospital League of Friends he died in 1921.

90 **Janet Jones** is worthy of further study. Starting as a shoe binder she seems to have become an estate agent and owner of lots of properties – what was then known as a “*small capitalist*”!

91 04/02/1857 ‘*Tewkesbury Weekly Record*’: hereinafter **TWR**

92 TR 08/04/1871 p1/5

93 TR 06/07/1878 p1/5

94 TR 24/12/1921 p5/1

95 One wonders how much the decision was swayed by possible economic benefits rather than political ideology. In 1868 there was still no secret ballot (introduced in 1872) and so votes could still be “bought”.

96 09/11/1840: J. Bennett " Register & Magazine" Volume II, p17 (Town Library)

97 TR: 22/04/1865 p1/5 & 03.06.1865 p1/6

98 TR 24/10/1874 1/5 & prison record 19 Oct 1874 GRO ref: Q/Gc6/6

99 TR: 04/03/1882 p1/6, 02/09/1882 p1/5 28/10/1882 p1/4, 24/02/1883 1/5. In 1897-9 one or the other was convicted of being drunk and disorderly; 12/06/1897 p1/5 29/04/1899 p1/5

100 TR 04/09?1915 p4/5

101 in 2003, worth £8,137; TR: 16/12/1916, p4/5

102 Born in 1907, John Moore wrote *Portrait of Elmbury* in draft whilst landing in Normandy after D-day!

88 High Street and Glovers Alley

103 1913 Survey no 292; rental £16.90p and value £170 (£8,107.30p at 2003 values). It had been sold for this amount in 1903 (£9120 in 2003). It was not evidently an appreciating asset.

104 Linnell archive: he also has listed the following shop occupants after 1939 – Mrs. Davey , Squibb and Hast. He also cites a Miss Pike in 1860 and *Orme's Servants Agency* from 1902-3. In 1931 there was a Smith.

105 Gloucester Assizes TR 22/01/1921 p4/4 + 29/01/1921 p8/3

106 21/01/1899 1/4. Formerly a laundress and grocer from Evesham, she had lived as a widow in Tewkesbury since 1851.

107 John Moss buried 6 Jan 1865 aged 18 mths. Ref: 742 and George Moss 25 Jan 1865 3 yrs ref: 752

108 see page 38-9

109 Thomas Moss summoned Thomas Hawker for assault 26/04/1884 p1/5. (However, the 1881 census recorded him as *Hawkins*.)

110 This was the first election under the act which had extended the vote to most males over 21 whatever their social class. Tewkesbury had, however, lost its own M.P. and was now merged into the wider county Tewkesbury Division Election. In this election the Forthampton landowner, J R Yorke (Conservative - 4,666 votes) gained a majority of 182 against ‘*radical*’ G. R. Samuelson (Liberal - 4,482). Apparently the Radicals were “*dumbfounded*” and the fear of mob caused Yorke to cancel a planned visit by train. The “*radical roughs*” -Thomas Anderson, John Price, Thomas Drinkwater, John Collins, Charles Harrington, George Fletcher, William Shelton, George Sweet, Eliza Williams (alias Boroughs) & John Mew – were bound over for £50 (1997 *£2,431) for 12 months (TR

09/01/1886 p1/4) while the claim for compensation was considered on 09/01/1886 p1/4

¹¹¹ At the Borough Police Court, Alice Moss (formerly Alice Taylor of Deerhurst, married since 24/12/1882 in Staffordshire, bigamously married William Burgoyne on 12/12/1885. TR 09/01/1886 1/4

¹¹² Death. 21/02/1891 p1/4; decision to replace the late Thomas Moss 11/07/1891 p1/5

¹¹³ News Cutting Collection (Gloucestershire Echo/ Chronicle)

¹¹⁴ Because of the renumbering of premises and the lack of numbering used in earlier censuses.

¹¹⁵ It was also confusingly known as *Townsend's Alley*; this last featured in censuses during 1841-1861 but *Glovers Alley* features from 1841-1891. The TR records in 23/10/1897 supp/1 that Townsends Alley was stopped. Theot p11 also claims that it was known as *Mansells Alley* in 1750 but I have found no corroboration.

¹¹⁶ He died in 1853: TWR, 30/06/1853

¹¹⁷ in 2003, worth £408, £204 & £81 respectively; Woodard Research from GRO, Tbr A6/6. 6/1/1842. Poor Rate Assessment (tbra66.doc).

¹¹⁸ Rogers Alley no: 9; I can find no record of Mr. Fame.

¹¹⁹ Dr Turner, TR 25/06/1898 p1/5

¹²⁰ Perhaps surprisingly in view of the comments, the defendants – and not the owners - were committed to 14 days hard labour; Borough Police Court TR 25/03/1922 p5/3

¹²¹ There is no mention in records of '*Black Sal*' alias '*old Shuk*' or in reality, Susan Evans, having lived in Double Alley; this might therefore be poetic licence. For a historical biography of *Susan Evans*, do read my article in *THS Volume 10, p65-66*.

89 High Street

¹²² Burial records show that he had lost two infant children: Ellen aged 8 months in 1857 (ref: 66) and Jane aged 2 in 1861 (ref 497). Both were buried in "unconsecrated" i.e. non-conformist plots but that the latter's registration was 'omitted'. Mike English explains that "*Some burials omitted and have been entered at a further date, all entries with relevant reference number as entered in the register.*"

¹²³ Town Council - William Ball & Jubilee Francis had been appointed a recipient of the Bedesmen's money in the place of Thomas Cox, shoemaker, deceased. TR 10/07/1880 p1/5

¹²⁴ Police Court: Ellen Jones - fined for assaulting Sarah Hodges TR 01/06/1872 p1/5 & 21/10/1876 p1/4

¹²⁵ 1913 Survey no 304; its gross value was £150, £7,153.50 in 2003 values.

¹²⁶ Town Library, Museum Collection , p7

¹²⁷ Mrs Jean McNiven, 2003 transcribed by John Pocock; hereinafter **McNiven**

¹²⁸ She is referring to Sir Oswald Mosley of the British Union of Fascists. Harry Didcote corroborates the story - except Ellen's role.

90 High Street and Mayalls Court

¹²⁹ Oral testimony of Jean McNiven in 2003, niece of Ellen Jones. Mr. Pinfold: an "*ex army gent who my aunt christened 'Colonel Chinstrap', she never got on with him, and every week brought a different saga*". This is a reference to Jack Train's character in *ITMA*, a war time radio programme. (Thanks to Bill Rennison)

¹³⁰ This was George Brown, Headmaster of Tewkesbury Boys' Grammar School.

¹³¹ A3/5f3: Notes on streets and premises (B. Linnell?) 16/07/1965 file on restoration and conservation issues mainly Mrs. E. Linnell (Linnell Archive) Newspaper cuttings.

¹³² A3/5d3A: Notes on streets and premises (B. Linnell?) no specific date 1965: file on restoration and conservation issues mainly Mrs. E. Linnell (Linnell Archive) Newspaper cuttings

¹³³ In fact, a recently discovered photograph (unfortunately too poor to publish) of a water spout which occurred in Tewkesbury in 1912 does faintly reveal no. 90 with 'Tudor' exterior woodwork. It was in a dilapidated state but does suggest that the frontage was restored rather than "*tarted up*".

¹³⁴ 1935 Kelly's Directory and Notes from Linnell Archive

¹³⁵ Norah Day in *THS Bulletin* Vol. 4 p46. She acknowledges that this is one of many unverified versions of the story. *Theoc* was supposedly a hermit and a form of his name led to the modern Tewkesbury. (Bennett, *History* p 4, 2002 edition)

¹³⁶ auction as Lot 1 TR 31.10.1914- late Mr John Broad now Misses Broad. See note 131 above.

¹³⁷ in 2003, worth £7869; Ref 308. There is no mention of a cellar.

¹³⁸ Miss Nora Day, alias Tewkesburian, in her book, "*They used to live in Tewkesbury*" pp64-5 comments: "*in 1798 James Bubb & his son-in-law Richard Day were heavily engaged in the Codrington election campaign. These elections were notorious for bribery and corruption..... So Sir William acquired a quantity of small properties in Tewkesbury, transferring the ownership at election time to his tenants, servants & others that he could trust, to give them the right to a vote and transferring them back to himself*" after the election.

¹³⁹ Rogers no 10.

¹⁴⁰ 1913 Survey nos. 305-7: they are valued between £50 & £80. (in 2003, £2,400-£3,800)

¹⁴¹ Tewkesburian op. cit; Burd Tewkesbury" p89, 'Paupers receiving Occasional Parochial Relief'; see n64.

¹⁴² CWGC website and TR 19/10/1918 p4/4.

¹⁴³ TR: 24/07/1920 p5/1

91 High Street and Waldrons Court

¹⁴⁴ McNiven & TR 04.01.1919 p6/6

¹⁴⁵ Linnell Pubs p55 no 50

¹⁴⁶ David Willavoys wrote in Primitive Methodists in Tewkesbury: "Not many records survive of the activities of the Primitives in Tewkesbury, but it is known that in the 1830's, they rented a property for use as a meeting house". According to Bennet in 1836 "The place in which they assemble to worship is now become too small" so on 19 February 1837 a "Reading Room" was opened in the High Street but in February 1838 "Theatre was converted into a Sunday School Room & Primitive Methodist Preaching Room into a Beer Shop". Bennett Register Vol. I, pp279, 321 & 369

¹⁴⁷ Skilled working class men were accorded the vote by the 1867 act but, until 1872, there was no secret ballot. So lists, invaluable to the local historian were maintained which recorded for whom they had voted. B The confusion over whether a dead man voted indicates an element of corruption which then existed in the process. In the 1841 census the site was unoccupied; in 1851 there lived Elizabeth White, a waterman's wife.

¹⁴⁹ TR 18/02/1893 p1/5

¹⁵⁰ 30/06/1894 p1/5; they owned property in *Spring Gardens* and *Walls Court*, worth £44,000 in 2003.

¹⁵¹ 30/10/1895: "Died at *Happy Return Inn*, *Elaine Lilian Crockett* aged 3 weeks." 02/11/1895 p1/

¹⁵² Police Court: 22/06/1901p1/6 & 24/11/1883 p1/5

¹⁵³ 1913 reference 311. In 2003, £751 was worth £35,815.

¹⁵⁴ Other landlords according to Linnell, were 1903-04 Frank Bullock, 1904-06 William Woods, 1908-09 Joseph Hawkins, 1909-12 Walter Lane, 1912-14 Charles & Edward Harris, 1914-15 Ann Colwell, 1906-08 Frederick Whatley, 1915-16 Edward Harris & lastly 1916-17 Thomas Albert Curtis. In 2003, 1917's 37p was worth £9.96. It was due compensation for closure under the 1910 Act but, by 1919, it still had not been paid. Harry Davies bought the premises at auction. TR: 24.08.1918 p5/1 & 01.02.1919 p4/6

¹⁵⁵ Rogers No. 11; Theot p13 who thought the change from alley to court took place c 1870. However, the 1851 Census labels it as a 'court'.

¹⁵⁶ Woodard Researches 1995; 1842 TBR A6/6. 6/1/1842. Poor Rate Assessment. The database contains very little information about a *Thomas Waldron* but one was a property owner & churchwarden, d. 1793.

¹⁵⁷ 1849 Bennett no 4 (Volume II)

¹⁵⁸ Glos. County War Memorial: (form Hmf1) G R O D2888/9 & Memorial In The Abbey (1) & Memorial In The Abbey (2): Those Who Volunteered 1914-16 & TR: "*pro patria mori*" & Methodist Church Memorial. Comments from TR 2/9/1916; TR 1/9/1917; TR: 3/11/1917. The death comment in a letter from *Jesse J. Rice*.

¹⁵⁹ TR 10 Oct 1915;; for excellent account of Loos & !0th *Glosters*, read N Christian: 'In the Shadow of Lone tree', (ISBN 0 9528378 0 3, 1995 out of print) p106. Abbey Memorial In The Abbey (2) above.

92 High Street: Sun Inn, Sun Street and the Market Shops

¹⁶⁰ The most useful reference book on Tewkesbury names is *Theot*. The *1811 Enclosure Ward* is contained in GRO Signal Publication. In addition *High Street* was known in the Sixteenth Century as "*Oldbury Street*" (J.W. Rennison, THS Vol. 11 p 58); *Oldbury Road* as (*Oldbury*) *Back Road in 1883 and No 1 Road in 1811; Trinity Street* as *New Street*.

¹⁶¹ For 1785 see *Woodard Database* 1785 *Poor Rate*; for 1790 see Burd 'Tewkesbury', p 27.

¹⁶² Bob Woodard: List of the Chief Rents, payable to the Governors of the Free Grammar School, in Tewkesbury, showing the Proprietors and Occupiers chargeable in 1821. Linnell records that Henry Insall was also landlord of the Feathers Hotel of 101 High Street, from 1839-40, when William Moore was the land owner.

¹⁶³ TWR, 03/06/1857: Borough Police Court.

¹⁶⁴ Linnell Pubs p74 ref. no. 104. He claims that, during demolition, human remains were found in a shallow grave in the coach-yard. In 1861 there was a report of the laying of a foundation stone of the *New Sun Inn* but nothing came of that venture.

¹⁶⁵ Linnell Archive A3/5a2: Notes on streets and premises file on restoration and conservation issues mainly Mrs. E. Linnell: *Market Shops: 1872 5 shops, single storied, built on Sun St for the UDC by Lewington Collins @ £249/19/6d (£249.98p)*. Included a weighing office; n.b. a weighbridge was fitted on the High St.. It could be that the Shops were built by the Local Board of Health as a result of a £336/15/0d loan (in 2003, worth £18,653) from the *Oddfellows' Friendly Society* (TR 09/06/1888 supp. p1/2)

¹⁶⁶ Article by Mrs. M. Willavoys, 'a Tailor Of Tewkesbury', February 1998 about *James George Preston*; born 1849; he moved from Bourton to Tewkesbury in 1894 - not as a tailor but as licensee of Wheatsheaf Inn; in 1897 there was an advert as "Tailor and Breeches-maker" of 54 High Street but, by 1901, he was living at 122 High St., tailoring in "lock up" in old Sun Street; father of F.E. Preston.

¹⁶⁷ According to Peter Preston, son of Frederick and interviewed in September 2003, Reg Brick possessed a fine singing voice and was a member of the Choral Society. He lived in a council house in Abbots Road. His prosperity was undermined by the introduction of rubber soles in the 1930s.

¹⁶⁸ P. Preston: Mr. Hodges had two children, one of whom was blind.

¹⁶⁹ Photograph by courtesy of Peter Preston; the chimney served a fire which only heated the shop. I am also grateful to interviews with Jean McNiven and Harry Didcote.

¹⁷⁰ THS Bulletin, Vol. 11 p 36: Miss Norah Day, I love a mystery: “*but when the new shops replaced the old properties what happened? Were all the cellars filled in? ...*”

Oldbury Road

¹⁷¹ William Jeynes, the developer, died on 14/01/1899 in Jeynes Row aged 78. The report in the TR, 21/01/1899 p1/6 said that he was “respected, upright, trusted, (with) integrity”. He was a mason, working on railway contracts in France and, in 1863-4, on the Mythe Tunnel.

¹⁷² For a much fuller discussion of alleys see *THS Bulletin, Volumes 2, 8, 9, 11 & 12*.

¹⁷³ These included Thomas Walker’s fairground engineering works & Humphrey Brown’s Silk Mill.

¹⁷⁴ As above

¹⁷⁵ McNiven: “*at the top of the alley fronting the Oldbury Road, were the Perry family. From the Oldbury Road end of the alley was some ground, where some cottages had been demolished in the mid 1930s, occupied by the Mattys and Goodes*”.

¹⁷⁶ P. Preston: 22 Oldbury Road; Mr. Lane’s son, Garth Lane, was an RAF pilot in the Second World War and married Thelma Heath, worked for Hoover and then emigrated to Australia.

¹⁷⁷ The *Ancient Order of Foresters* was an example of Victorian self-help. In the days before the welfare state, working people were encouraged to save for sickness and old age while richer townspeople would subscribe money as an act of charity. The movement deserves its own historian.

¹⁷⁸ Martin and Bennett’s Corn Merchant at the rear of 103-4 High Street

¹⁷⁹ Mrs. McNiven has caused controversy amongst contemporaries by claiming that a public air-raid shelter was located there, “*occupying the rest of the corner plot with Oldbury Road*”. Peter Preston and Harry Didcote do not remember the air-raid shelter.

101 High Street from Manufactory to Car Mart

¹⁸⁰ TR 08/10/1921. The Photograph is from the *Harry Workman Archive*.

¹⁸¹ Kelly’s Directory Of The County Of Gloucestershire, 1935 no 342: Commercial Motor Engineer: Jordan Abel, High Street, 101; telephone 52; Advert; Jordan’s Garage, High Street, Abel Jordan; Register 20/05/1922 p4/2

¹⁸² I am indebted to *Mrs Ann Collings* for her contributions of reminiscences for this article.

¹⁸³ J. Bennett “Register & Magazine” (Town Library) Volume I p336

¹⁸⁴ Linnell Pubs 1996 Edition p50

¹⁸⁵ List of the Chief Rents, payable to the Governors of the Free Grammar School, in Tewkesbury, showing the Proprietors and Occupiers chargeable in 1821. Research by the late R.C. Woodard & available on the *Woodard Database*.

Proprietors	Occupiers	Rent	Address
Law (Widow)	Richard Fryzer	(Feathers Inn (11) 0s 11d	

John Alexander Gregory (infant)	William Moore	1s 0d	
---------------------------------	---------------	-------	--

John Kings	Late Benjamin Evans	0s 3d	103 High St
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¹⁸⁶ note that High Street was originally called Oldbury Street see J W Rennison THS Bulletin Vol 11 p58

¹⁸⁷ IR58/33073 Particulars and Notes on Inspection 321 12.9.19U 101 High Street House And Blacksmiths Shop. In 2003 £850 was worth £40,536.

¹⁸⁸ Interview with Harry Didcote, 2002.

102 High Street: Tewkesbury’s First – and Forgotten - Railway Station

¹⁸⁹ For more detailed and integrated discussion of the site covered by 101-102 High Street see *John Dixon, Tewkesbury’s First and Forgotten Railway Station in THS Vol. 12 p27-36*.

¹⁹⁰ J. Bennett “Register & Magazine” (Town Library) Volume I p336

¹⁹¹ Harry Didcote started work at Abel Jordan’s garage in 1930-1 and does not recall the building; however, Mr. A.H. Page recalls the demolition in about 1930.

¹⁹² I am deeply grateful firstly to Ken Marsh who put an enquiry in a local newspaper, which uncovered another version of the same photograph denied to the public for so long was from the curator of the *Severn Valley Railway Museum* at Kidderminster, David Postle.

¹⁹³ Bob Woodard: *List of the Chief Rents, payable to the Governors of the Free Grammar School, in Tewkesbury, showing the Proprietors and Occupiers chargeable in 1821*.

¹⁹⁴ We met this wine merchant on p53

¹⁹⁵ In 1884 the Tewkesbury Register announced that “*Mr. Hayward*¹⁹⁵ *proffered use of one of his rooms at the old railway station*” for the Tricycle Club and then reported dramatically in 1895 that there had taken place a “robbery of £3.00 from the *Working Men’s Club, Old Railway Station, when M. Gough* was the Honorary Secretary¹⁹⁵. A study of GRO file D2786 of Ledgers of the *Hayward* business yielded no further clues. Sources: Tewkesbury Register, 17/05/1884 p1/6-7 & 21/12/1895 p1/6 respectively and A. H. Page.

Pictorial Postscript



Figure 126: *Tewkesbury Car Mart* towards the end of its active life. (MOD)



Figure 127: Townspeople gather round a vintage car outside 88-89 High Street (Bigland)

What type of car is it?

Do you recognise any of these people?

The authors would love to hear from anyone who can correct information or add to our knowledge of this fascinating area and era of our History

Contact **John** on **294262** or johnhistory46@btinternet.com



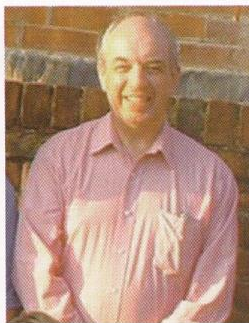


HERITAGE
DEFILED?

PROGRESS??



The Authors



John Dixon

Born in 1946, he reluctantly left Grimsby in 1968 to study History at the London School of Economics. In 1988 he gained his M.Phil., with a thesis on Vichy France. After serving with VSO in Nigeria in 1969, he trained as a teacher and then followed a teaching career arriving 'home' in

Tewkesbury where he spent 18 happy years as Head of History and Humanities. In 1991 he co-founded Tewkesbury Historical Society after which his roots were transplanted to Tewkesbury. Since retirement in 2001, he has tried to be a full-time historian, editing Harry Workman's Memoirs and developing his beloved Woodard Database!



Toby Clempson

Born in 1958 in Cheltenham, he studied Geography at the University of Birmingham. Following work in the Civil Service in London and Stroud, he decided to enter the Town Planning profession and subsequently gained an MA at the University of the West of England in 1993.

He is a member of the Royal Town Planning Institute. Local history and architecture are long held interests. He is an active member of the Stroudwater Textile Trust, working to interpret and publicise the history of the woollen cloth industry. Since 1989 he has worked at Tewkesbury Borough Council as part of the Local Plans team.

We have both aged somewhat – but are still going strong!