

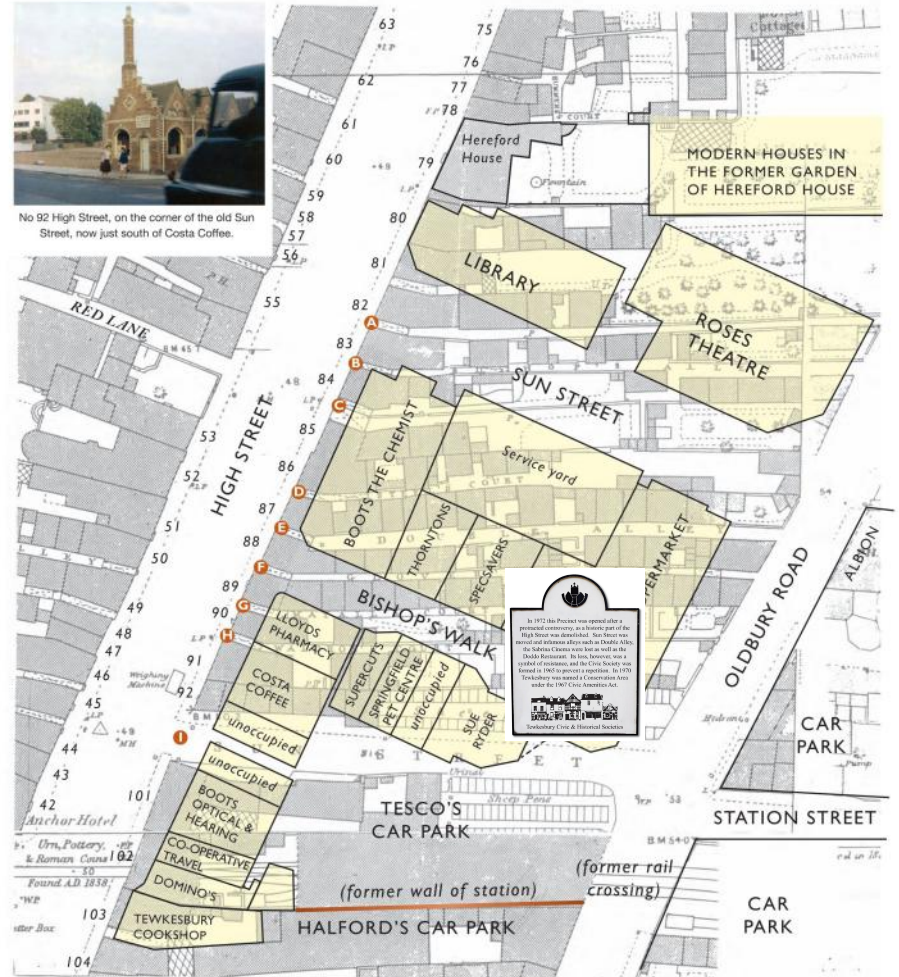


In 1972 this Precinct was opened after a protracted controversy, as a historic part of the High Street was demolished. Sun Street was moved and infamous alleys such as Double Alley, the Sabrina Cinema were lost as well as the Doddo Restaurant. Its loss, however, was a symbol of resistance, and the Civic Society was formed in 1965 to prevent a repetition. In 1970 Tewkesbury was named a Conservation Area under the 1967 Civic Amenities Act.



Tewkesbury Civic & Historical Societies

Map: High Street, Tewkesbury, 1883, and after 1964-1972 development.



This map is a super-imposition of a modern street map on the O.S. 6 inch 1883/1906 Map, (originally reproduced with the kind permission of the Ordnance Survey). In 2003, an overlay showing the modern development was hand-drawn by Jan Natrass; it has now been updated to 2017 by Sam Eedle. The house numbers on the High Street are those post 1871. Picture, right: view from the junction of Station Street and Oldbury, c1960, where the entrance to Tesco's carpark now lies. Almost all the old buildings in this picture were demolished during the 1964-1972 development.



- Pre-1964 street and alley entrances in High Street:-
- A Garretts Alley
- B Bishops Alley
- C Red Lion Alley
- D Steels Court
- E Double Alley
- F Glovers Alley
- G Mayalls Court
- H Waldrons Court
- I Sun Street (old)

TEWKESBURY ‘THEN AND NOW’

VOLUME V 2017



by John Dixon

Tewkesbury Historical Society
as featured in *Tewkesbury Direct Magazine*
with augmented illustrations and information

For the benefit of:
Friends of Gloucestershire Archives

Second Edition of
'Doddo Defiled' with first
full edition on DVD

Foreword

THEN: From 1858 until 1922 Tewkesbury had two weekly newspapers devoted to local, as well as national news – the *Tewkesbury Record* (1853-1922) was Liberal and the *Tewkesbury Register* was Conservative. From 1922 only the *Register* survived until, albeit with increasing news from the Evesham area.

NOW: We have depended on the *Gloucestershire Echo*, based in Cheltenham, until *Tewkesbury Direct* was first published in March 2009. It was so welcome since its aim was “to provide a local voice to promote business in Tewkesbury”.



Published monthly, the magazine aimed to attract local readers, by providing stories about local people, issues and interesting features. The editor commented: “Our feature *Tewkesbury Then and*

Now has become immensely popular and we are indebted to local historian, John Dixon, who has spliced together the past and the present. Through his efforts we have a historical record, saved to print, around the world on the internet, at Tewkesburydirect.co.uk .”.

The interest shown in our Local History is much appreciated by *THS* – because we are convinced it is an important way for people to provide more information on the fascinating history of our town.

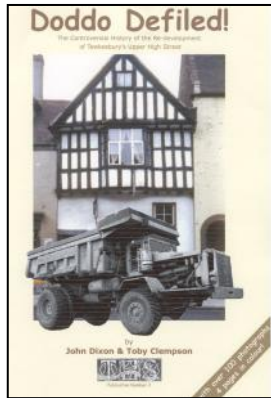
THEN AND NOW is not a wallow in mere nostalgia – it is an attempt to understand how our town has developed. **This volume is not merely a reprint of the monthly articles. It adds more photographs, even more information – and this year, 4 extra pages, as it is an abridged 2nd Edition of ‘Doddo Defiled’!**

John Dixon

Please add to it by
ringing 294262
or emailing
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A. *Doddo Defiled!*



It is hard to believe that, when *THS Publication no. 2* was issued, it was nearly 15 years ago. Then I had the good fortune to meet my collaborator, **Toby Clempson**, a Town Planner with the Borough Council, who made available for that book not only his expertise but also his portfolio of photographs. He has now retired but he occasionally enriches discussions on Facebook: '*The Good Old Days*' with his knowledge and photos.

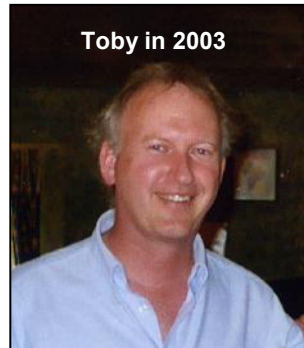
It also seems to be the sad law of commerce in Market Towns that most of the businesses that we featured on Jan

Natgrass' hand-drawn map have now disappeared into oblivion - only *Boots*, *the Chemist* has survived, along with the *Co-Operative Travel* and *Springfield Pet Centre*. Even *Tesco* has reduced its size as a '*Metro*'. The award winning Toilets were also closed in a bout of Borough Council cost cutting - to be replaced, perhaps inevitably, by a charity shop: that of *Sue Ryder*.

The buildings, however, survive to the regret of many who erroneously call it the *Kremlin* - which is something of an insult to that wonderful medieval building. Perhaps the modernist *Lubyanka* would be more appropriate. In the first part of our book Toby explained the process by which the pre-1974 Council, led by then Town Clerk Ken Smale, designed this shopping precinct as the start of a regeneration process that would preserve the Town's political independence. That perhaps glorious endeavour failed with the local government changes of 1974.

Toby's Planning History is attached in '*Doddo Defiled*' [Ed. 1] DVD /PDF.

This new edition modernises the book's presentation as well as the history of the historic buildings that, some would say, were defiled in the 1970s.



An Impression of the Changing Streetscape

Pre-Development, c1957



Post-Development, 2017



B. The Planners' Cunning Plan!

Rationality in the Middle Ages differed today. The alley entrances were aligned differently from the thoroughfares - some said to inhibit the prevailing winds. The 1974 cunning planners, not only placed the new buildings at right-angles to the High Street, but moved Sun Street to a more traffic friendly location. [See pp 18-19]



High Street facades deceived - demolition revealed that most frontages hid medieval buildings. In contrast, the 1973 development, however, revealed mathematical precision.



Changes to Addresses and Businesses

Pre-1871	1871 – 1960 Addresses	2003 Businesses	2017 Businesses
87	79 Hereford House [Doctor's]	79 Hereford House [Flats]	79 Hereford House [Flats]
88-89	80-81 1933 Sabrina Cinema	1990s Library & Roses Theatre	1990s Library & Roses Theatre
90-91	82-83	Sun Street	Sun Street
92-93	84-87	Boots	Boots
96-7	88-89	Bishops Walk	Bishops Walk
98	90 Doddo Café	Café (renovated but unoccupied)	Lloyds Pharmacy
99-100	91-92	Wine Rack	Costa Café
Sun St.	Market Shops Sun Street/ Station Street	Housewives Choice & Nutrition Centre	Unoccupied since 2016
101	101 Car Mart	Post Office	Boots Opticians and Hearing
102	102 Old Station	Co-operative Travel and Toyzone	Co-operative Travel and Domino Pizzas
103	103	Tewkesbury Cookshop	Tewkesbury Cookshop

A major renumbering of the ancient town properties was undertaken in 1871 and these numbers are still in use today. However, the design of the new shopping centre makes understanding the modern numbers, with those of pre-1974, very confusing.

The areas affected by redevelopment were: 1990s: 80-82; 1970s: 83-102; unaffected were 79 & 103.

C. 79-81 High Street: a Georgian Bastion



The original Georgian building of Hereford House [79] and the 1990s design of the Library and his second-floor office by Bob Beswick seem to sit relatively harmoniously with each other.

Hereford House was perhaps 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, Prior and Devereux, before they moved to *North House*, at the top of the High Street [now 1930s 'semis'. 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 and large greenhouse, stabling for 5 horses and a coach house". More recently the Drs. Shephard lived there.

If in 1957 *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 by the doctors' coachman, Thomas Newman whose widow was ejected and whose son died in 1914 on *the Aisne*. The Crisp family bought it in 1908, when its ground floor was already a shop with a cellar.

In its last years, Jean McNiven remembers it was occupied by artist Gerald O'Sullivan and then Alf Collins sold dog meat there.



From Hereford House to the Sabrina and Library



What is remarkable is that this shop survived and constricted - still somewhat mysteriously - the important development of the *Sabrina Cinema* in 1933-4.

A 700-seater cinema, with restaurant and car park, the *Sabrina* possessed, according to Linnell, a "facade of plate glass and dazzling white concrete". It was built by *Collins & Godfrey* for £10,000. Brian Linnell claimed that it was unpopular with locals after 1940 with Sunday evenings reserved for servicemen. By 1944 it was serving 2,000 meals a month and GI's from America remember its *tea room* with great affection. Its inception was not without controversy as originally an entrepreneur, *Oscar Deitch*, proposed building a new cinema at 103 High Street [in 2017 the *Cookshop*] but, despite being granted a licence, his project was defeated by another whose co-director was - according to Linnell, the then Town Mayor, Reginald Gaze! It was opened on 6 May 1934 by M.P. - and future House of Commons Speaker - Rt. Hon. W. S. Morrison. Its life was, however, short and it only occupied the site from 1934 to 1963 as a going concern. One wonders if, had 1963 been in the age of strict planning rules, its art-deco frontage would have been subject to a preservation order.

D. 81-83 High Street: a 19thC. Redevelopment



The building of the Sabrina had in fact 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 property, comprising two floors. It had a surgery, bath, geyser, w. c. and grounds sufficient for a three horse stable

and greenhouses. Its longest living occupant was the retired iron-monger John Price, who inhabited the house until his death in 1895 aged 88. In 1868 he had voted Liberal, unlike his predecessor, solicitor Charles William Moore and his siblings, who were part of the celebrated local family.

Separating the two properties was **Garrett's Alley**. 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 1932.

No. 81 may have been a smaller property but, as the picture shows on the next page, it was something of an architectural gem with its agreeable semi-circular first-floor window.



An 1928 Aerofilms' view of the site before the Sabrina was built. It shows nos. 79-80, with 81-82 obscured, before a Red Lane gap reveals no. 83.

From Houses to the Sabrina, Library and Sun Street

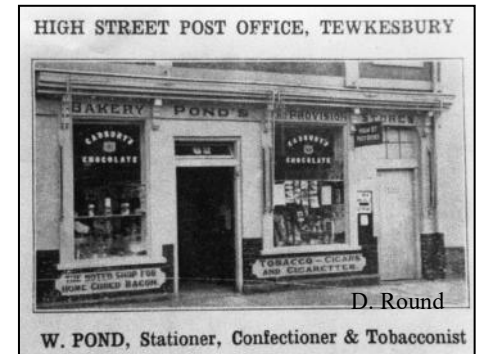
81-82 from a splendid *Gardner's Guide* Advert of 1903.

Note the Healings' steam lorry.

Once possibly the *Seven Stars* Beerhouse, by 1861 it had become a baker's shop - was it then that it was re-built? In 1903 we see the proprietor, Thomas H Acton, standing to attention as his flour is delivered as well he might, as in 1891 he and his wife had been porters at the Workhouse in the Gloucester Road. (The name of the alley to the right is unknown.)

In 1911 it was uninhabited and was bought by the vet Malvern to be converted into a shop and post office run by William Pond from 1914 until its demolition in 1933. It has also begun what appears to be a steep decline, as the photograph taken before 1933 reveals.

No. **83** boasted "2 excellent cellars, 4 bedrooms, closet, garden and brew house in Bishops Alley". From 1841-51, it was owned by butcher Elizabeth Bishop who had the right to name **Bishops Alley** - the only alley name which survived with any distinction after the development of the shopping precinct.



E. 84 High Street: a Confusing Development



The exact site of 84 High St. with Bishops Alley to the left

Although we tend to concentrate on the 20th century development of the shopping centre, rebuilding took place in certain locations in the High Street earlier - as we have seen with the *Sabrina*.

84 and 84a High Street was a new property. It has been described as a "Georgian two door house of three storeys". That is unlikely 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".

The property was split into two for ownership and occupancy with **84** owned by Charles Hurn, while George Wilkins, the owner/occupier of **84a**, was treasurer at the Baptist Church. **84** was only two-up one-down but **84a** had upstairs rooms, which extended across the passage

The owner of **84a** 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 Court, between the owners of 84 and 85, over access to the former *Unicorn Alley*, as it "had been previously stopped up". [It has long been the desire of Alley owners to stop them and form more private courts with no thoroughfare. In 1888 it was decided to pave public alleys with blue engineering bricks, with *Bishops Alley* being the first. After this, it was illegal to stop up public alleys.]

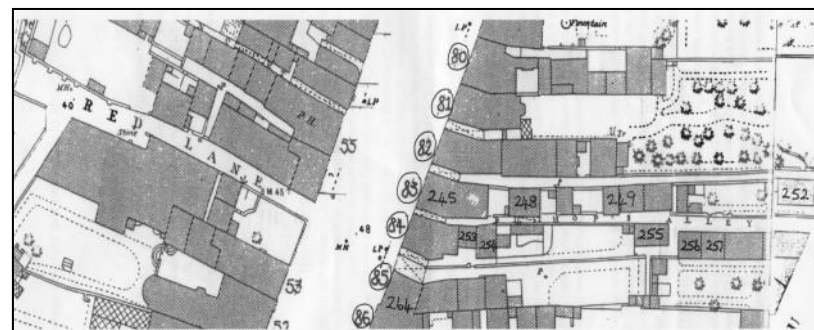
Re-Development of *Red Lion* Public House

In 1894, the auctioneer Hone sold "two new properties on site of old *Red Lion*, High St." for £500; these would have been **84** and **84a**.

Most writers agree that the *Red Lion* inn was situated opposite Red Lane. It had an ancient history:

- In 1787 "the church paid for alterations to be workhouse until union workhouse opened in 1790s". It acted as an Anglican Poor House at a time when the religious denominations cared for their own poor by providing work until the opening of the new purpose-built Workhouse on the Gloucester Road in 1793
- The building could also have been known as the *Horse and Groom* and the *Bolt and Tun*.
- Between 1819-1832 it may have been known as the *Unicorn Inn*.
- 1832-67: **Red Lion** again when it was "demolished and pair of semi-detached red brick cottages built - **84 and 84a**"
- In 1889 a tenement deed revealed that "at the top of what was formerly a certain alley or passage called **Old Unicorn Alley** but which has since been closed".

One can only surmise that little objection was made to the demolition of the old **Red Lion/Unicorn Inn** to be replaced by fine residential homes for the period, with 'w.c.' and shared garden.



Map of the area with *Red Lane* adapted from OS 6 inch Map
To the south of no **84** was *Red Lion Alley* and south of that was *Bedfords Court* [formerly *Marshalls Alley*], latterly incorporated into no 85.

F. 85 High Street and *Bedfords Court*



Boots' Façade (with *Oasis Dental Care*) now incorporating the sites of **84 & 85 High Street**.

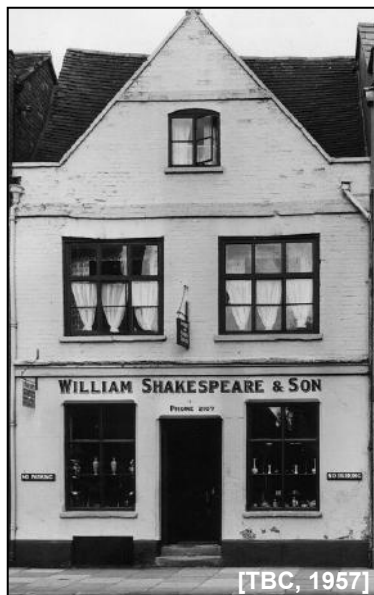
I can still never understand how an architect could design this ugly building to dominate the High Street - or how a council could permit it!

This is especially poignant when a noted medieval building was demolished to make way for it.

In 1881 Frederick Moore described it as "a house with a quaint gable, in which is carved an oak beam...., with a floriated boss in the centre". The Commission for Historical Monuments described that boss as a 'Tudor Rose'. However this photo reveals that in the early 20th century a façade was built to hide the Medieval features – and the entrance to *Bedford Court*.

Teacher Bob Sayers lived there from 1935-1937 and confirmed this: "the front door which typically opens into the best room with the windows either side. The room ran the whole width of the house, with a massive oak beam running the length of the room, i.e. parallel to the road. In the centre was an absolutely exquisite Tudor Rose carving. What a terrible loss when this was destroyed."

William Shakespeare, owner of an antique furniture shop, was much more important to us than the 'Bard' - he sired our own **Bill Shakespeare**, who lost his life in 1971 on Lake Windermere, breaking power-boat records .



[TBC, 1957]

'Tewkesbury's Shakespeare' and Mrs. Craik



A Victorian postcard/photograph purporting to show **Sally Watkins' Cottage** as featured in Mrs. Craik's *John Halifax, Gentleman*. [R Ross]

Bedford's Court was named after a painter who lived there from 1891-1901; his wife was a grocer and later fried-fish shop owner. Before that it had probably been known as **Marshalls Alley** when it joined up with *Red Lion/Unicorn Alley* before being stopped up. John Rogers, author of the *Short History of Alleys* wrote in 1905: "I knew Mr. Marshall. A shop in the front

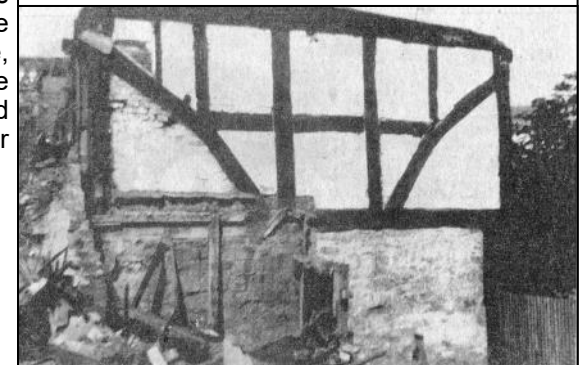
house sold provisions, vegetables - a respectable looking man. When I returned in 1834 he had either left the town or was dead".

The Court had become famous by 1929 when the *Register*, in a court case, commented that it was known as *Sally Watkins' Cottage*, featured in the popular novel, '*John Halifax, Gentleman*'. Home owners in the town competed to convince the tourists that their home featured in the book!

When the area was demolished in 1965, the woodwork disappeared but stone floors, which were believed to have been originally part of the Abbey Cloister, was returned to the Abbey - to repair the Vicarage.

I wonder if *Boots* appreciates the historical romance, which may have been buried beneath their modern floors.

A 1965 newspaper photograph, commented on the demolition of this medieval building. [B. Linnell]



G. 86 High Street and Steels Court



Boots' (& Oasis Dental Care) Façade now incorporating the sites of 84 85 & 86 High Street.

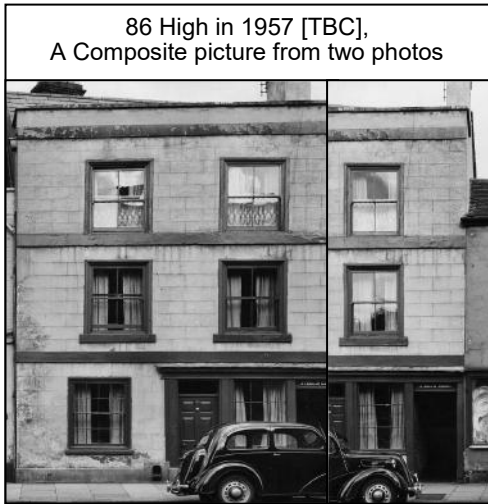
The substantial building below was described as a “two storied Georgian style building”. Accordingly it served as a substantial family home to William Cullis, a partner of Thomas Collins, whilst the family of its owner of 1881 numbered thirteen persons! In

1891 the house was divided into two unmarried households, that of the laundress Miss M. J. George and the vet W. J. Malvern.

In 1913 it was described 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 Walker and occupied by George Pearton, an engineers’ clerk in 1891. It was sold in 1919 to Sidney Baker, the solicitor son of the oft-times Mayor, Alderman Alfred Baker. Its last occupant was *Hilson Antiques* before its demolition in 1966.

The second door at the right is not a house entrance but is an elegant entrée into **Steels Alley**.

Rogers claimed it was named after *Stephen Steel who owned “the front house and property through to the Oldbury. A highly respected builder, his health failed and he died suddenly”*. After 1871 it was called *Steel’s Court*, suggesting that it had been blocked up.

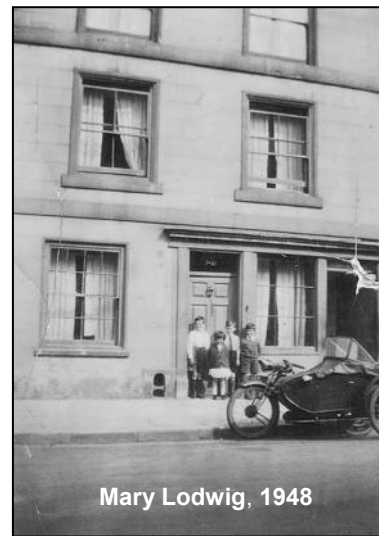


The historical frontage of the Upper High Street which focuses upon nos. 84-86 - whose rebuilding contrasts with the properties that follow, until the gabled frontage of the *Doddo Café* [90]



Mary Lodwig put the story of this house into a more human context when she sent me this delightful, earlier photograph of its frontage along with a fascinating motorbike [model and date, enthusiasts?] and such smart young children. I presume the girl was the then **Mary Little**. This is her story:

“Around 1933 aged 10, Dad often visited his Auntie - Miss Winn Davies and her son Howard. She lived in the house with Tom Cooper - she was his housekeeper. (Dad wondered why they had separate bedrooms!). There were 3 floors and, around 1948 my parents, rented the 2 rooms at the top of the house and shared the toilet on the middle floor. There was a toilet in the yard and kitchen at the back. From their front window they could look into the windows of the Tudor House.



Steels Court [to the right] had only 2 cottages; one was very dingy with an old man Mr. [Richard] Knight, a tin smith with Haywards. At the top of the court was the Geoff Pope’s uncle Godwin [‘Goddy’].

H. 87 High Street and the 'Infamous' *Double Alley*



87 High Street possibly gives us a glimpse into the style of buildings which were demolished to make way for nos. 84-6 in the late 19th century. Certainly, when this photograph was taken before the 1960s demolition, it looked in a very sad state.

However its earlier history suggests some prosperity. In 1851, it was the home of Richard King Fletcher, one of only two *brightsmiths* in the town. As he was a son of William Fletcher the gunsmith, it is likely that his job was as a metal polisher. For most of the late nineteenth century, it was occupied by Samuel Davison, the butcher; in 1871 he lived in these small premises with his wife and seven children. By 1913, however, 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 medicine. Harry Workman recalled that "*Seabright's Embrocation*" was amazing stuff, supposed to cure cows that had rheumatics etc. – it said it would cure 'even wooden legs'".

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 opposite, was successful! Eventually permission was granted for the conversion to a cabinet maker's shop. Perhaps, however, the decline was by now terminal.

This house, therefore, may not have possessed an exciting history but the same cannot be said for its integral alley - which moved John Moore, in *A Portrait of Elmbury*, to describe its entrance in the most lurid terms. Indeed his character "*Black Sal*" died in the alley.

John Moore's "*The Yawning Jaws of Hell*".

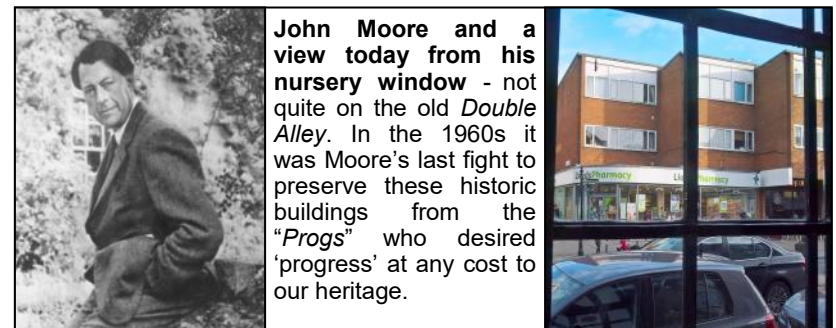
Alleys, as we have noted, could change their name depending on the name of the owner of the house on the frontage – thus it was 'Harris' in 1819, *Castle's* in 1830 but, to take the edge off its reputation, it was renamed in 1929 as "*Oldbury Walk*".

John Rogers, the first Alley historian, explained its popular name: 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 A long time ago the wall was removed to give light to the cottages".

It was also a much neglected alley and 5 inhabitants died in the Cholera epidemics of 1832 and 1849. In 1857 it was advised that "to abate the nuisance [sewer] in *Double Alley*, it would be requisite to cover over a portion of the open drain". In fact, water was piped to the Alley by 1878. Nevertheless, the water problem persisted intermittently since, in 1921, "nine houses owned by several owners have defective and unsanitary w.c.s".

It had its own pub, the "*Sailors' Return*" and one of the owners was relatively prosperous, although his reputation was as infamous as his alley. Richard Green, born in 1848, was a drover whose five-roomed home accommodated his nine children. He was frequently in conflict with the law committing such offences as assaulting a policeman. By 1915, however, he was respectable enough to have his Golden Wedding notified in the newspaper.

By the time of the 1957 photo, it was virtually derelict. Clearance was proposed in 1936 yet 5 families of Woodward's lived there in 1939. As late as 1958. '*Old Contemptible*' Harry Pope celebrated his Golden Wedding there.



John Moore and a view today from his nursery window - not quite on the old *Double Alley*. In the 1960s it was Moore's last fight to preserve these historic buildings from the "*Progs*" who desired 'progress' at any cost to our heritage.

Map 1

Map 2

I. 88 High Street: without an Integral Alley



The site of this building reveals that change can be continuous especially when good ideas in theory do not work out in practice.

In the original 1970s development the glass encased stairway possessed a kind of elegance. However, the stairs led to a snooker hall above *Boots* [now *Oasis* dental surgery!] and unfortunately the youths leaving abused its facilities. It was demolished to open up Bishops Walk which, I think, today is viewed as being agreeable.

This property was as undeveloped as its neighbour no 87 but was even smaller; this is perhaps surprising since part of its life was devoted to the status of lodging house. However in the 20th century, it served as a shop with the last occupant being Mary Attwood's grocery (she later moved to Barton Street) which followed the dairy of J. H. Dudley and the Baptist tea dealer W. H. Wilkins who was the owner in 1913, when it boasted a second floor with one bedroom with three on the first floor - and a 'w. c.'. Even in this period the house contained lodgers, such as Charles Wood, who was sentenced in 1921 to eighteen months hard labour for using false pretences to obtain board and lodging!

We do know, however, that from about 1876 to 1893 it acted as a lodging house, run by Mrs. Phoebe Moss. In 1891, it is incredible that the house contained officially eighteen persons: Phoebe and two sons plus fifteen lodgers, amongst whom there were at least two families! In 1885 the house was also the target for "*serious electoral rioting*" - the policemen were deemed "*useless*" but a claim for compensation by Mr. Moss was rejected!

Glovers Alley in 89 High Street

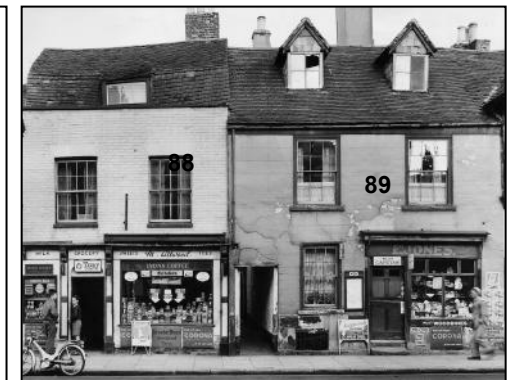
Glovers Alley took its name from the owner in 1841 of the front house, Joseph Glover who was a 56 year old carpenter and widower who lived with his married son, his wife and three children. There seem to have been between 10 and 13 dwellings in the alley. In 1842 for example the front house had an annual rent of £10 while the alley houses were valued at c£2 although there was a shop valued at £5.

Two people from the alley died in the 1849 Cholera Epidemic and, in the 1868 elections, as many as five so called 'skilled artisans' were entitled to vote; in this case labourers, a boatman and a tailor.

In 1905 John Rogers described the alley in his usual puritanical way: *Glover was a carpenter .. "very respectable.. he died many years ago; one son left the town; [it was] narrow only 4 feet at widest, houses were 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. ... often 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 sewers but in 1922 there were still problems as two parents were charged 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*".

To the modern student the identification of the alleys is complicated by the fact that on the map [p4] the 1883 OS Map shows the alleys running to the right of the front house until no. 87. However, **the alley integral to 89 High Street is *Glovers Alley*.**



J. 89 High Street and the 'Famous' Nellie Jones



Throughout a century before its demolition, this house/shop was occupied by only two families. From at least 1841 to 1881 the Cox Family of bootmakers lived there - Michael Cox had qualified as a *Bedesman*, who received a pension from *Queen Mary's Charity*. After his death the house stayed in the family's ownership but it was occupied from 1891 by the Jones family; tug boat engineer's widow Ellen ran it as a shop and her daughter "**Nellie**" followed.

Historian Brian Linnell remembered the shop: "*it was in one half of a double fronted house, the other half being the living quarters. The central door was reached via a couple of stone steps which projected out into the pavement. This layout gave customers glimpses of the main living room. One wall was taken up by a large sideboard on which, in a prominent place was an ornate frame holding the photograph of a khaki-clad soldier. Nellie was not a spinster from choice.*"

She knew her rights and had limited patience. As a greengrocer she displayed her stock on the pavement under the shop window. This led to warnings from the Police about "Obstruction". This time the Inspector was doing the talking when she snapped. Fetching him a mighty clout across the cheek, she told him what to do about his "Obstruction". She was on firm ground. The curtilage of her property was the front edge of the steps, not the wall under the window."

Jean McNiven remembers her as a "*a very feisty but generous lady*". One of the things of which Nellie was most proud was the fact that she kicked Mosley's soapbox from beneath him, when he and his "*Blackshirts*" held a meeting in Quay Street. [The meeting is recorded but not Nellie's role!]

Linnell agrees about her generosity to some extent as "*her memory is best marked by the year the Second World War ended. She was the first retailer to make and sell ice-cream*". However, he claimed that it was "*tasteless and full of ice crystals it was poor stuff but after five years of none it was manna*". The Council also took a dim view in 1949: "*Samples of ice cream taken from 89 High Street have been consistently unsatisfactory... action to stop manufacture*". Cliff Burd, however, has recorded: "*The shop was popular with children as [they] were allowed to turn the handle of this machine for 15 minutes, and in return would get a free cornet!*" No. 89 was demolished in 1966 after Nellie had died in 1960 at Tredington Hospital aged 75.

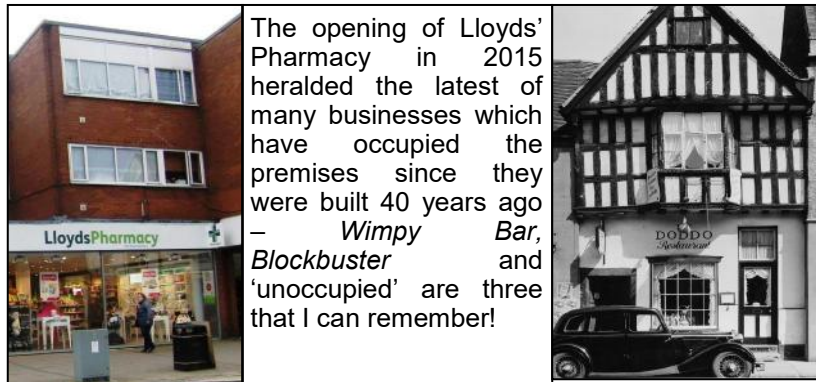
Mayalls Court with 90 High Street



Mayalls Court mysteriously does not appear in Rogers' book until one realises the error with *Bronds Court* – which should be *Broads Court*. Every one else uses the name *Mayall*. In 1842 there were four dwellings all owned by the aristocratic M.P. Codrington with one occupied by a pauper widow. In 1913 there were three dwellings but two seemed unoccupied. All seemed to share "*small yard & w. c. & piece of garden in front.... water from main*". There was some continuity of population since Mrs. McNiven remembers the "*small court and the family living there were called Sallis*". 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*".

K. 90 High Street: The 'Defiled' Doddo!



The opening of Lloyds' Pharmacy in 2015 heralded the latest of many businesses which have occupied the premises since they were built 40 years ago – *Wimpy Bar, Blockbuster* and 'unoccupied' are three that I can remember!

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.

Of the twelve old houses for which a demolition order was said to have been secured, Town Clerk Ken Smale was quoted: "*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*".

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

"UNIQUE DOOR DISAPPEARS"

The demolition sparked a Civil War – Progs v Meds!



Pinfold's Refreshment House – (a pencil on tracing paper drawing, 8 April 1932) attracted the attention of U.S. architectural student on tour, John H. Kell.
[J.C. Kell in *THS Bulletin* 24 2015]

Mrs. Howells, a leader 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 followed: the Society was concerned "*some ancient stone, later identified as of the same period as the*

Abbey" had been removed. The curate suggested that, in the 1540s, "*the church wardens had sold job lots of Abbey stone to raise the £453 needed... to buy the Church*".

Was the "**Progressive**" Town Clerk correct in his assertion that it was "*tarted up*" in the 1930s? It only became a café sometime before 1932, when it captured the interest of our US artist. William Pinfold (known derisively as '*Col. Chinstrap*' by neighbour Nellie Jones) converted it from Rowland's confectioner's shop.

The name **Doddo** was taken from the alleged Saxon Duke of Mercia. However when it was put up for auction in 1914, it was described as "*Black and White Dwelling House*".

So maybe the Town Clerk, expressed a misleading opinion. However, the battle was lost - but the war was won by the "**Medievalists**" as planning laws now prevent a repetition.

One learns more by viewing from the rear. Behind the *Doddo*, the doomed buildings are clearly Medieval. The large barn is to the rear of the *Happy Return*.



L. 91 High Street and a “Happy Return”?



Our 1957 photo, taken towards the end of its life, shows 91 High Street after it had been converted by Edie Attwood into a furniture shop in about 1952. (Edie was born into the Shakespeare family, which lived at no. 85.)

For most of its life however, this building was the *Happy Return* public house. Linnell 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. 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”. *Thomas Rice*, the first formal 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 there in 1870-1. After quitting the pub in 1889, he moved into *Waldrons Court* and died in 1893 aged 64.

His successor was *John Predith*, a wheelwright by trade and formerly landlord of the *George* across the road. 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 [p10-11]

William Crockett, a shoeing-smith took over 1892-1903, while in 1913 it was owned by Arnold Perrett. On the first floor there was a club room and in the basement a cellar. However, there were no happy returns as daily takings were so low at 37p in 1916 that its license was refused in 1917. The property was sold to become a shop, with Edie living there in 1935: “*Attwood’s Ways Pay Always!*”

Waldrons Court

91 High Street in context with the *Doddo* and the rest of the doomed buildings - with the *Markets Shops* appearing from the right.
[H. Butwell 1950s]



This was another small court: “*I think this held just one small cottage, the only people I remember living there were the Colley Family*” [Rogers]. In the mid-19thC, there were three dwellings of brick, half timber and tile construction and said to be “*very old*”. There was an outside kitchen and a shared wash house and ‘w.c.’.

John Rogers, writing in 1905, claimed that it formerly been an alley leading to the Oldbury but, when Moore’s cattle market had 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’. It would, therefore, be logical still to call the alley after the fisherman and landlord of the pub because *Thomas Waldron* only lived down the alley in 1842. There is in fact no evidence that Waldron ever lived in the front house.

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.

During World War One, the court was to produce two heroes, killed in action. *L/Cpl. William Hawker* was a 23 year old former teacher in the Wesleyan Sunday School where he was regarded as a “*steady respectable young man*”. Mrs. Hawker was also the mother of the New brothers who fought heroically together at the *Battle of Loos* in 1915, but one, Sgt Thomas New, lost his life.

The *Happy Return* with *Waldrons Court* was the last building of the ancient part of the High Street but the buildings to the right remind us that redevelopment was not merely a ‘disease’ of the 1960s.

M. Old *Sun Street* and the *Market Shops*



[H. Butwell 1950s]

The *Market Shops* in *Sun Street* were designed as an innovation in shop design in that they were only lock-up shops, as opposed to those in the High Street. I also find their Gothic design appealing!

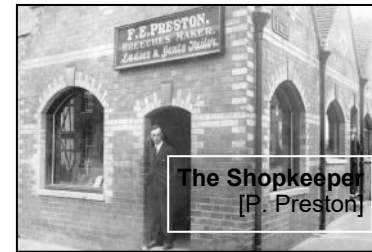
One of the most confusing – and cunning – achievements of the ‘Kremlin’ developers was to move *Sun Street* about a hundred yards to the north where today it houses the *Library* [see p4].

Old *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. 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 1854; in 1851 it housed eight family members and three servants. The last landlord, Dan Kitton was assaulted in 1857.

The *Sun Inn* was named after the emblem of the *Yorkists* of 1471 but was, according to Linnell, “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. Even more confusing, it gradually changed to Station Street at least after 1855.

There were five shops with the *Borough Surveyor’s office* (later *National Insurance/Employment Office*) and public toilets behind. 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.

An Urban District Council Re-development of 1897



The Shopkeeper
[P. Preston]

No. 3 was occupied by **Reg Brick**, a “very respectable” shoe-mender who also doubled as a part-time country postman while the next was occupied by ‘**Barber**’ **Stokes**, also a part-time country postman. No. 5 contained shoemaker, **Jack Hodges**. These shops were 21 square yards in width but no. 6 was three

times bigger; it was occupied firstly by Mr. Ridler, the Borough Surveyor before it became the Employment Exchange. Finally there were the public toilets, which replaced the sheep pens - and an air raid shelter - after the war. They were resited opposite the Tesco entrance until closed by Council cost cutting in 2009.

Echoes of the old *Sun Inn* have been recorded by the late Norah Day: “Mr. *Didcote* worked at *Car Mart*, where the cellars were used as workshops. This garage was the other side of *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*.”

Right to left: The rear of the *Car Mart*, D. H. Finnigan’s “*Old Station Stores*”; Moore’s offices behind the Council Offices; the medieval barn was to the rear of the *Happy Return* [contrast p23], the 1955 Public Conveniences.

Both sides of the street replaced sheep markets.



Sun St. looking to the High St. [H. Butwell 1950s]

N. 101 High Street



Nos. 92-100 disappeared at the time of the 1871 re-numbering and thus just after the creation of *Sun Street*. Then they reverted to the 1791 numbers that the east side maintains as far as the Cross.

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

We think that it was Abel Jordan 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, 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 first 1922 garage and subsequently the *Car Mart* was still in Abel Jordan's control according to the 1935 Directory but it was subsequently owned by **Vic Watson**.



* MR. ABEL JORDAN,
(Ind.), High-street, gar-
age proprietor.

it is likely that Vic took over the garage before 1946. He was born in Cork, Ireland but lived in India before 1947. He returned to marry a nurse - they met when her car needed repairing! Later he bought Blenheim Villa, Bredon's Hardwicke. Vic Watson himself died in about 1961 but the business survived his death.



A. Col-
lings

Manufactory and then Car Mart



Cropped from the photo
of the station on p30

The garage was a development of an older building, whose magnificence is spotted on a photograph of the railway station next door, taken in the 1860s [p30]. This building was originally known as **Thomas Sharpe's Coach Manufactory**. Was it purpose built or was the building designed as the "*Plume of Feathers*" Public House, whose land Thomas Sharpe bought in 1839?

Thomas Sharpe carried on the family business until he died somewhere between 1868 and 1871, after which his widow Sarah maintained the business until 1894. However, their nephew, **James Sheward**, worked as a 'Coach builder' from at least 1861. In 1913 Sheward was the owner occupier of the two storey building, It was sold upon Sheward's retirement in 1918; he died in 1919.

Coach-making must surely not have been profitable long before. However, when **Harry Didcote** was working in the building in the 1930s, he discovered a room with supplies of red fabric, presumably having been used for coach interiors. The *Car Mart* was extended by building repair shops along the south side of *Station Street* and by installing petrol pumps on the platform of our now demolished *Railway Station* after 1933. [see p 30-1]

101 High St. in its Context, just before demolition.

The *Market Shops* are behind it and to its right are the petrol pumps built on the old Station platform, rails tarmaced over and no. 103 [in 2017 the *Tewkesbury Cookshop*]

[TBC 1957]



15. 102 High Street



Left: the Railway station site in 2017, occupied by *Co-Operative Travel and Domino's*; note the **vertical limestone column**, which is the only remnant of the station separating it from the *Cookshop* [103 to the right]

Right: an aerial photograph of 1928 by *Aerofilms* but enlarged on the computer, hence the fuzzy quality. It confirms that the main photograph is of our station but adds the castellated, *Baronial Gothic*, upper frontage.

Despite vehement protests from its two MPs, the Bristol to Birmingham Railway bi-passed Tewkesbury and the only compensation was the right to build a branch line from Ashchurch to a station on the High Street with an extension to the *Quay* (and later *Healings Mill*) for goods traffic.

When that station was opened in 1839, there was press interest in the “*fine Gothic screen-work, front, with oriel windows and battlements*” of this station which adorned the branch line. In addition there were “*two well-proportioned gateways, .. one of which is designed for railway passengers, and the other for carriages and goods*”. Steam traction was forbidden by law to pass this gate and goods vehicles were propelled by gravity down *Quay Street* and retrieved by Shire horses until 1923 when a diesel tractor took over.

The active life of this wonderful edifice was declared redundant as a station only 25 years later in 1864 when the new extension of the line to Great Malvern necessitated the building of a new station away from the centre of the town, in modern *Station Road* behind *Morrisons' Supermarket*. It was retained for goods traffic but railway workers still lived in the building as revealed in censuses. After World War I, it was used “*by the British Legion Club, since when [in 1926] it has been more or less derelict*”.

Our ‘First - and Forgotten - Railway Station’



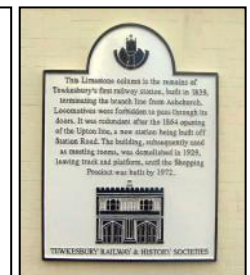
An undated photograph kindly supplied by Kidderminster Railway Museum. This must have been a posed photograph of the 1860s but the unidentified engine has broken the law by passing through the station gates and the Gothic arch has been ‘vandalised’ to permit the egress of the funnel.

After that and until 2013, the fate of the building was a mystery as nothing was reported in the Tewkesbury press. However, Wendy Snarey’s researches found that it was the *Cheltenham Chronicle* of 9 March 1929 which revealed that:

“*One of the familiar landmarks in the old Borough is in process of being removed. One alludes to the Old Railway Station in High Street. This, the Railway Company is taking down, so as to enable taller wagons to pass to the Quay.*”



In 2013 the **Historical, Railway and Civic Societies** commemorated the Station, courtesy of no. 103’s owner.



The Process of



Epitome of the 1950s?
A photograph of the vintage car -and fashion,
Located outside the entrance to Double Alley;
taken by Mr. Edwin Bigland, then owner of Tudor House.

Right - the cleared site revealing the
Tudor House Hotel, dwarfed by the
machinery of progress
[TBC]



A Room with a View?
From the Tudor, we can spy (left)
Warner's Garage, the *Maltings* -
and the 1950 conveniences

Defilation - or Progress?



Job Done!
A Bird's Eye View of
the Shopping Centre
In 2003
[TBC]

Town Clerk, Kenneth Smale
Leader of the 'Progs'
Architect of Progress
or
The Defiler of
Historical Heritage?
[Echo 28 July 1976]



Our Beneficiary:

About the Friends



The Friends of Gloucestershire Archives is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation that helps to protect and promote the documented heritage of the historic county of Gloucestershire, now known as Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire, making it available to everyone.

Founded over 20 years ago, the Friends fundraise to support the work of Gloucestershire Archives. Many of our members are also active volunteers, helping to transcribe, catalogue and promote documents in the Archives' collections, and raise awareness about Archive services.

Members' subscriptions are the Friends' principal source of income. These are supplemented by donations and by fundraising for specific projects. Individuals, families and organisations are welcome to become Friends whether or not they are based in Gloucestershire or South Gloucestershire.

All members receive a newsletter twice a year and those in and around Gloucestershire can also enjoy a programme of talks and visits to places of historical interest. Above all, every member knows that he or she is making a contribution to the preservation of the County's heritage.

Recently we have:

- Raised £100,000 towards a project that is refurbishing the Archives' premises;
- Set up a group to preserve, catalogue and share the archives of Gloucester Rugby Club (so successful that it is now a charity in its own right);
- Purchased the original architect's drawings for Gloucester's lunatic asylums;
- Made a donation towards the cost of protective enclosures for Gloucester's ancient city charters;
- Sponsored Gloucester History Festival events.