

THS Bulletin 28 Report

Once again, we must congratulate the editor, and all concerned, for another beautifully produced *Bulletin*. The use of high-quality glossy paper, the clear typefaces and the profusion of photographs, many in colour, make for a stylish publication.

As the editor notes in his Foreword, this year's articles very much focus in one way or another on family history, either as oral history (as in the case of Alan Snarey's interviews with Gordon Baker), as personal recollections (as, for instance, in Clifford Day's account of his schooldays) or (as in John King's account of his great-grandfather Humphrey King's life and work) on 'researched' family history – all of which are, of course, equally valid approaches to the gathering of historical information. All are full of interest, and the authors as a whole are to be commended on their articles, each of which makes its own contribution to our knowledge of Tewkesbury's past.

On occasion, family history and local history are viewed as two separate approaches to the past – perhaps by those who feel that the collecting of names of past family members 'for names' sake' is something of a futile task. Very often, however, family history research can reveal a story that is of far wider interest and significance beyond the family itself. That is certainly the case with John King's article, 'Tewkesbury's Redoubtable Victorian Ironmonger', which introduces the reader to a man who, in the author's own words, played a 'very full part...in so many areas of Tewkesbury life'. It is on that basis that we chose John's article as the winner of this year's Woodard Award.

Two final thoughts: one must be an appreciation of the range and quality of this year's illustrations, and in particular the inclusion of watercolours, drawings, newspaper advertisements and printed ephemera, alongside the inevitable photographs old and new – all of which serve to enliven each page. The other thought stems from looking through the endnotes to each article: that is the ever-increasing use of Internet sites as a source of information: although always to be used with discretion (and dare we say 'occasional scepticism'?), they certainly provide an increasingly valuable route into the past for local and family historians.

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