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Shrewsbury: Institutions, buildings and culture

Section 3.5, 'Common lands and the Quarry'

The following text is an unrevised draft prepared by the late W. A. Champion. It is made available here through the kindness of his executors.

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3.5 Common lands and the Quarry. [W.A. Champion – Final draft, Jan. 2012]

The agrarian interests of the borough and Shrewsbury abbey

By the 1840s almost 3,000 acres of gardens and agricultural land in Shrewsbury's suburban townships, including Abbey Foregate, still remained to be surveyed by the tithe commissioners, of which half (c.1481 a.) lay in the parish of Holy Cross and St Giles.¹ Although to some extent, as elsewhere,² the open fields at Shrewsbury were once located closest to the built-up areas, with the common pastures further out, that pattern was disturbed not only by the inherent quality of land but also by the sinuous course of the Severn and the disposition of the old river bed abandoned c.5,000 years ago, leaving much of Coton encircled by a belt of damp 'moors'.³ In addition, until 1835 the manor of Meole Brace, including Kingsland common, separated the open fields of Coleham and Frankwell.⁴ As a result a more irregular pattern existed, notably in Coton where some of the arable open fields lay at the furthest point from the town, separated from it by a mixture of moors and closes.

Open fields under arable cultivation

The process of clearing ground for cultivation, and the location of some of the earliest open fields, is suggested by field-names such as *Porthebruche*⁵ and *Wodemonsheie*⁶ in Coton Field, and *Aldefelde* in both Coton and Coleham.⁷ In 1279 the Hundred inquest still recorded lands as if attached to burgages held of the town,⁸ and in a bequest of c.1398 to Lilleshall abbey, lands as well as tenements in Shrewsbury were again said to be held by burgage tenure.⁹ But any original system of allocating holdings among the burgesses is unknown. In addition, much open field ground was originally held not by the burgesses but by the town's parish churches (below). Nor, as a rule, is it possible to map the boundaries of the open fields

¹ SA 2050/4 (Castle Foregate, 1851), 2711/T/2 (Coton, 1849), 1048/858 (Frankwell, 1849); TNA: PRO IR 29/29/93 (Coleham, 1845), IR 29/29/291 (Holy Cross and St. Giles, 1840).

² F.W. Maitland, *Township And Borough* (1898), chs 1, 4; R.A. McKinley (ed.), *A History of the County of Leicester*, IV (1958), 165-6, 354-5; T. Rowley, *The Shropshire Landscape* (1972), 144-5; G.C. Baugh (ed.), *A History of Shropshire*, IV (1989), 170.

³ C. Morey, D.J. Pannett, 'The origin of the old river bed at Shrewsbury', *Bulletin of the Shropshire Conservation Trust* 35 (1976), 7-12.

⁴ Above, *The Liberties and Municipal Boundaries*.

⁵ Poss. 'broken-in land near the gate': M. Gelling, *The Place-Names of Shropshire*, IV (2004), 64.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 65 ('forester's enclosure').

⁷ *Ibid.*, 63, 87.

⁸ SA 6001/28.

⁹ U. Rees (ed.), *The Cartulary of Haughmond Abbey* (1985), 187-8.

since, unlike at Ludlow for example,¹⁰ no survey of the town fields has survived.

Nonetheless, numerous deeds, together with field-names on the tithe awards, enable their approximate location to be established with some confidence, and the same is true of the common pastures and wastes (Map []).¹¹

The existence of open field husbandry itself can readily be inferred from nomenclature associated with that mode of agrarian organization. From the 13th to the 16th centuries deeds provide copious references to selions, acre 'lands' (i.e. strips or selions in the open fields),¹² butts, headlands and furlongs, set within the overall suburban 'fields'. In 'Coleham Field',¹³ for example, the Drapers company in 1491 held 'londs', butts and a headland, some grouped together, others singly, scattered among the constituent open fields.¹⁴ These included the Middle or 'great' Field (1346, 1530) which extended along the Longden road to the open fields of Meole Brace.¹⁵ In Castle Foregate land behind the castle was known as the *castylfeld*,¹⁶ with selions extending northwards from the castle ditch.¹⁷ In Coton much of the field ground had probably once belonged to St Mary's collegiate church – the *communes grangias* of St Mary recorded in 1318.¹⁸ Thus Priests' Furlong, listed in every borough rental from 1246, may have been land included in a grant to his niece by Robert, Bishop of Bangor and dean of St Mary's c.1186-1200. Shortly afterwards it was conveyed to Thomas Corbet kt. and by him to John Le Strange and the community of Shrewsbury.¹⁹ Both Priests' Furlong and Haughmond's Furlong, which had also once belonged to St Mary's (below), were appurtenant to the 'great' field called Coton Field,²⁰ where butts and selions are recorded from the 13th to the 17th centuries.²¹ In the cartulary of Shrewsbury abbey numerous 13th century references also appear to acre lands, headlands, butts, selions and furlongs in Abbey Foregate.²² Four open fields existed here c.1540: the Barley Field, Clay or Clayhill Field,

¹⁰ D. Lloyd, *The Concise History of Ludlow* (1999), 71-4.

¹¹ Details in W.A. Champion, 'The ancient fields and commons of Shrewsbury', unpubl. TS at SA.

¹² H.D.G. Foxall, *Shropshire Field Names* (1980), 7.

¹³ SA 567/2F/41.

¹⁴ I.M. Rope (ed.), 'The earliest book of the Drapers' Company, Shrewsbury', *TSAS* 4th ser. 3 (1913), 194.

¹⁵ SA 1831/2/35/6, 10; 1831/2/13/18; Rope (ed.), 'Earliest book', 194; L.F. Chitty (ed.), 'The earliest book of the Drapers' Company, Shrewsbury', *TSAS* 4th ser. 9 (1923-4), 267.

¹⁶ TNA: PRO E 303/14/Salop/46.

¹⁷ U. Rees (ed.), *The Cartulary of Haughmond Abbey* (1985), 189; SA 6000/3665; O & B, II, 420n.

¹⁸ SA 6000/3667.

¹⁹ Bodleian, Gough Shrop. 14, p. 124; SA 322/2/10. For the bishop's local connections, A.T. Gaydon (ed.), *A History of Shropshire*, II (1973), 119, 121-2. The reserved rent for the land (11½d.) was the same paid for Priests' Furlong in boro. rentals as late as 1686.

²⁰ Rees (ed.), *Cart. Lilleshall*, 188; TNA: PRO SC 6/Hen. VIII/3009, m. 43d; E 310/23/122/69.

²¹ Bodleian, Gough Shrop. 3, ff. 12, 16-17; SA 1831/1/2/75.

²² E.g. U. Rees (ed.), *The Cartulary of Shrewsbury Abbey* (1975), I, 188-9, 205-213; II, 375-6.

Boat Field, and Beckbury Field.²³ Of these, three were named in a deed of 1456 of the Drapers' company describing strips in all four fields. The fourth, the Boat Field, was then called *Redstanhulfeld* after the red stone quarry located nearby.²⁴ Clayhill, Beckbury, and acre holdings near the red quarry, are all mentioned in the first half of the 13th century.²⁵

The amount of land originally under the plough was extensive, covering much acreage later converted to pasture. Thus in Coton a *cultura* (i.e. indicating tillage) stood above the weir in 1359,²⁶ and to the north east, beside Hencott Stye, lay another *cultura* of six acres granted to Haughmond abbey by a canon of St Mary's c.1254–5. As *Haghmonesforlonge*,²⁷ it was still laid out in 1538 as 18 butts of land.²⁸ Ridges and furrows remain visible in the vicinity, though that characteristic signature of open field cultivation is today best seen at the Monk Eye, Frankwell. In Abbey Foregate, the Gay, afterwards an extensive riverside pasture, was described as a *cultura* in the 13th century, and parts of Underdale were then also under the plough.²⁹ Open arable land was also located between the river and the south-west line of the town walls, ground known in the Middle Ages as 'behind the walls' (*retro muros*). By the 16th century the area was usually described as the 'pasture behind the walls', but its original character is shown by references to selions (1324, 1366), butts (1352) and two separate parcels of arable land, each an acre in extent, lying *in campo extra muros* (1449).³⁰ Butts outside the posterns at Romaldesham are also mentioned in 1436.³¹ Probably all the ground between the Austin and Franciscan friaries had once been of this nature,³² and in 1545 occupants of the soil between the orchard of the old Franciscan Friary and the pasture-behind-the-walls were expected to bridge the furrows that still marked the ground.³³

Shrewsbury's parish churches once held substantial holdings in the open fields. In addition to the lands of St Juliana's and St Mary's in Coton (above), the existence in Frankwell of fields originally of St Chad's collegiate church, belonging to the bishops of Lichfield/Chester,

²³ TNA: PRO LR 2/184, ff. 193v-195, 199, 200v.

²⁴ SA 1831/1/5/21.

²⁵ Rees (ed.), *Cart. Shrews.*, I, 173-4, 188-9, 195-6 (cf. II, 386-7), 212.

²⁶ SA 1514/470.

²⁷ Rees (ed.), *Cart. Haughmond*, 193.

²⁸ TNA: PRO SC 6/Hen. VIII/3009, m. 43d.

²⁹ Rees (ed.), *Cart. Shrews.* I, 173-4; II, 375-6, 381.

³⁰ R.C. Purton (ed.), 'Deeds relating to an estate called Behind The Walls, Shrewsbury', *TSAS* 47 (1933-4), 62, 65, *misc.* xiii; 'Deeds relating to land Behind The Walls, Shrewsbury', *TSAS* 48 (1935-6), 208.

³¹ SA 3365/845.

³² BL, Add. 30,321, f. 16; SA 6000/3937.

³³ SA 3365/1033/6/10 (perhaps in aid of a tow path).

is indicated both by deeds and the persistent field-name Bishop's Land.³⁴ In addition, the Half Acres and land later known as Monk Eye had both once belonged to St Chad's, the latter being granted by Roger de Clifton, bishop of Chester, to Buildwas Abbey in 1135 as an extension of its Crowmeole estate.³⁵ Ground behind the walls, including doubtless the Bishop's Slang, had also once belonged to the church.³⁶ By the late 13th century, however, the church estates in the town fields had largely been dissipated, while any original and proportional allocation of strips had been broken up as a result of the brisk traffic in land, including, for pious purposes, grants to religious houses.³⁷ Some idea of the resulting distribution of land-holding can be obtained from the Hundred inquest of 1279, although the

Size of holdings (acres)	Number of Holdings	%	Acreage	%
1-5	17	29.8	59	6.8
6-10	16	28.1	124	14.3
11-20	12	21.0	204	23.5
21-50	10	17.5	310½	35.8
51-99	1	1.7	70	8.1
100	1	1.7	100	11.5
Totals	57		867½	

Table [...]: Holdings in Shrewsbury fields, 1279.³⁸

returns evidently included pasture and meadow land, while at the same time largely omitting, as at Cambridge,³⁹ monastic holdings.⁴⁰ Although grants to Lilleshall abbey in the 1390s have been taken to imply that holdings in the Coton and Castle Foregate fields were of a standard size,⁴¹ that pattern cannot be discerned from the inquest. Instead the concentration of land in the hands of some of the greater burgesses and their relations is palpable (Table [. . .]). Over one third of the recorded acreage was held by men known to have served as provosts or bailiffs of the borough, a proportion that excludes land belonging to widows and other

³⁴ SA 6000/176, 18874 (1867); 3365/861, 2592; 1709/20/2a ii.

³⁵ Champion. 'Ancient fields and commons'.

³⁶ Rees (ed.), *Cart. Haughmond*, 203; SA 6001/199, pp. 144-5.

³⁷ Cf. Cambridge, Maitland, *Township and Borough*, 45, 57-66.

³⁸ SA 6001/28, pp. 21-44 (excl. two meadows of unknown size).

³⁹ Maitland, *Township and Borough*, 159.

⁴⁰ E.g. neither Monk Eye in Frankwell, belonging to Buildwas abbey, nor the 30a. in Coleham fields granted to Haughmond abbey before 1172, were recorded: Rees (ed.), *Cart. Haughmond*, 190.

⁴¹ Rees (ed.), *Cart. Lilleshall*, 191. In fact the grants prob. relate to the same property: *ibid.*, 187-8, 191.

relatives of prominent Shrewsbury families (e.g. Bernard, Gamel, Reyner). Altogether, some 55 per cent of the acreage was held by just 12 individuals, the largest holding (100a.) resting in the hands of Lucy Pride, whose relatives Roger and Richard Pride held another 110a. between them. Not surprisingly the Pride family was to leave its mark upon local nomenclature, much of the ground (c.58a.) in Coton, now mostly occupied by the Agricultural Show Ground, being known for centuries as the Pride or *Purditches*.⁴² Like the adjoining Cock (Cox) Ditches, named after another prominent Shrewsbury family,⁴³ the *Purditches* may have originated in private assarts on the flood-plain of the old river-bed.⁴⁴ But accumulations by wealthy burgesses in the arable fields are also reflected in field-names, e.g. Child's and Colle Furlongs in Castle Foregate, and Borrey's Furlong in Abbey Foregate.⁴⁵ Among their holdings, leading townsmen and institutions also kept their own dovecotes and warrens.⁴⁶ Such concentrations of land, persisting after 1350,⁴⁷ must have made communal regulation of the open fields problematic; or, alternatively, are symptoms of its absence. Significantly, with respect to the old arable fields, the borough records are silent on this score, perhaps because, as at Cambridge and other 'old county towns', these fields had never been subject to a true manorial lordship.⁴⁸ By contrast, in Monks' Foregate, where the abbey came to exercise just such lordship, the position was rather different (below).

In the long run accumulation, together with exchanges and consolidation, was also likely to encourage the process of inclosure which in the borough, as in Shropshire generally, seems to have begun relatively early and to have occurred piece-meal over a long period.⁴⁹ In 1408 Thomas Pride was presented for ditching and appropriating a furlong in Coton field;⁵⁰ and by the early 15th century the Great Court was licensing holdings in severalty in fields which at the prescribed season had previously been held in common, including the Middle Field in Coleham, Child's Field in Castle Foregate, and the Monk Eye in Frankwell.⁵¹ Fields might still lie open, however, though held in severalty. As late as 1587 some 'butts or ridges of

⁴² Hobbs, *Street Names*, 85. The *pridiches* were sold by Margery Pride in 1362: SA 6000/3247-3256, 3388.

⁴³ Hobbs, *Street Names*, 36; J. Morris, 'The provosts and bailiffs of Shrewsbury', *TSAS* 3rd ser. 1 (1901), 153, 160-1.

⁴⁴ The Coxe Ditches were still treacherous enough in 1298 to claim a victim by drowning: SA 840/90; Revd C.H. Drinkwater (ed.), 'Proceedings of the coroners of Salop, 1295-1306', *TSAS* 3rd ser. 5 (1905), 155.

⁴⁵ O & B, II, 144.

⁴⁶ SA 6000/3970, 3982; 3365/771/2, m. 1; TNA: PRO C 142/200/64.

⁴⁷ E.g. in the 14th and 15th centuries the Myttons acquired an estate in the town fields which still amounted to 220 acres in 1818: Berwick deeds, 450/39/6 (33).

⁴⁸ Maitland, *Township and Borough*, 25-6, 98.

⁴⁹ G.C. Baugh (ed.), *A History of Shropshire*, IV (1989), 83-4, 119-121.

⁵⁰ SA 3365/817.

⁵¹ SA 3365/817, 821, 823, 837, 845, 849, 860, 877.

land' in Frankwell were still being tenanted separately, though lying within a landlord's pasture, which hints at some such arrangement.⁵² Nonetheless, Thomas Pride's ditching c.1408 (above) indicates the making of a field boundary, and hedge inclosure was clearly under way by the late 14th century, as the destruction in 1370 of unpopular hedges in Coleham suggests.⁵³ Land behind the walls, adjacent to Stury's Close, was also inclosed in c.1450,⁵⁴ as had by 1540 all the selions in Castle Foregate belonging to Shrewsbury abbey.⁵⁵ By the 1640s Coton Field, though still marked by old 'ridges of land', had also been divided into separate closes.⁵⁶ The presumed loss in these cases of common grazing in the harvested and fallow fields need not always have occurred without resistance, as the Coleham incident in 1370 suggests, and presentments of similar date imply that Shrewsbury women-folk continued to assert customary rights to gleaning.⁵⁷ Nonetheless, loss of commonable land was particularly likely where arable was inclosed and converted to permanent pasture.⁵⁸ In Castle Foregate, where the Castle Field was described as pasture in 1538,⁵⁹ both Colle Furlong and Child's Field had also been laid down to grass by the early 16th century.⁶⁰ The field name Greenfields in Coton may reflect the transition: in 1596 'Greenfelde' consisted of four crofts, adjacent to remnant butts in the open fields.⁶¹

In Abbey Foregate, as with other monastic estates in late medieval Shropshire, the extent of pasture also increased at the expense of arable.⁶² The *Aldefeld*, a *cultura* in 1295, was described as pasture by 1540,⁶³ as were parts of Beckbury or St Giles's Field, and the Judas Butts (Judith Butts off Monkmoor Road).⁶⁴ Little is known of how the abbey once worked demesne lands within its liberty, although boon work at harvest time was probably required (1349).⁶⁵ The home grange may have stood in the vicinity of the later site of Whitehall where the abbot's 'greate barne' was located.⁶⁶ By 1540, however, only one half of the barn was

⁵² TNA: PRO Prob 11/72, f. 158.

⁵³ SA 3365/771.

⁵⁴ SA 3365/876.

⁵⁵ TNA: PRO LR 2/184, f. 196.

⁵⁶ TNA: PRO C 142/609/64; SA 1146/57-8.

⁵⁷ SA 3365/784, mm. 10, 12, 25d.

⁵⁸ Cf. G.C. Baugh (ed.), *A History of Shropshire*, XI (1985), 157, 223.

⁵⁹ TNA: PRO: E 308/14/Salop/229.

⁶⁰ SA 3365/438, f. 92v; 3365/1000, m. 13.

⁶¹ SA D3651/B/4/2/131.

⁶² Baugh (ed.), *Hist. Shrop.*, IV, 104.

⁶³ SA 1831/2/35/15; TNA: PRO LR 2/184, f. 194. (Strictly in Coleham, but part of Holy Cross parish.)

⁶⁴ TNA: PRO LR 2/184, ff. 205v, 206v-207.

⁶⁵ Revd W.A. Leighton, 'Notes relating to the Abbey parish church estate', TSAS 1 (1878), 22-3.

⁶⁶ N. Baker (ed.), *Shrewsbury Abbey* (2002), 211-13.

retained by the abbey, and like its demesne lands elsewhere in Shropshire,⁶⁷ the home farm by then was probably not kept in hand, most food being purchased in Shrewsbury markets where it was said in 1509 that 400 marks was spent annually by the abbot on provisions.⁶⁸ In 1540 the abbey's own holdings in the open fields included at least 173 selions, 'lands' or half-lands, let to 19 tenants, the majority of whom held by indenture or 'copy' for terms of 60 or 61 years, most set to expire between 1575 and 1600.⁶⁹

Communal regulation of the Abbey Foregate open fields may also have been more active than in the borough, a result, possibly, of closer manorial control. Perhaps the absence of rich and powerful laymen, and leases persisting long after the abbey's dissolution (1540), also hindered inclosure. As late as 1589 by-laws for the suburb laid down the prescribed period for gleaning; prohibited both the removal of boundary stones and the ploughing out of the balks or green 'reans' at the end of the strips; and ordered the annual election of a swineherd to tend pigs in the fallow fields, although stocking of seeded fields with livestock required permission of the holder of the soil.⁷⁰ Thus, apart from free tenancies, significant opportunities for the new post-Dissolution proprietors in the suburb, notably the Prynce, Langley, Rocke and Hatton families, to consolidate and inclose holdings in the open fields were delayed until after c.1600. In 1628, 1633 and 1647, for example, Sir Richard Prynce exchanged strips lying 'promiscuous in the comon feilds' with John Langley of The Abbey, proceeding to remove the mere stones and inclose the ground, in the case of St Giles' Field and the Boat Field putting the respective lands down to pasture.⁷¹ Further exchanges were carried out both by Sir Richard's son-in-law Thomas Hayes, and by John Langley prior to 1652.⁷² The process continued into the 18th century,⁷³ and included strips belonging to the Drapers' company. These, originally scattered through all four open fields,⁷⁴ passed to the Hattons and were later consolidated as Crowmere Farm (by then a Tankerville possession).⁷⁵ By 1750 inclosure in Abbey Foregate was essentially complete, although a few residual strips lingered on into the 19th century.⁷⁶

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, f. 259.

⁶⁸ Gaydon (ed.), *Hist. Shrop.* II, 32-3.

⁶⁹ TNA: PRO LR 2/184, ff. 206v, 258v, and 198-208 *passim*.

⁷⁰ SA 3365/1106/1-2.

⁷¹ TNA: PRO C 5/15/61.

⁷² *Ibid.*; SA 6000/1367, 1671.

⁷³ Champion, 'Ancient fields and commons'.

⁷⁴ SA 1831/2/21/6-8, 10, 12, 17, 21, 32.

⁷⁵ M. Peele, 'Shrewsbury Drapers' Properties', unpubl. TS at SA D36.1 v.f, p. 5.

⁷⁶ SA P250/B/23/51.

Meadows and pastures

As with the arable, most meadows and permanent pastures in the town fields belonged by the 14th or 15th centuries to richer burgesses, including Thornes Heyes and Pride Ditches in Coton;⁷⁷ Gooseland and Selk's Meadow in Frankwell (both of which passed to the Myttons);⁷⁸ Kent's Eye and Robinett's Croft in Coleham;⁷⁹ Colle Meadow, Vaughan's Croft, and other meadowland, in Castle Foregate.⁸⁰ Again, presentments suggest that it was after c.1350 that any commonability of these grounds began to unravel. Access to the Thornes lands in Coton was restricted by 1377, and this was followed by many similar cases.⁸¹ Typical was the meadowland, originally a 'back-swamp',⁸² beneath the cliff on which the northern line of the town walls had been built. Although still described as 'common' in the 16th century,⁸³ most of it, known generally as Roushill, was already divided by 1408 into 16 closes licensed in severalty.⁸⁴ Of these, 14 can be identified as extra-mural extensions of plots on Pride Hill,⁸⁵ truncated by two larger closes known afterwards as Thornes or Roushill Meadow.⁸⁶ By the 15th century the latter had become appurtenant to the Raven Inn in High Pavement, belonging to the Thornes family, with the burgesses retaining only a (contested) right of way across it.⁸⁷ In Castle Foregate, the 'great' close known as *Cowlande*,⁸⁸ which, it has been suggested, once comprised a communal cow pasture,⁸⁹ was also held in severalty by the 1400s.⁹⁰ Deposits at 'Cowland pitts' (later Clay Pits) were being dug out by local tilers from the 1470s, and the tract was to develop as an important brick-making area.⁹¹

⁷⁷ SA 6001/6761 (notes on Coton fields, unpag.); 450/16/1-5.

⁷⁸ SA 6001/2794, pp. 17, 83-4; 6000/1199, 1454, 3719, 3789, 3810, 3947; 1709/20/2a ii.

⁷⁹ Hobbs, *Street Names*, 66; SA 6000/121, 2171/96.

⁸⁰ TNA: PRO LR 2/184, f. 199v; E 303/14/Salop/229; SA 6000/3912, 3920, 3927, 3970; 1514/457 (1338).

⁸¹ SA 3365/784, mm. 18d, 24; 817, 820, 837, 845, 849, 857, 861, 877.

⁸² The resulting silt bar, on which a limb of the town walls was built, formed a near-island, the 'bylet de Roeshull' recorded in 1313: N.J. Baker, J.B. Lawson, R. Maxwell, J.T. Smith, 'Further work on Pride Hill', *TSAS* 68 (1993), 46. My thanks to Mr David Pannett for advice on this point.

⁸³ 'Old deeds relating to property in Shrewsbury', *TSAS*, 2nd ser. 12 (1900), 198; SA 6002/93/229, 3365/1033/6/13.

⁸⁴ SA 3365/817.

⁸⁵ Cf. the tenants' names recorded in SA 3365/817; 972/223/2/7; 3365/67, f. 94v.

⁸⁶ TNA: PRO C1/838/56-7; SA 6000/5800, 5885.

⁸⁷ SA 3365/392 (1464), 410 (1477), 1033/6/12 (1544). A small area, however, between Roushill Meadow and Roushill Lane belonged to the borough. Encroachments for industrial and other uses began here in the 1570s, the residual estate eventually being sold in 1820: Bodleian, Gough Shrop. 12, ff. 95v-97, 106v; SA 3365/105 (7 Feb. 1820), 3365/73 (17 Feb., 4 Apr. 1820), 3365/2525.

⁸⁸ Rees (ed.), *Cart. Haughmond*, 71-2 (1462).

⁸⁹ Hobbs, *Street Names*, 38.

⁹⁰ SA 3365/817, 823. Much, if not all of Cowland, had belonged since the 14th century to the Corbets of Moreton: SA 6000/3984-5; Champion, 'Ancient fields and commons'.

⁹¹ SA 3365/926-7, 932, 934-5; 6000/13327; 3357/26/1.

Again, as with the arable open fields, only slight evidence exists for resistance to the loss of commons. Richard Stury, whose father 'emparked' *Wommanes medowe* in Coton before 1372,⁹² was one of a group of leading townsmen whose fences there were damaged 1381–3, and several women were presented for reaping the herbage.⁹³ Nonetheless, as at Cambridge,⁹⁴ regulation of the pasture lands was more explicit, and the demise of commons was protracted. In 1500 the borough council could still order that permanent grassland within the franchise should remain open from Michaelmas to Candlemas 'as it hath ben accustomed',⁹⁵ and care was also taken to ensure that the burgesses' rights to graze cattle and horses were not infringed by butchers tenanting the pastures (1527).⁹⁶ In Coton, where the field-names *loseporte* ('pig-sty gate') and *Swinedale* suggest that some fields once provided pannage grounds,⁹⁷ common usage for that purpose may have survived into the 1560s.⁹⁸ Above all, rights in the 'pasture behind the walls', were vigorously upheld (below). Still, with that exception, by c.1600 common grazing of the meadow-pasture seems to have quietly expired. Nor was compensation provided as may have happened e.g. at Beverley.⁹⁹ Much later in 1725 the corporation was to purchase land in Coton of a bankrupt butcher,¹⁰⁰ but that was a commercial investment. Leased until 1813, the estate was then divided into 64 allotments, known as 'Corporation Gardens',¹⁰¹ most of which was sold in 1848 to raise funds for the new Butter Market, a final parcel being disposed of in 1859.¹⁰²

The common wastes

The ancient common wastes of the borough were located to the west of the town at Kingsland, and to the north in Coton, Castle Foregate, Hencott, Albrightlee and Pimley. Kingsland, outside the borough limits, was part of Meole Brace township, and may have been granted to the burgesses by William I (who also granted the rest of Meole Brace to Ralph de Mortimer).¹⁰³ Certainly, an annual rent for Kingsland of 1s., first recorded in the late 14th

⁹² The meadow, near Long Moor (q.v. below), was prob. land sold by Walter Stury in 1620 and owned by Capt. Ashby in 1859: SA 3365/784, mm. 3, 19, 24; 6001/6461 (notes unpag. on Coton fields), 2047/90.

⁹³ SA 3365/784, mm. 9d, 12d, 13d, 14d, 24d, 25d.

⁹⁴ Maitland, *Township and Borough*, 25-7.

⁹⁵ SA 3365/67, f. 1v (reiterated 1525: 3365/75/4, f. 13v).

⁹⁶ SA 3365/75/4, f. 2.

⁹⁷ Gelling, *Place-Names of Shrop.*, 64-5.

⁹⁸ SA 3365/1057/3.

⁹⁹ K.J. Allison (ed.), *A History of the County of York East Riding*, VI (1989), 213.

¹⁰⁰ Bodl. Gough Shrop. 3, f. 17; SA 6001/290, 13 May 1722, 31 Aug. 1722, 5 Oct. 1722, 19 June 1725

¹⁰¹ SA 3365/676, 27 April 1813; and inf. from Mr Robert Cromarty.

¹⁰² SA DA5/100/2 (8 May, 15 Oct. 1847; 7 Aug., 9 Nov. 1848; 1 Jan. 1849); 3790/439.

¹⁰³ Gelling, *Place-Names of Shrop.*, 91; Eyton, *Antiquities*, VI, 350-1.

century,¹⁰⁴ was paid by the burgesses to the Crown or its assigns until 1871.¹⁰⁵ By 1863 the borough's estate there comprised 53 acres of which about nine acres consisted of land at Radbrook recently obtained by way of exchange (below). Of the rest, only 26 acres remained uninclosed, occupying the existing southern half of the main playing field of Shrewsbury School, extending approximately to the line of Kennedy Road and Beehive Lane and bounded by the Kingsland House property to the west.¹⁰⁶

According to Phillips (1779) much inclosure of the out parts of Kingsland had only recently taken place,¹⁰⁷ but a plan of 1760 shows that the uninclosed portion was virtually identical to that which survived a century later.¹⁰⁸ Probably the inclosures referred to were those that were said in 1728 to have recently occurred on 'Kingsland Bank', i.e. above the Rad Brook,¹⁰⁹ leaving the arbour of the Weavers', Bakers' and Clothworkers' companies stranded among the new closes.¹¹⁰ The other inclosed part of Kingsland, represented by the later Kingsland House estate, may be identified with inclosures of 1442–3, supervised by the civic authorities, which provoked opposition among the town's artisans.¹¹¹ In 1615 this part was sold by the corporation to the headmaster of Shrewsbury School John Meighen, whose father had rented it beforehand.¹¹² It was bought back in 1631, probably, as in 1650, for use as a pesthouse during the plague epidemic of that year, and was regularly leased by the corporation thereafter.¹¹³ In 1834 the estate was sold to the town clerk and sitting tenant Joseph Loxdale in exchange for some land at Radbrook.¹¹⁴

Common waste was also once enjoyed by the burgesses in an extensive heath to the north called Derfald, identified as an area of late Anglo-Saxon royal demesne comprising a deer park later attached to Shrewsbury castle.¹¹⁵ One part (*mediatatem*) of Derfald, in Castle Foregate, was represented by a detached parochial portion of the castle chapel of St Michael,

¹⁰⁴ SA 3365/67, f. 117; 3365/355.

¹⁰⁵ SA DA5/100/1 (2 Jan., 13 Feb. 1871); H. Pidgeon, 'Ancient guilds, trading companies and the origin of Shrewsbury Show', *TSAS* 6 (1883), 197. The rent was temporarily extinguished during the Interregnum: Bodleian, Blakeway 16, p. 203.

¹⁰⁶ SA DA5/100/3 (9 Feb. 1863); TNA: PRO IR 29/29/47, 30/29/47.

¹⁰⁷ T. Phillips, *The History and Antiquities of Shrewsbury* (1779), 202.

¹⁰⁸ SA 3790/452.

¹⁰⁹ Probably c.1722: SA 3365/2521 (Kingsland leases, 25 Oct. 1728).

¹¹⁰ SA 3790/454; 3365/2521 (lease, 1789, reserving right of access to the arbour.)

¹¹¹ SA 3365/377, 879. Ditches on Kingsland were also damaged by Shrewsbury women-folk in 1459: SA 3365/387.

¹¹² Bodleian, Gough Shrop. 1, f. 173v.

¹¹³ SA 3365/2521; H.W. Adnitt (ed.), 'The orders of the corporation of Shrewsbury, 1511-1735', *TSAS* 11 (1888), 177, 183; Phillips, *Hist. and Antiquities*, 17.

¹¹⁴ SA 3365/74 (10 Jan., 10. Feb., 17 Feb. 1834).

¹¹⁵ S. Bassett, 'Anglo-Saxon Shrewsbury and its churches', *Midland History* 16 (1991), 13; O & B, II, 417-22, 425.

granted to Haughmond abbey in the 12th century.¹¹⁶ Here the burgesses released to the abbey their common rights in 1256 (confirmed 1463),¹¹⁷ and by the 15th century it was leased, with a moated farmstead and dovecote, as Derfald Grange or ‘manor of Derfald’ (1436).¹¹⁸ After the Dissolution, the estate was granted (1545) to the Shrewsbury merchant Thomas Ireland,¹¹⁹ passing in the 18th century to the Corbets of Sundorne.¹²⁰ Another small part of Derfald also lay in Castle Foregate, but in St Mary's parish,¹²¹ though described by the 16th century as Old Heath.¹²² This waste, belonging to the borough, was to develop as Ditherington.¹²³

Most of Derfald, however, lay in Lilleshall abbey's manors of Hencott and Albrightlee.¹²⁴ The boundaries of the Hencott portion were laid out in 1296, and again in 1394 when the Husseys (mesne lords of Harlescott) quitclaimed to the abbey the waste of *Derefald* reserving rights of common.¹²⁵ This too was known by the 16th century as Old Heath,¹²⁶ though the term also encompassed all the waste east of the Whitchurch road extending to Pimley and Albrightlee, including the *dritssawe* (‘dirty wood’) of 1296.¹²⁷ Here Lilleshall's rights, saving common pasture and easements, had been recognized by Stephen of Pimley in 1189.¹²⁸ This area, said in 1311 also to be part of Derfald, was administered as part of Albrightlee.¹²⁹

The burgesses evidently once enjoyed common in the whole of Derfald or Old Heath, as shown by disputes over Hencott (1200),¹³⁰ and Albrightlee at *Portmanneselesue* (Portman's leasow, ‘burgess's pasture’), where a dispute (1311–14) occurred after beasts of two Shrewsbury theynesmen were impounded by Lilleshall abbey.¹³¹ Here common was said to be appendant to burgage tenure.¹³² Later, c.1478–9, the burgesses were again in dispute after

¹¹⁶ Below, Ancient chapels.

¹¹⁷ Rees (ed.), *Cart. Haughmond*, 72.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 72-3; SA 6000/3930, 3970 (‘culvercroft de Derfald’, 1387); 6001/2794, p. 16.

¹¹⁹ *L&P Hen. VIII*, XX (1), pp. 222-3.

¹²⁰ Champion, ‘Ancient fields and commons’.

¹²¹ SA 3365/817, 849, 860, 953, 955. This pt. of Derfald was listed as a separate township in 1493: 3365/952.

¹²² For the name change, cf. SA 3365/1793 (1521-2, contemp. f. 9v), 3365/1022/14 (1534).

¹²³ As the boro's pt. of Old Heath, its southern boundary, extending to Farmer's charity land near Spring Gardens, was laid out in 1691: Bodleian, Gough Shrop. 6, f. 76; SA 2050/4.

¹²⁴ Blakeway, ‘History of Shrewsbury Hundred’ (ed. Fletcher), *TSAS*, 2nd ser. 8 (1896), 163.

¹²⁵ SA 972/223/1/6; *Cal. Close* 1392-1396, 374; Champion, ‘Ancient fields and commons’.

¹²⁶ The name is first recorded in 1507: SA 972/223/2/12.

¹²⁷ Gelling, *Place-Names of Shrop.*, 154.

¹²⁸ Rees (ed.), *Cart. Lilleshall*, 67, 106-07; Eyton, *Antiquities*, VI, 368-9.

¹²⁹ SA 972/221/loose 6; Blakeway, ‘History of Shrewsbury Hundred’ (ed. Fletcher), *TSAS*, 2nd ser. 1 (1889), 114; *Year Book* 5 Edw. II (Selden Soc. 63), 195.

¹³⁰ Eyton, *Antiquities*, VI, 369; *Cur. Reg.* I, 294.

¹³¹ D. Cromarty, *Everyday Life in Medieval Shrewsbury* (1991), 77. But not Albrighton, as stated there. See SA 3365/325; TNA: PRO CP 40/204, m. 45d (inf. from the late Mrs Cromarty).

¹³² *Year Book* 5 Edw. II (Selden Soc. 63), 194-5.

part of Albrightlee wood was inclosed by the abbey's tenant.¹³³ Common was also claimed (1201–02) in Pimley wood, the latter a pannage ground which until the 1630s was demarcated from Old Heath only by mere stones.¹³⁴ In the latter case the burgesses' rights were conceded by Stephen of Pimley in return for an annual payment of a pound of pepper,¹³⁵ paid by the 15th century to Shrewsbury abbey, lord of Pimley since c.1121–36.¹³⁶ Rights were also claimed (1256) in the low-lying land beside the Severn between Pimley Wood and Derfald Grange known as *Darersiden* or the Great Slade.¹³⁷

In addition to Kingsland and Derfald, common was also once enjoyed in the 'common moors', mostly located on or beside the old river bed encircling the 'isle of Coton', a description still used in the 15th century.¹³⁸ The damp nature of this ground was reflected in medieval toponyms such as *caldewalledale*, *frogkeacre*, *folebrugge* (where the Ellesmere road crossed the old river bed), and *shardewallemor* ('spring in a cleft').¹³⁹ With the exception of Hencott Moor, alias Long Moor, whose boundary was uncertain (below), all the moors along the old river bed lay within the borough, and were originally taken to be part of its estate. Other common moors in Coton included Peat Moss, a glacial kettle hole acquired by the Myttons c.1542–3;¹⁴⁰ Corvisors' Moor beside Alkmond Park;¹⁴¹ and Roundhill (*Ruenhulle* in the 1246 borough rental).¹⁴²

The common wastes after 1350

With the exception of Kingsland, common rights in the wastes were also slowly eroded after c.1350. Albrightlee wood was partly inclosed in 1478–9 (above), and Pimley wood in its entirety in 1635–6, where despite legal action the burgesses' claims to common, still said to be attached to holdings in Coton and Castle Foregate, were extinguished 1638–9. The wood

¹³³ SA 3365/414; Blakeway, 'History of Shrewsbury Hundred' (ed. Fletcher), *TSAS*, 2nd ser. 1 (1889), 113-14.

¹³⁴ Blakeway, 'History of Shrewsbury Hundred' (ed. Fletcher), *TSAS*, 2nd ser. 8 (1896), 162-3.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*; Eyton, *Antiquities*, VII, 305. By 1635 the rent had been commuted for 4d. paid to the Yonges, owners of Pimley: SA 3365/580.

¹³⁶ Eyton, *Antiquities*, VII, 304; SA 3365/392, 407, 899.

¹³⁷ Gelling, *Place-Names of Shrop.*, 48.

¹³⁸ SA 6000/3714, 3721.

¹³⁹ Gelling, *Place-Names of Shrop.*, 63-4.

¹⁴⁰ SA 6000/3725; Bodleian, Gough Shrop. 12, f. 99v.

¹⁴¹ Hobbs, 'Three borough rentals', 227; BL, Add. MS 30,317, f. 100.

¹⁴² Bodleian, Gough Shrop. 1, f. 145.

(c.60a.) was cleared shortly afterwards, the timber allegedly being used to fortify Parliamentary garrisons on the River Severn.¹⁴³ The Hencott portion of Old Heath, acquired with Hencott Grange by Samuel Wingfield in 1647,¹⁴⁴ was still uninclosed in 1721 when the corporation, as part of its policy of asserting its manorial lordship over surviving commons in the liberties, challenged the Wingfields' right to the waste.¹⁴⁵ Although still described as 'common' in 1751,¹⁴⁶ the whole area (c.458a.) had been inclosed by the early 19th century into two isolated farms called Old Heath and Cross Hill.¹⁴⁷ The portion of Albrightlee wood left uninclosed in 1478 probably underwent the same fate shortly before 1754, and by 1777 was mostly absorbed, with the Great Slade, into New Inn farm.¹⁴⁸

Of the Coton 'moors', Bownton's Moor and *petemor* had been held in severalty as early as 1346 and 1382,¹⁴⁹ and part of Long Moor was inclosed and planted with trees by Thomas Pride before 1408,¹⁵⁰ probably the small pleasure ground known by 1448 as 'Coton Park'.¹⁵¹ Northern parts of Long Moor, inter-commoned with Hencott but with an uncertain boundary, were ditched and inclosed by the borough in the 1430s leading to a dispute (1437–1443) with Lilleshall abbey, at the end of which the borough demised its rights.¹⁵² Other encroachments are recorded in 1436 and 1494,¹⁵³ and by 1580 all the Coton moors had been granted away for fixed rents, usually to leading townsmen, after whom they were often named.¹⁵⁴ In 1606 the Pontesbury moors were described as 'sometime belonginge to the said towne of Shrewsburie',¹⁵⁵ and the demise of the borough interest was underscored when even the reserved rents were sold. At Harper's and Wantenor's Moors, granted to alderman Thomas Trentham in 1506,¹⁵⁶ the rents had dropped from the borough rental by 1580, while that for Hencott Moor was 'absolutely sold' in 1575 to the judge Thomas Owen, who had purchased

¹⁴³ Adnitt (ed.), 'Orders', 179; Blakeway, 'History of Shrewsbury Hundred' (ed. Fletcher), *TSAS*, 2nd ser. 8 (1896), 162-3; TNA: PRO KB 27/1651, m. 1400; C 7/417/84, C 8/324/33.

¹⁴⁴ TNA: PRO CP 25(2)/478/23 Chas.I/Mich.

¹⁴⁵ SA 6001/290 (27 Oct. 1721); above, *The Liberties and Municipal Boundaries*.

¹⁴⁶ SA P256/B/2/1/3, f. 8.

¹⁴⁷ R. Baugh, *Map of Shropshire* (1808); SA 2050/4. No inclosure award has come to light.

¹⁴⁸ SA 3182/1, pp. 6-10; 6000/18212.

¹⁴⁹ SA 3365/773, m. 13; 784, m. 18d.

¹⁵⁰ SA 3365/817, 821.

¹⁵¹ Gelling, *Place-Names of Shrop.*, 64 ('parke meadow' in 1583: TNA: PRO C142/200/64).

¹⁵² *Cal. Pat.* 1436-1441, 268; TNA: PRO C 66/1088, m. 29; SA 3365/370, 373, 375, 377. There were earlier disputes (c.1306–1311) with Lilleshall over common pasture rights: TNA: PRO CP 40/162, 164, 181 (inf. from the late Mrs Cromarty).

¹⁵³ SA 3365/817, 821, 845, 953.

¹⁵⁴ Hobbs, 'Three borough rentals', 227; Champion, 'Ancient fields and commons'.

¹⁵⁵ SA 6000/1737.

¹⁵⁶ Bodleian, *Gough Shrop.* 6, f. 31v; SA 3365/67, f. 32v.

Hencott two years before.¹⁵⁷ For how long common rights persisted as the corporation sold off its estate is unclear, although in 1555 the lessee of Roundhill was still presented for refusing to throw open his 'comyns mors' at Lammastide.¹⁵⁸ Probably, however, common rights in the Coton moors had been extinguished by 1600.

Kingsland and the 'pasture behind the walls'

Significant compensation for the loss of common grazing was provided by the creation, in effect, of a new common pasture 'behind the walls', now the Quarry. Originally part of the arable open fields (above), by 1350 many of the strips had been consolidated in the hands of a few rich townsmen, and a significant acreage, including the quarry itself, from which much of the area later took its name, was donated in the 1350s and 1360s to the Austin Friars.¹⁵⁹ In 1392 the friars granted the quarry (the present Dingle) to the borough in exchange for being allowed to inclose some land by the town wall,¹⁶⁰ and by the 16th century some 30 acres, now under pasture, was held by the borough and seven chief lords,¹⁶¹ including the Hord family of Hords' Park near Bridgnorth who had earlier granted part of their holding to the vicars choral of St Chad's as obit land – identifiable as the west side of Quarry Place, an obvious encroachment upon the present Quarry park.¹⁶²

Although most if not all of the ground was by now under grass, the area corresponding (more-or-less) to the present Quarry escaped inclosure – the friars' estate may have had much to do with this. Common rights too had been preserved, though now relating to permanent pasture, and about 1543 complaints of disorderly grazing by the burgesses' cattle led to an agreement that the borough could have the whole herbage for the use of poorer inhabitants, paying chief rents or providing cow grasses to the other lords.¹⁶³ The rents were paid out of pasture fees supervised by a bailiff.¹⁶⁴ The new arrangements, however, proved unsatisfactory.¹⁶⁵ In particular the borough's interest in that part of the pasture (c.14a.) which until the Dissolution had belonged to the Austin Friars, was challenged by the lessee in the

¹⁵⁷ Bodleian, Gough Shrop. 12, f. 10; Blakeway, 'History of Shrewsbury Hundred' (ed. Fletcher), *TSAS*, 2nd ser. 5 (1893), 391; TNA: PRO CP 25(2)/200/15-16 Eliz./Mich.

¹⁵⁸ SA 3365/1042/22/2; 3365/486, f. 2.

¹⁵⁹ R.C. Purton (ed.), 'Deeds relating to an estate called Behind The Walls, Shrewsbury', *TSAS* 47 (133-4), 61-2; TNA: PRO C 143/340/19, 350/13; Bodleian, Gough Shrop. 12, f. 96.

¹⁶⁰ Purton (ed.), 'Deeds', 63.

¹⁶¹ SA 3365/2502; 3365/76, f. 249 (loose paper).

¹⁶² TNA: PRO E 310/23/123, no. 89.

¹⁶³ SA 3365/2501.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.* (deposition of Geo. Higgons, 1572); SA 3365/486, f. 2v.

¹⁶⁵ SA 3365/76, ff. 59, 63v.

late 1560s,¹⁶⁶ and again by the lessee's widow after the corporation had in 1570 set the whole pasture-behind-the-walls as a means of recompensing the undertakers of the conduit project.¹⁶⁷ A temporary accommodation (1573) came to an end in 1581,¹⁶⁸ leading to further litigation settled only after the lease was assigned to the corporation in 1586.¹⁶⁹ With the expiry of the term the borough's title was again disputed (1606–11) by the reversioner Roger Pope whose grandfather had purchased the Shrewsbury friaries in 1544.¹⁷⁰ Problems also arose elsewhere in the pasture. In 1585 the lawyer Richard Prynne, after obtaining a lease of the estate belonging to the Hords, challenged the burgesses' rights to common by impounding their cattle and ploughing the ground – actions fiercely resisted by the lads of the town.¹⁷¹

These vexations were overcome after the corporation bought out the more important chief lords between 1587 and 1612.¹⁷² Chief rents continued to be paid to three remaining lords of whom two (including the Drapers' company) were bought out in 1789 and 1790, probably in connection with the encroachment on the Quarry by new St Chad's church.¹⁷³ Rent for the residual parcel, supposedly centred on the glacial erratic known as Harley's Stone, was paid until 1919.¹⁷⁴ During 1580–1 the corporation also began negotiations to buy the tithes of all the ground between the old Austin and Franciscan friaries to improve the stipend of the public preacher of St Chad's.¹⁷⁵ After purchase in 1588 the corporation paid £2 p.a. towards the stipend out of the 'herbage' of the pasture behind the walls.¹⁷⁶ To acquire the tithes the corporation had leased its interest in the Quarry pasture in 1581 for three years,¹⁷⁷ and short leases were also made in 1588 (to raise money to endow the public preacher of St Mary's) and 1596.¹⁷⁸ Such leases were unpopular with poorer burgesses,¹⁷⁹ but if the ground was set to the plough, as in 1588, common grazing was still accommodated between Michaelmas and Lady Day. Access to the quarry was also provided.¹⁸⁰ If the pasture was kept in hand, a stint

¹⁶⁶ SA 3365/2632 (petition of Joyce Beynes). The lease, for 80 years, dated from 1523.

¹⁶⁷ SA 3365/2501; 3365/76, f. 272; *Early Chronicles*, 269.

¹⁶⁸ SA 3365/2632 (letter of Joyce Beynes); 3365/76, ff. 167v-168.

¹⁶⁹ TNA: PRO Req. 2/175/21; Purton (ed.), 'Deeds', 68.

¹⁷⁰ SA 3365/2502, 2769; *L&P Hen. VIII, XIX* (2), p. 78.

¹⁷¹ *Early Chronicles*, 302.

¹⁷² Purton (ed.), 'Deeds', 69-72.

¹⁷³ M. Peele (ed.), 'Deeds relating to land behind the walls, Shrewsbury', *TSAS* 47 (1933-4), *misc.* xi-xii; *TSAS* 48 (1935-6), 207-212; SA 3365/2536/a, 2527(a); 6000/2757.

¹⁷⁴ *Salopian Shreds & Patches*, 16 Jan. 1878; Boro. of Shrews., *Abstract of Accts* (publ. annually, copies in SA DA4-5).

¹⁷⁵ SA 3365/76, ff. 298v, 348v, 356-7, 360v, 393; O & B, II, 204, 209-10.

¹⁷⁶ SA 1048/4511; DA5/100/2 (1 Jan. 1849).

¹⁷⁷ SA 3365/76, ff. 298v-299, 355v; *Early Chronicle*, 288.

¹⁷⁸ Bodleian, Gough Shrop. 1, f. 154v; Adnitt (ed.), 'Orders', 163; SA 3365/519 (28 April 1596).

¹⁷⁹ SA 3365/2617/140.

¹⁸⁰ Purton (ed.), 'Deeds', 69.

of 30 'summer kine' was provided at the rate of 5s. a cow, an arrangement said in 1609 to be ancient.¹⁸¹ Cow grasses, for poorer burgesses only, were obtained by application,¹⁸² a method replaced c.1612 by a system of 'turns' involving all the burgesses. The stint, reduced to 24 cows in 1625, lasted from 1 May to 1 November and was allocated, by ward, on a street rota similar to the watch.¹⁸³

On Kingsland, where inclosures were attacked in 1575,¹⁸⁴ and St. Mathew's fair was held the next year because of plague in town,¹⁸⁵ the common was also regularly leased during the 16th century;¹⁸⁶ but in 1563, when the pasture was in hand, poor burgesses were permitted to graze their kine from Candlemas until Michaelmas, the number of cows and the rent being determined by the bailiffs and two common councillors.¹⁸⁷ Over pressing the common was presentable.¹⁸⁸ In 1615, on expiry of a 21 year lease, a system of turns was also adopted with a stint of 30 cows, suspended during later leases (e.g. 1635–1656).¹⁸⁹ Regulations for the turns, later including horse grasses, continued to be made for Kingsland and the Quarry into the 18th century. Between c.1731 and 1756 the grasses were commuted for cash payments – one guinea for the Quarry, 4s. 6d. for Kingsland – although the mode of distribution was still regulated by the turn system.¹⁹⁰ Payments were finally discontinued in 1859 or 1872.¹⁹¹

The commutation of the turns effectively brought an end to the commonability of Kingsland and the Quarry, although the grazing continued to be let by the corporation. In the Quarry the grazing, running from May Day to Christmas, was now let 'without preference' in leys and produced c.£73–£90 p.a. between 1756 and 1839 – sums notably in excess of that obtained under the previous system.¹⁹² From 1797 the leys were supervised by a salaried keeper, appointed by the corporation and provided with a cottage in the Quarry, receiving a small fee from each ley holder.¹⁹³ In 1878, as part of improvements to the Quarry proposed by the Shropshire Horticultural Society, the leys were converted to sheep pasture and limited

¹⁸¹ Bodleian, Gough Shrop. 1, f. 168v; SA 3365/2502 (deposition of Ric. Higgons).

¹⁸² SA 3365/2617/140.

¹⁸³ Bodleian, Gough Shrop. 12, f. 195v; SA 3365/560.

¹⁸⁴ SA 3365/1875.

¹⁸⁵ *Early Chronicles*, 177/

¹⁸⁶ SA 3365/75/3, f. 41v; 3365/74, f. 2v; 3365/76, f. 258v; Bodleian, Gough Shrop. 3, f. 93v.

¹⁸⁷ SA 3365/76, f. 250.

¹⁸⁸ SA 3365/1040/47.

¹⁸⁹ SA 3365/560.

¹⁹⁰ SA 3365/655, 2684; *An Account Of The Turns In The Quarry And Kingsland* (Shrews. 1823).

¹⁹¹ Boro. of Shrews., *Minutes of the Council and Reports of Committees*, report 12 Feb. 1962. Alternative date of 1872 in J.W. Heath, 'The Quarry, Shrewsbury', *Trans. Caradoc & Severn Valley Field Club* (1912), 317.

¹⁹² SA 3365/72 (5 Mar. 1759); 3365/663; DA5/100/2 (4 Oct. 1839).

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*; 3365/73 (26 Aug. 1796, 3 Mar. 1797).

to a period of three months.¹⁹⁴ Regular grazing appears to have ceased by 1896, although complaints about sheep in the Quarry were still received in 1927.¹⁹⁵ On Kingsland, where the common had been let for seven years at £25 p.a. in 1758, the lease was almost immediately surrendered to the trustees of the projected Orphan Hospital, and in 1760 it was re-conveyed for a term of 93 years.¹⁹⁶ Kingsland's later history was linked successively to the Hospital, the House of Industry, Shrewsbury School, and the development of the suburb of that name.¹⁹⁷

Other uses of the common wastes

The common wastes provided assets other than grazing. On Old Heath coppice woodland was leased to Shrewsbury tradesmen,¹⁹⁸ and the designation (1189, 1296) in the boundaries of both Derfald and Pimley Wood of the road across the heath as the *Odewey* (OE *ad*, burning place) or Colliers Way, indicates the existence of charcoal making.¹⁹⁹ Gorse, used in the town's baking kilns, was gathered on both Old Heath and Kingsland,²⁰⁰ and bricks were also manufactured on the borough's part of Derfald. Although the first references to brick kilns and tile houses there appear in the early 16th century,²⁰¹ clay pits in Castle Foregate were being worked by 1345,²⁰² and encroachments at Derfald in the 1430s by William Vawre, of a family of tilers, also imply the existence of brick-making by that date.²⁰³ As elsewhere in Castle Foregate, tar deposits at Bow Bridge were exploited in the 1480s.²⁰⁴ By the 17th century the corporation was regularly licensing cottages and brick yards on its part of Old Heath (Ditherington).²⁰⁵ Mineral rights were also reserved by the corporation on Kingsland where gravel was being exploited by 1757, and coal prospecting began in 1739.²⁰⁶

¹⁹⁴ SA DA5/119/2/1 (28 May 1877, 2 July 1878).

¹⁹⁵ Boro. of Shrews., *Abstract of Accounts*; SA DA5/119/2/5 (24 June 1927).

¹⁹⁶ Bodleian, Gough Shrop. 3, f. 80; SA 3365/72 (16 Mar., 20 Oct. 1758, 1 Oct. 1760); 3365/2684.

¹⁹⁷ L. Smith, 'Refuges of last resort: Shropshire workhouse and the People who Built and Ran them', *TSAHS* 82 (2007), 25-34; J.B. Oldham, *A History of Shrewsbury School* (1952), 135-46; B. Trinder, *Beyond the Bridges. The Suburbs of Shrewsbury 1760-1960* (2006), 108-12.

¹⁹⁸ SA 972/223/2/12; TNA: PRO E 303/14/Salop/154.

¹⁹⁹ Rees (ed.), *Cart. Lilleshall*, 106; SA 972/223/1/6.

²⁰⁰ SA 972/223/2/12; 3365/1803 (orders 1583-4, unfol.).

²⁰¹ SA 3365/1004, m. 2; 3365/1793 (1521-2, f. 9v).

²⁰² SA 3365/773, m. 11d.

²⁰³ SA 3365/849, 860, 955, 1004 m. 2.

²⁰⁴ SA 3365/935.

²⁰⁵ Bodleian, Gough Shrop. 12, f. 101; BL, Add. MS 30,317, ff. 101, 112v, 114v; SA 3365/72 (8 May 1739, 5 June 1761); Adnitt (ed.), 'Orders', 196, 208. For Ditherington, Trinder, *Beyond the Bridges*, 161.

²⁰⁶ SA 3365/72 (10 Aug. 1739; 30 Sept. 1757); 3365/2521 (1747, 1789).

The wastes were also used for leisure pursuits. On the borough's part of Old Heath a bowling green was laid out before 1624,²⁰⁷ and Kingsland was dotted with a number of arbours erected by the craft fellowships. First mentioned in 1528, the arbours had probably originated as meeting places for archery practice,²⁰⁸ but were later best known for their use during Shrewsbury Show.²⁰⁹ Of the 15 trade companies extant in 1525, eleven, or their successors, had arbours on Kingsland in 1759, effectively cottage encroachments on the common.²¹⁰ By 1565 the Shoemakers had also constructed near their arbour a 'race' or maze, on which a windmill for the House of Industry was later built in 1796.²¹¹ In the 16th century access to the arbours, the maze and shooting butts was protected during inclosures of the common,²¹² a potential point of conflict which surfaced in 1724 and 1726 when craftsmen were obliged to force the lessee to clear a passage through the corn to their arbours.²¹³ Both Kingsland and Old Heath were also used for public executions. The position of the Kingsland gallows is not known but at Old Heath it was located in a field behind Gladstone Terrace (Ditherington).²¹⁴ The last execution there, before hangings were removed to the new county gaol, occurred in 1794.²¹⁵ From 1718 until 1724 Kingsland was also the site of the first Shrewsbury races,²¹⁶ and the 'airings' introduced for the gentry in the 1720s.²¹⁷ By the 19th century indeed the appropriate use of the commons for recreational use had become a contested social issue. On Kingsland that theme was linked to the fate of Shrewsbury Show,²¹⁸ but it also became a leitmotif in the subsequent history of the Quarry.

The Quarry

Prior to their demise before 1575, Shrewsbury's Whitsun plays had been staged in the 'dry quarry', a partial amphitheatre (now occupied by the Swimming Baths) on the north-west side of the pasture-behind-the-walls, though sports and recreations were still being held there in the 1600s.²¹⁹ When not under corn the rest of the pasture was also employed for musters,

²⁰⁷ Bodleian, Gough. Shrop. 12, f. 101v

²⁰⁸ SA 3365/75/4, f. 2v; 3365/1032/3/10; Nat. Lib. Wales, Castle Hill 2641/2 (Shearmen's accounts 1584-5).

²⁰⁹ Below, Social and Cultural Institutions, Companies and Guilds.

²¹⁰ Located on a 1759 plan of Kingsland: SA 3790/452.

²¹¹ SA 3365/76, f. 258v; J.E. Auden, 'Kingsland and its associations', *TSAS* 52 (1947-8), 55.

²¹² SA 3365/75/4, f. 2v; 3365/76, f. 258v.

²¹³ Phillips, *Hist. and Antiquities*, 202.

²¹⁴ *Early Chronicles*, 274, 290, 312, 332; *Shropshire Notes & Queries*, 4 Mar. 1892.

²¹⁵ *Shropshire Notes & Queries*, 30 April 1886.

²¹⁶ SA 6001/2, f. 252; A. T. Gaydon (ed.), *A History of Shropshire* II (1973), 177.

²¹⁷ Above, Economic and social history, 1640-1780.

²¹⁸ P. Price, 'The Decline and Fall of The Old Shrewsbury Show', in B. Trinder, *Victorian Shrewsbury* (1984).

²¹⁹ J.A.B. Somerset, 'Local Drama and Playing Places at Shrewsbury: New Findings from the Borough Records', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 2 (1985), 1-31.

archery, football and assemblies of some of the town companies.²²⁰ Military usage, shared by Kingsland, was also pronounced in the 18th century when parade damage to the Quarry aroused corporation concern.²²¹ That anxiety reflected a novel change, as the Quarry's 'tone' began to rise. Promenading in the Quarry alongside the Severn had begun by c.1700, but the practice was promoted in 1720 by the laying-out of a number of fashionable walks lined with lime trees.²²² Later embellishments included the erection of a summerhouse at riverside in 1734,²²³ and the railing and gravelling of the lower walk in 1754.²²⁴ During 1762–3 part of the town wall near St John's Hill was also pulled down to provide a better view across the Quarry, and plans were entertained to demolish another stretch to provide space for waiting coaches.²²⁵ The newly-appreciated aesthetic virtues of the Quarry also underlay the erection (1792–4) of Claremont Terrace on land donated by the corporation at the north-east end of the Quarry. Built 'as ornamental to the Town as possible', the development – never finished – was undertaken on condition that the view across the Quarry should remain unimpeded.²²⁶ These developments sharpened sensitivities to the Quarry's older and earthier functions. Although the siting of tenter frames in the pasture was accepted (1742, 1771),²²⁷ the admission of braying asses to the Quarry stint was not,²²⁸ nor the washing and drying of clothes, allowed in 1596 but restricted – if unsuccessfully – in 1796.²²⁹ In addition, plans to move the pig market to the Quarry, first proposed in 1756,²³⁰ were vigorously resisted in 1782 by Roger Kynaston of Hardwick, whose family owned property nearby.²³¹

Bourgeois sensitivities were further injured by 'indecencies' such as running naked,²³² and vandalism of the Quarry trees and facilities,²³³ acts difficult to check so long as artisanal

²²⁰ J.A.B. Somerset (ed.), *Records of Early English Drama. Shropshire* (Toronto, 1994), I, 296. Musters were also held in Stury's Close: *ibid.*; *Early Chronicles*, 310.

²²¹ Auden, 'Kingsland', 44-5; SA 3365/72 (12 Mar. 1742, 5 Oct. 1759, 7 May 1781).

²²² P. Stamper, *Historic Parks & Gardens in Shropshire* (1996), 36-8. In the 20th cent. the fate of the limes was to be the subject of much local anguish: *ibid.*, 70, 108.

²²³ Adnitt (ed.), 'Orders', 210; Phillips, *Hist. and Antiquities*, 201. The summerhouse was dismantled in 1797 to provide material for the Quarry keeper's house, but the seats still survive: SA 3365/73 (3 Mar. 1797).

²²⁴ Bodleian, Blakeway 16, p. 201.

²²⁵ SA 3365/72 (27 Aug. 1762, 5 Dec. 1763).

²²⁶ SA 3365/73 (5 Oct. 1792, 15 April 1794); D3651/B/13/2/4-6.

²²⁷ Bodleian, Gough Shrop. 3, ff. 84v-85; SA 3365/72 (27 Aug., 26 Oct. 1742, 25 Nov. 1771).

²²⁸ *Ibid.* (13 Apr. 1742).

²²⁹ Stamper, *Historic Parks*, 70-1; Adnitt (ed.), 'Orders', 163; SA 3365/73 (30 Sept. 1796); 3365/74 (23 June, 29 Sept. 1834); DA5/100/2 (1 May 1846).

²³⁰ SA 3365/72 (16 June 1756).

²³¹ Below, Markets and fairs.

²³² SA 3365/72 (16 May 1738). Doubtless swimmers: their recreation, beside the walks, was banned in 1806: SA 3365/73 (17 June 1806).

²³³ Stamper, *Historic Parks*, 70.

Shrewsbury continued to resort to the fields for its own, sometimes pugilistic, recreations.²³⁴ Potentially febrile but irregular events such as the parliamentary hustings held in the Quarry could be endured,²³⁵ but 'annoyances' inflicted upon respectable inhabitants on the Quarry walks, as in 1860, were not.²³⁶ By that date conflicting perspectives on the proper exploitation of the Quarry were coming to a head as municipal authorities responded both to parliamentary legislation from the 1840s, promoted by public health campaigners, empowering them to provide recreation grounds and municipal parks,²³⁷ and to the rise of novel kinds of mass entertainment and sport.²³⁸ Central to the defence of the Quarry as a decorous space was the Shropshire Horticultural Society, founded in the same year (1875) as it mounted its first annual Flower Show in the Quarry, held, with interruptions for both World Wars, ever since.²³⁹ With a committee largely drawn from the professions and leading tradesmen of the town, the Society was to set the price of admission to the show sufficiently high, as the Shrewsbury Chronicle noted in 1876, to 'exclude the rough element'.²⁴⁰

Although improvements to the Quarry lands were under consideration by 1868,²⁴¹ it was funds provided by the Society out of profits from the Show that enabled projects to proceed. Between 1878 and 1912 over £13,000 was donated to the corporation for municipal embellishments, much of it spent on the Quarry including the provision of a bandstand (1879), a greenhouse (1881), entrance gates (1880, 1883), a new lodge for the Quarry keeper (1885-6), and a balustrade (1906). In 1878 the Dingle was cleared and converted into a rockery, and decorated (1880) with the archway of the Shoemakers' arbour – its removal from Kingsland symbolizing the demise of Shrewsbury Show, the degraded spectacle of which was contrasted in the local press to the respectability of the new Flower Show.²⁴² Trees, plants and ornaments were also donated by some of the county's leading landowners from whose ranks the Horticultural Society's patrons were invariably drawn. Later improvements

²³⁴ *Shropshire Notes & Queries*, 5 Feb. 1886.

²³⁵ Heath, 'The Quarry', 324.

²³⁶ SA DA5/100/3 (13 Aug. 1860).

²³⁷ Stamper, *Historic Parks*, 93; M. Girouard, *The English Town* (1990), 267-278.

²³⁸ Except where stated, the rest of this piece is based on boro. council minutes and reports of committees, 1835 to present, esp. of the Estates and (from 1974) the Recreations and Leisure Committee: DA5/119/2/1-5; SA DA5/100/1-6; DA5/101/23 et seq. Also minutes of the Shrop. Hort. Soc., 1875-1968: SA 3122/1/1-7, 3122/4/3.

²³⁹ It was not the first show of its kind: an exhibition by the Shrop. Hort. and Botanical Soc. was held in the Quarry in 1855.

²⁴⁰ *Shrewsbury Chronicle*, 11 Aug. 1876, 22 Aug. 1879.

²⁴¹ Cf. T. Tisdale, *Prospectus and Plan of the Quarry as proposed to be laid out for Pleasure Grounds* (Shrews. 1869).

²⁴² SA 3122/4/3 unpag.

promoted by the Society included a contribution towards the erection, first envisaged in 1908, of a bridge across the river to link the Quarry to the newly-built villas of Porthill (1923).

Management of the Quarry after 1880.

As a result of these changes, and the alteration of the grazing regime, the Quarry was transformed into a municipal park, the first bye-laws regulating its use being issued in 1887 under the provisions of the Parks Regulation Act (1872) and the Public Health Act (1875).²⁴³ The extent of the public's rights however was at first only dimly understood and an epidemic of pilfering from the plant beds provoked a lawsuit won by the borough only after a judgement in the Queen's Bench in 1888. Extensions to the Quarry soon followed, again financed by the Shropshire Horticultural Society. Already owner since 1893 of the Crescent Fields (formerly Stury's Close), the Society purchased and planted up much of the riverside between the Quarry and St. Julian's Friars between 1895 and 1906. The avenue was conveyed to the corporation in 1915 and widened 1934-5. Another avenue to the Welsh Bridge was also created in 1911-12. Further parcels on the east side of the Quarry were bought by the Society in 1911, 1956 and 1967 and donated to the corporation at nominal rents.²⁴⁴ Of these the largest, Salt's Field, was acquired from the trustees of George Moultrie Salt (d. 1907), a prominent local solicitor and for many years the Society's chairman.

Potential new uses for the Quarry included the athletic sports which emerged in Shropshire in the 1850s as a respectable alternative to the 'Old English Sports' typical of parish wakes and other local festivities.²⁴⁵ Inspired by Dr W.P. Brooke's Olympian movement at Much Wenlock, a county Olympian Society 'for the intellectual improvement of the people' had been founded at Shrewsbury in 1860 under the patronage of the Lord Lieutenant, and in 1864 Olympian Games were staged in the Quarry under its auspices.²⁴⁶ Athletic contests were also held during the 1876 and 1877 Flower Shows, the 1877 events being organized by the National Olympian Association.²⁴⁷ An inscribed cup, donated by the King of Greece, was presented by Dr Brookes to the winner of the pentathlon.²⁴⁸ Although the middle-class ethos of such movements was later displaced by the rise of sports clubs with working-class

²⁴³ Appropriately a mowing machine was bought for the Quarry in 1882.

²⁴⁴ The Society's attempt (1961) to buy the cottage near Kingsland Bridge, the last enclave of private property in the Quarry, was unsuccessful.

²⁴⁵ Gaydon (ed.), *Hist. Shrop.* II, 192-3.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*; SA DA5/100/3 (13 Aug. 1860, 8 Aug. 1864).

²⁴⁷ *Shrewsbury Chronicle*, 17 Aug. 1877, 16 Aug. 1878.

²⁴⁸ J.G. Wylie of the Shropshire Wanderers.

appeal,²⁴⁹ the corporation remained sympathetic to sporting events which were properly regulated. An athletics meet on Whit Monday, first requested by the Pengwern Boat Club and Shrewsbury Football Club in 1878, after disagreements had prevented further association with the Flower Show,²⁵⁰ was held irregularly in the Quarry thereafter, and the annual Shropshire Constabulary sports were also staged there from 1875 to 1914. By 1909 a grass cycle track had been created for the Shrewsbury Cycle and Athletic Club – probably the running track, extant by 1912,²⁵¹ where a Whit Monday meet was organized by the Shropshire Amateur Athletics Association in the 1920s. In the 1930s the track was used for competitions of the Shropshire Bowmen.

More controversial was the presence of informal games. Although the provision of recreation grounds was under consideration by 1868, and in the Quarry itself by 1877, official policy was not determined until 1887. As well as protecting the ornaments of the park, and prohibiting older nuisances such as the beating of rugs and the hanging out of washing, the new bye-laws allowed games only under restricted conditions. Problems persisted, however, and in 1889 the legality of football-playing in the Quarry was the subject of another lawsuit. A solution was provided in 1894 when the Shropshire Horticultural Society purchased the Circus Field at St Julian's Friars and conveyed it (1896) to the corporation as a public recreation ground, explicitly to remove games from the Quarry and to maintain it as 'a quiet resort for the use and enjoyment of the inhabitants generally'.²⁵² Football in the Quarry was almost immediately banned.

Pressure on the park and its environs was also relieved by the opening in 1894 of the Public Swimming Baths on the site of the dry quarry, and the establishment of recreation grounds at St Michael's Street in Castle Foregate (1895) and Silk's Meadow in Frankwell (1911). Later other recreation grounds were to be opened in the suburbs, all united with the Quarry since 1914 under the care of a single superintendant, the most notable being the gardener and television personality Percy Thrower (d. 1988) who held the post from 1946 to 1974. Although complaints about boys playing football in the Quarry were still being received in 1921, a compromise was afterwards agreed with local residents and a playground was opened in the north-west corner in 1923. New leisure pursuits such as bicycling, permitted (1897–8) only under restricted conditions, have also long been tempted by the

²⁴⁹ Gaydon (ed.), *Hist. Shrop.* II, 192.

²⁵⁰ *Shrewsbury Chronicle*, 16 Aug. 1878.

²⁵¹ Heath, 'The Quarry', 323.

²⁵² SA 3122/1/1 (letter 19 Apr. 1896).

Quarry spaces, more recent examples including skateboarding and BMX cycling, both removed after facilities were provided at recreation grounds elsewhere.

A policy of rejecting the use of the Quarry for commercial purposes was also introduced early on, with applications often being diverted to the recreation grounds.²⁵³ By contrast, Friendly Society meetings (first recorded in 1862), Sunday School outings, charitable fêtes, and religious assemblies (the Primitive Methodists held an annual camp meeting from 1874 until 1914), were permitted, while use of the Quarry for military parades also continued, notably in 1922 when the 4th battalion K.S.L.I. was presented with the Croix de Guerre for its role at the Battle of Bligny (1918), and the annual Bligny Day service parade was occasionally held there into the 21st century. At first the military also provided the majority of bands engaged for the promenade concerts – extant by 1882 – although by the 1920s works and colliery bands from Shropshire were favoured. Here too the 1880s witnessed a struggle to wrest the Quarry from a perceived threat of demotic disorder, with plain-clothed constables circulating among evening promenaders to suppress 'rowdyism'. Labour Day demonstrations were also permitted from 1919, briefly revived after 1947, and the Quarry was used for a mass meeting of railwaymen during the General Strike of 1926.

By the 1950s, however, the number of events held in the Quarry had fallen sharply as a result of changing patterns of leisure, the decline of the military presence in British cultural life, and population movement into the suburbs. The concert season had shrunk by a month since its pre-1914 heyday and weekday concerts had ceased altogether with the abandonment by Shrewsbury's middle class of the promenade – a significant, if little studied, change. The decline was mitigated by a perceptible easing of the conditions for park use as the borough responded to the need to market the town's attractions in an era of increasing retail and tourist competition. A carnival ending in the Quarry was promoted in 1960, and despite foundering was revived in 1975. More significantly, applications to hold a circus (1973) and an amusement fair (1986) were granted, with reservations, for the first time,²⁵⁴ and other more demotic events were also occasionally allowed including an outdoor disco (1976) and stunt shows (1980, 1985). Nonetheless, resistance to a Motor Exhibition (1997) showed that support among local residents for the previous ambience of the Quarry was by no means

²⁵³ E.g. in 1906-07 the Royal Carl Rosa Opera Co. were accommodated instead at St Julian's Recreation Ground.

²⁵⁴ Later three annual Amusement Fairs were allowed.

dead, and in 1998 the borough council accepted that only commercial events of a 'high quality' would be allowed in future.²⁵⁵

A more serious threat to the Quarry's ambience was heralded in 1912 when a motor car crashed into the entrance gates. By the 1950s the need to relieve traffic congestion in Shrewsbury was met by a proposal to build a relief road from St. Julian Friars to Kingsland Bridge. Shelved after a public inquiry at which the planner Sir Patrick Abercrombie appeared as an expert witness for the Shropshire Horticultural Society, the plan was revived 1963–4, involving a two-level interchange at Kingsland Bridge and a tunnel beneath the Quarry. Partly as a result of the likely environmental damage the scheme was rejected, solutions to Shrewsbury's traffic problems since being sought elsewhere. An experiment (1985–1994) to use the lower avenue as a car park over Christmas was also halted despite arguments which stressed the importance of supporting retailers against the marketing initiatives of nearby towns. This debate continues.

The contrary view that the Quarry should be protected as 'one of the finest examples of a public park in the country', citing its Grade II listing (1988) in the Register of Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest,²⁵⁶ seems more likely to determine future management, with the Shropshire Horticultural Society continuing to play a key role. In 1994 the Society secured free use of the Quarry for the Flower Show for another 100 years, and over 1996–7 purchased the entrance lodge. It also liaised with the borough in an application, under the Urban Parks Programme, towards refurbishing the park facilities. A £1.5 million grant was obtained from the Heritage Lottery Fund, with the Society providing another £500,000, and refurbishments were completed in 2005.²⁵⁷ Nonetheless, complaints that the borough was turning the Quarry into 'a museum',²⁵⁸ suggest that its proper recreational purpose will remain an issue.

²⁵⁵ Shrews. and Atcham Boro., *Use and Management of the Quarry* (report to Recn and Leisure Comm., 15 Jan. 1998).

²⁵⁶ Shrews. and Atcham Boro., *Minutes of Planning and Highways Committee*, 13 Oct. 1998.

²⁵⁷ *Shrewsbury Chronicle*, 26 May 2005, p. 2.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 7 July, 2005, pp. 7, 10.