

For any historical study of a town or village, directories published through the nineteenth century and the first part of the next are a valuable source of information, readily accessible in the library. They have already been quoted in several parts of this history series.

In the earliest local directories, such as Pigot's in 1822 and 1828, Bicton information was included in the Shrewsbury entries; since it was part of St Chad's Parish and is therefore not always clearly identifiable. In 1851, however, 'Bagshaws Gazetteer of Shropshire' set the pattern adopted by most subsequent directories in which Bicton was treated the same as other rural parishes.

This standard format, continued and refined by Kelly's, started with a brief description of the parish, any separate parts and their legal definition. In the case of Bicton, the creation of the new ecclesiastical parish in 1853 and then the civil parish in the 1880s were thereby explained. The principle landowners, 'officials' such as the incumbent and school teachers, and also post office services were likewise explained. Even soils got a mention. Lists of leading residents and those with commercial activities, both farming and trading, then followed.

Kelly's, originally founded in 1799, dominated the local market for 'County' directories for almost 80 years, although other versions were also published by Cassey and later by Wildings. As a local company, Wildings only covered Shrewsbury and its immediate neighbourhood but could offer much greater detail. Editions appeared every 5 or 6 years until the Second World War finally put an end to the system.

The type and timing of the information provided usefully filled the gaps between the ten-yearly census records and together they make it easier to note changes in the community. For instance, the succession of innkeepers, clergy and mainly tenant farmers can be noted over the years. Minor landowners as well as tenants of Bicton Hall or Preston Montford Hall also changed frequently. Since some local residents were, in fact, Shrewsbury businessmen, their work addresses can also easily be found in the town entries. Most of such aspects have already been illustrated in this series.

For instance, we have already told the story of what is now known as 'the Yews' in Montford Bridge, which was once the home and business of the Thomas family. They were recorded very well in the census but the successive directories traced the story of their business from a grocery store in the 1850s to an ever-expanding post office from the 1870s. Bit by bit new functions were added including the first telephone exchange in the 1920s.

Meanwhile, next door, the Wingfield Onslow estate also owned Preston Montford Hall since acquiring it from the Hill family in 1829. At first Sir Francis Hill remained here as sitting tenant, but the Revd. Charles Wingfield, brother of the new owner, John, retired here in the 1850s. After his death the house was then let to a series of tenants, at least three of whom were absent on census day (in a way not unknown with wealthier citizens but rare amongst workers) so that directories prove useful in identifying them. They were William Butler Lloyd (1870), the Earl of Leitrim (1879) and William Ingram Shaw (1885). Incidentally, the Earl's Irish title may perhaps explain the Irish and other distant birthplaces of his young staff recorded by the census, suggesting he had brought his own household with him rather than recruit locally.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Charles Ralph Borlase Wingfield, who now held the estate, was a prominent military man and therefore it may be no surprise that his tenants were of similar rank: Major Walter

Garret, Major William Borfield (Royal Artillery Reserve) and Colonel Robert Philips. By 1913, Arnold Bryce Smith, also said to have a military background, became tenant and then owner for the next 26 years, a period during which census data is not yet available.

In the nineteenth century the long established Sandford family of the Isle included lawyers who practiced in Shrewsbury, where the directories record their offices in Belmont. Richard Sandford, with offices in College Hill, in 1907 took over Udlington Villa, which earlier had been the family home of the Pritchards who had a grocery business in Dogpole. As with the Thomas family, personal details were recorded in the census, but directories trace the story of the business from the early nineteenth century until 1885.

Kelly's directory of 1941 and a Shrewsbury edition incorporating Wildings directory, illustrated here, represent the last of this long line of publications as the wartime problems developed. Bickton has always experienced a steady turnover of population and it is interesting to study the list of leading citizens and tradesmen and reflect on how many families are still in the neighbourhood today.

**BICTON.**

4 miles north-west from Shrewsbury.

(Postal address, Bicton Heath, Shrewsbury, Shropshire.)  
 (Marked thus \* postal address, Montford Bridge, Shrewsbury, Shropshire.)  
 (The Telephone Exchange is Montford Bridge.)

**PRIVATE RESIDENTS.**

Allman Philip, Hawthorne villa  
 Bennett Benj. Southwold  
 Bland Jack Edgar, Tuckton  
 \*Bryce-Smith Arnold, Preston Montford hall. # 42  
 Chidley Miss, School ho  
 Cooke Isaac, Sunnybanks  
 Ensor Wm. H. Uddington manor. # 88  
 Giles Sir Rt. S. Rossall hall. # 28  
 Hillage Witr. The Hollies  
 Jones Mrs. Lloyd, The Woodlands. # 75  
 Lewis Ernest, Milnsbridge  
 Mead Geo. Percy, Bicton hall  
 Mullineux Rd. Silverdale  
 Paddock Jn. J.P. Mayfield  
 Petherick Herbt. Rossall gro. # 43  
 Philp Rev. Rd. Jn. Vernon (vicar), Vicarage. # 60  
 Pickering Jn. Corbet, Gainsthorpe  
 Powell Mrs. The Haven, Shepherd's la  
 Sandford Humphrey M.A., J.P. The Isle. # 27  
 Sandford Rd. Uddington. # 65  
 Steavenson Edwd. Hy. Bicton Heath ho  
 \*Symes Reguld. F. Brook ho  
 Teece Misses L. & A. Calcott ho  
 Welford Arth. Edwd. The Cottage  
 Wingfield Mrs. Onalow hall. # 48

**COMMERCIAL.**

Andrews Hannah (Mrs.), smallholder, Thorngrove  
 Andrews Wm. smallholder, Corner la  
 Ancient Order of Foresters (Court Stability, No. 2850 & Court Pride of Stability, No. 9549; Jas. Paddock, sec)  
 Barker Wm. farmer, Horton la  
 Barkley Wm. smallholder, Shepherd's la  
 Bicton Church of England School (Miss C. E. Chidley, head mistress)  
 \*Broughall Ernest, castrator

\*Roberts Fras. Trevor, farmer, The Grange  
 Roberts Jas. H. farmer, Bicton farm  
 Roberts Wm. smallholder, Shepherd's la  
 \*Rodenhurst Dennis, farmer, Preston Montford  
 Sambrook M. (Mrs.), farmer, Rossall Heath farm  
 Slater Thos. farmer, Isle farm  
 Stringer Bros. dairymen, Elm cott

Cassels Bernard Wm. farmer, Bicton ho  
 Clarke Alfd. Gethin, farmer, Churncote farm. # 73  
 Clarke Thos. Jas. farmer, Corner frm  
 Cooke Jn. Wm. farmer, The Nursery, Bicton Heath. # 56  
 Davies Aliok Wm. blacksmith  
 Davies David, smallholder, Isle villa, Isle la  
 Dorricott Jack, farmer, Horton la  
 Dudley Wm. Geo. dairyman, Bicton villa  
 Edge Wm. farmer, Isle pk  
 Edwards Hy. smallholder, Shepherd's la  
 Edwards Wm. smallholder  
 Francis Harry, grocer, Newlyn  
 Griffiths Corbett, farmer, Onalow farm  
 Griffiths David Edwd. farmer, Rossall farm  
 Hallmark Alfd. dairyman, Horton la  
 \*Hartshorne S. J. (Mrs.), shopkpr. 11 Montford bridge  
 Holloway Jn. Edwd. farmer, Dinthill hall (postal address, Ford, Shrewsbury, Shropshire). # 93  
 Hope Thos. Hy. farmer, Isle grange  
 Jones Edwd. farmer, Bicton Villa farm  
 Jones Jn. blacksmith  
 Lake Frank Edmnd. poultry farmer  
 Lee Arth. shopkpr. & post office  
 Lewis E. (Mrs.), tea rms.; confort. & tobacco; bed & breakfast (Sunnyside)  
 Llewellyn Alfd. Rd. farmer, Rossall grange  
 Morgan M. E. (Mrs.), farmer, Uddington farm  
 Paddock Jas. farmer, Bicton farm  
 Paddock Jas. farmer, Pound ho  
 Painter Rd. butcher, Pump ho  
 People's Refreshment House Association Ltd. Four Crosses inn. # 58  
 Pryce Wm. S. farmer, Woodcote  
 Puffet Arth. J. smallholder, Corner la  
 Ratcliffe J. (Mrs.), tea rooms; bed & breakfast; moderate charges, Rose cottage  
 Ratcliffe Jas. H. farmer, The Grove. # 72  
 Roberts Fras. David, farmer, Calcott

Wallader A. M. & A. (Misses), smallholders, Calcott  
 Williams Wm. H. cowkeeper, Calcott Moss  
 \*Wingfield Arms Hotel (People's Refreshment House Association Ltd.). # 21  
 Yeomans Rd. Wm. clerk to Parish Council & rate collector for Aitcham Rural District Council, Heath cott

KELLY'S DIRECTORY OF SHREWSBURY AND NEIGHBOURHOOD 1940

