

The Church of St. Leonard

Yarpole Trestle Bier Update:

Living History

The Parish Accounts for 1791 include the following entry:-

“Paid for John Brown for making a new bier. £1.7s.6d.”



The Yarpole trestle bier is in a surprisingly good condition considering that it is over 200 years old and has been in store for the last 100 years, when it was replaced by the wheeled bier (now on display in the church).

The long handles, which would have allowed the bier to be carried on the shoulders of the bearers and which fold down, have interesting hinged joints, notice the stub tenon on the outer face (handle side) which locates into a mortise on the inner face, thus ‘locking’ the joint; the mortise and tenon do not extend across the whole face and therefore do not show when the joint is closed; notice also the moulding on the frame and the turning at the base of the handle. This style of carpentry, when compared to the trestle bier at Pembridge, would confirm that the Yarpole bier is of a later date of construction, towards the end of the 18th century.



The trestle bier is on display in the Bell Tower.

The original Article was first published in September 2005.

Parish History

Living History

War Grave in the Burial Ground, Yarpole (Living History March 2014)

Recently a plaque has been erected by the War Graves Commission to record the fact that Yarpole Burial Ground has an official War Grave. This caused the Living History Group to revisit the records relating to it.

The grave is of Sapper Cecil John Collett, of the Royal Engineers, who died on November 4th 1918, as a result of gas poisoning.

The grave can be identified by its white stone cross directly ahead as you enter the Burial Ground.

The separate graves of his parents and grandparents are nearby. Cecil's family had lived in Gloucestershire for much of his life but had connections in Herefordshire as his mother Anna Phillipine (nee Cross) was born in Kimbolton and his grandparents (John and Phillipine Cross) had a farm on Bircher Common. Cecil's father Hubert (sometimes recorded as Herbert) was a Telegraphist for the Post Office and Cecil is recorded in 1911 as a Post office Assistant in Gloucestershire.



On the War memorial in Welshman's Lane it appears to record a C.T. Collett but after very close photographic work it is clear that there is in fact a curl to the 'T' which has lost its definition over the years and is not visible to the naked eye, which resulted in it being wrongly recorded and researched in the past as a separate soldier called Charles Collett.

We are in the process of checking all our research on WW1 casualties as part of our research on the war and its local consequences.

If anyone knows more about this family, or any other WW1 stories of the parish could you contact Ian on (01568) 780788.

(Photographs supplied by IM.)

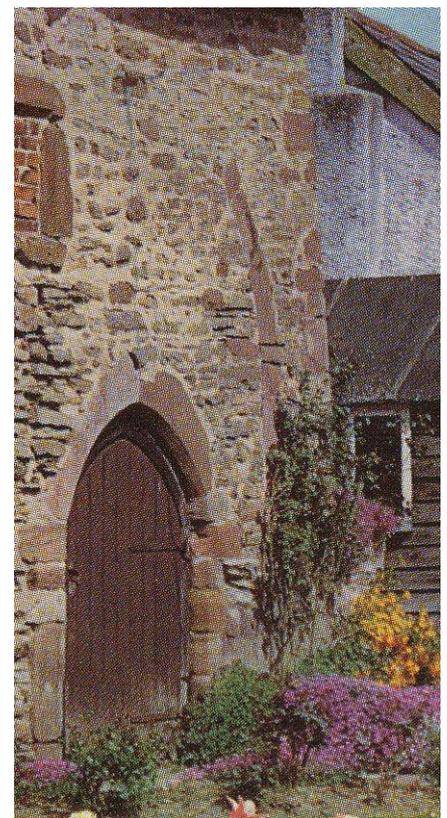
The Gatehouse 'an historical conundrum':

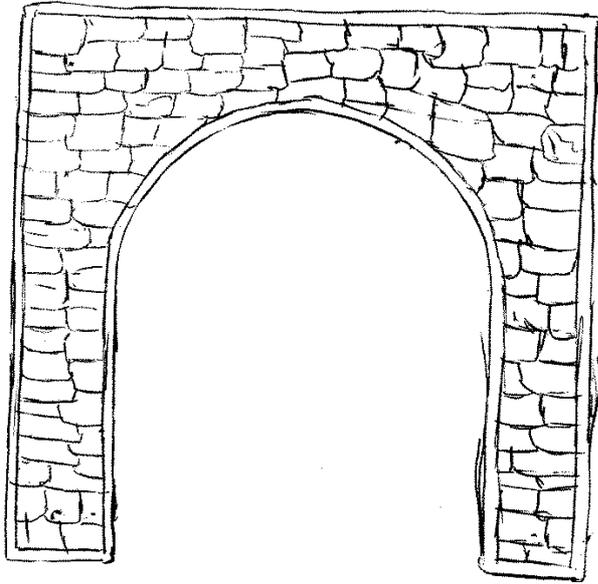
You can not but admire the skilful renovation work carried out on the Gatehouse towards the end of last year: Gone is the quaint old rustic ivy-clad relic which adorned the lid of many a chocolate box.



This renovation is just yet another modification to be added to the already long list of alterations which have been carried-out during its long history: a history which includes a (mistaken) claim that it had been the venue of a Quaker wedding, that it had been a goal and, in living memory, had been a bake house.

At a certain point on the road near the main gate into the site, when the leaves are off the silver birch, you will have this view of the rear (east) wall of the Gatehouse; between the small arched doorway and the corner (the north-east corner), you will see a prominent line of stones forming a gentle upward curve which, if replicated as a mirror image towards the south-east corner, would form a perfect arch as illustrated in the 'artist's impression' overleaf.





There is no hint of this arch formation to be seen in the front (west) wall and it could be that, originally, it was just a single stone arch - a 'gateway' rather than a 'gatehouse'. It would appear that only the north-east corner of the original building has survived goes some way in support of this idea. The arch is directly in line with Green Lane and would have led into a substantial property, presumably the original 'Manor House'.

Dating the 'Manor House' is still 'subject to further research' but there is one very strong clue, namely the presence in the present house on the site, of a large oak ceiling beam which has been dated, by the size of its chamfer, as mid - 15th century.

It would be reasonable to presume that this beam came from the original property on this site, thus identifying the date of construction of the original house and the Gatehouse, as mid - 15th century.

If we accept that this property was indeed the original 'Manor House', then the responsibility for building it would have been that of the Lord of the Manor.

In the early part of the 15th century the Lordship of the Greater Manor of Yarpole was held by the Cornwall family (of Berrington).

In 1452 Eleanor de Cornwall inherited the Lordship of the Greater Manor of Yarpole and as she had married Sir Richard Croft in 1445, the Lordship of the Greater Manor of Yarpole was attached to the Manor of Croft.

It could be therefore that the house became redundant or some natural disaster, such as flooding caused it to be abandoned, or, possibly, could it have been demolished during the Civil War, by the Royalists in 1644, ahead of the advance on Croft Castle by the Parliamentary Army, under the command of Colonel John Birch?

Compiled by Ian Mortimer (December 2013)