

Geography of Shropshire

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CHAPTER 1. THE SHIRE.

1. Its General Character.

The character of a county is the outcome of two chief sets of conditions : (1) The inherent resources of the county itself, and, (2) those conditions which it acquires by virtue of its position in relation to other localities.

The county of Salop exemplifies both these conditions. Its surface is in part hilly, even mountainous, and in part a plain diversified by gentle slopes and broad valleys. Its soil, mostly fertile but in places barren, supports ample woodlands dotted among its arable and pasture. It is well watered by abundant streams and rivers. Communication is in general not difficult, and there is abundant material for building and road-making. It has therefore always been a genial and desirable home-land, inhabited by a peace-loving and landed population.

Other qualities have, however, been forced upon its inhabitants by the situation of the county. On the east side it is in touch with agricultural neighbours desirous of sharing in the possession of its fertile plain. It lies in contact with the belt of low ground that runs from the mouth of the Severn to that of the Dee. (See fig. i.) Along one or other of the three routes thus marked out have come victors and settlers, the Celt, the Roman, conqueror and road builder, the Angle, settler and village maker, and the Norman, establishing himself firmly in his castle fortress.

The western hills and moorlands of the county are the outpost of the mountain refuge-land of Wales, inhabited and held by the toughest survivors driven ever westward by successive waves of conquest, standing here at bay in time of stress, and raiding in times of confidence and prosperity. The pathways from their fastnesses lead down the river gaps, such as those of the

GENERAL CHARACTER.

Dee, the Vrynwy, the Severn, the Rea, and the Teme, all converging upon the county and its plain. Hence the land of peace became one of struggle and bloodshed ; its hills are crowned with camps and fortresses, its plains have been battlefields, its houses are moated and loop- holed ; and its very churches have been used as keeps and watch-towers. Thus its people became soldiers in defence of their own homes or in adventure with the attacking or defending hosts.

As animosities slowly died down and the intervals of peace grew longer, the different elements thus introduced into the population intermingled and became welded together, giving rise to a hardy, agile, and determined race, capable of turning to good account the resources of the land, of providing armed men to serve their country's need, and of sending colonists to people and civilise the uttermost corners of the earth.

2. ORIGIN OF SHIRE.

With the pacification of the country and the cessation of intestine warfare came the development of the mineral resources which lay, hidden under the soil, in the rocks of the county, and great industries sprang up from the exploitation of its fields of coal and ironstone, its zinc and lead, its clay and limestone.

So the keynote of the county may be found in the contact and mingling of its diverse elements, its mixed race, its upland and plain, mining and agriculture, tiny rural villages and flourishing towns, its soldiers and farmers, and the growth of the new in the heart of the old.

2. Its Origin.

Of the innumerable towns and settlements scattered over Saxon England, a few, by reason of a convenient situation, natural strength, command of roads, or some other cause, grew more important than the others. They were naturally chosen as dwelling places by chieftains and kings, who extended their dominion into the country round as far as their energy, wealth, and command of men enabled them. Thus kingdoms like Sussex, Essex, and Kent originated. As time went on, and ambition, opportunity, or power increased, other and larger kingdoms grew up, such as Mercia, Wessex, and Northumbria. Of these large kingdoms now one now another gained the lead.

When the need arose for partitioning them into divisions for administration, the towns were too small for the purpose, so they were grouped together into hundreds, nominally of a hundred families, or perhaps capable of furnishing a hundred armed men. In time these proved too small for convenience in the administration of justice, and although they remained the units through which taxes were levied by the rulers, it became necessary to group them together into larger divisions. The older and small kingdoms were the right size for such a purpose, so they became earldoms under the Saxons and were each ruled under the king by a single earl. These divisions were accepted by the Normans and received the name of comitatus, eventually shortened to county (from the French comte). But kingdoms of the size of Mercia were too large and it became necessary to shear them up into shares or shires. This was done by taking a convenient number of hundreds grouped round some central town of strength or importance. This area was called a shire and given a name that was usually derived from its central town, to which it was bound to supply armed men in time of war and disturbance. Indeed one of the chief objects of the shiring was to give facilities for rapidly raising a force at any

desired point to resist the incursions of the Danes, and thus the principal shiring of England took place about a thousand years ago.

The most important town in the middle west of Mercia was Shrewsbury, founded by the Celts, possibly taken by the Romans, re-occupied by the Celts, and at last conquered by the Saxons. It held a strong position on the river Severn, was easily fortified, and commanded important lines of road. It was called Scrobbsbyrig, which means "the fortified town in the scrub." The word became written in various ways, such as "Sciropesberie," and it eventually settled down into Shrewsbury. But the usual pronunciation, Shrozebury, belies the spelling, and among unlettered country people it is still generally called S'ozeb'ry or S'ozeb'y. The spread of education, however, has generally caused it to be pronounced Sh'ewsb'ry or even Sh'ewsb'y one of the effects of "a little knowledge."

The shire was called "Scrobbscire" or "Sciropescire," the shrubby shire, a name very appropriate to it. In old documents the name was spelled by ear rather than by sight and the exact form depended upon the acuteness of the hearer and the articulation of the speaker. Hence we have the variants Scropscire and Salopscire from one of which has descended the modern Shropshire and from the other the county of Salop. The last word indeed is often applied to the town of Shrewsbury itself, giving an indication of the dependence of the one upon the other. The town was so well chosen, it was so central in position, so strong in its natural site, so convenient of access, that it has remained the centre of population, administration, business, and communications to this day, and is likely so to remain as long as the county endures.

The shires possessed defects inherent in their method of origin. The towns were irregularly distributed, according to the natural qualities of the land; their limits were "boundaries of acquisition" drawn to include desirable ground and in accordance with natural obstacles and human competition. When grouped into hundreds this irregularity persisted in their outer borders. Several detached parts might even be included in a single hundred for the convenience of individuals holding isolated estates. The same thing occurred in grouping hundreds into shires. Irregular as they were, the shires persisted for 9 centuries with very little change. During the last century, however, they have become such important units for the purposes of legislation, representation, and administration, that many simplifications of boundary have been carried out, and the existing outlines, complicated as they are, are much simpler than those which persisted for so long.

3. Its Size and Outline.

The area of the county of Salop is 861,800 acres, about 1346 square miles. Its greatest length from north to south measures 47 miles, and its greatest breadth from east to west 39 miles. Fifteen English counties are larger and twenty-four smaller. It is about the same size as Cornwall and Wiltshire, between a quarter and one-fifth the size of Yorkshire, and nine times as large as Rutland.

Although the boundary is very irregular in detail, the general shape is compact. It is approximately an oblong, with its long sides pointing northward, contained between the meridians 22° and 35' W. and the parallels of 522° and 5255' N. The most striking irregularities are due to the wedge of Flintshire pushed in from the north, two wedges of Montgomeryshire on the west, and one of Staffordshire on the east near Albrighton. On the other hand the county sends out a narrow projection to the north-east at Woore, and to the south-west a blunter mass made up of the Hundreds of Clun and Purslow. The shape of the county, and especially its western border, curiously mimics the outline of Ireland.

Boundaries may be of several different kinds, but the chief of them may be classified as follows :

- (1) Boundaries of defence lying along lines, or surrounding places, easily defended ; for instance hills, watersheds, rivers, marshes, roads, or artificial defences like walls or dykes.
- (2) Boundaries of attack and advance pushed out into a hostile county or into unfavourable ground, or intended to enclose valuable resources or possessions.
- (3) Boundaries of adjustment and compromise between balancing interests. These may be laid out on the principle of " give and take," or dictated by convenience of approach to towns or to administrative or electoral centres ; or they may be scientific frontiers defined by a line of latitude or longitude or by some other line easily recognised and expressed.

The western and part of the northern and southern boundary, from Whitchurch to Knighton, is not merely the boundary of a county but one dividing England from Wales, and it is thus approximately a racial boundary as well. Hence it may be expected to be one largely of defence and attack. The contrast between this and the eastern boundary is brought out by the map, on which the special feature of the line at different points is indicated. The following types of line are indicated by the symbols used : Streams and the

Severn especially, watersheds, fortresses (Offa's Dyke three times and Coxwall Knoll once), roads, railways, and canals, the " scientific frontier " across Whixall Moss, and other conventional lines not following any particular feature. The portion of the line which more or less follows the River Vyrnwy is instructive, and a separate map of it on a larger scale is given. When the boundary follows the river it coincides with its curves ; but it curves in exactly the same kind of way when it departs from the river for a space. This shows clearly that the boundary was originally drawn along a winding stream which has subsequently shifted its position. For 20 miles the county boundary threads its way through the western mountains leaving on the Welsh side the Severn marshes, the crags of Breidden, much of the Long Mountain moorland, and the mountain of Corndon ; but keeping on the English side a sufficiency of high land on Bulthy Hill, the Long Mountain, and the Shelve Hills, to defend the fertile valleys of the Rea and its tributaries {along

which there was the easiest approach to Shrewsbury from Wales), the middle Camlad, and the upper Onny. It may be a coincidence but the curious crook at the Breidden includes inside Shropshire the only mine on those hills, and the " monstrous cantle " of Corndon also leaves the lead-mines of Shelve on the English side. It is strange that the Severn only forms the boundary for a mile or two on the west and for about the same distance on the south-east. The Watling Street is a boundary for only a quarter of a mile though it is a parish boundary for several miles. A long, straight piece of boundary near Hinstock on the north-east follows the apparent prolongation of the Longford, an ancient and probably Roman road

CHAPTER II.

PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY OF SHROPSHIRE.

4. Hills and Plains.

The Shropshire toast is "to all friends round the Wrekin " and to Salopians the Wrekin stands for the centre and focus of their county. Standing on ground which averages about 500 feet above the sea, the hill rises abruptly to 1320 feet ; therefore from its position and isolation it commands in fine weather an unrivalled view extending over some 18 counties . At our feet as we look southward the Severn writhes like a snake over the flats on the floor of its valley. Towards the west we catch sight of reach after reach glinting in the sunlight till the river is lost among the spires and smoke of Shrewsbury, beyond which rise the three summits of the Breidden Hills crowned by Rodney's Pillar. If we now swing round so as to face N.W., N., N.E., and E. successively the eye passes over a wide plain, the western part of the great Midland Plain of England. Out of the Shropshire part of the plain there rise a few isolated hills such as Haughmond, Grinshill, and Hawkstone (see fig. 33), but with these exceptions the plain sweeps away unbroken till it meets the distant hills of Llanymynech and the Berwyns, and those of Flintshire, Cheshire, Staffordshire, Derbyshire, and Leicestershire.

Turning back to our first position and swinging southward all is changed. Mountains and hills rise everywhere, usually in ridges which trend like the rollers of the Atlantic roughened by a north-west gale. These become higher and more important as we look into Wales till they culminate in Cader Idris, the Arans, and Plynlimon. Looking nearer and into Shropshire we see the Long Mountain, the Stiperstones, Corndon, the Longmynd, Caradoc and the Stretton Hills, Hoar Edge and Shad well, and, most conspicuous of all, the great wooded ridge of Wenlock Edge which runs almost in the same line as the Wrekin itself for 20 miles to the south-west.

Where the northern end of this Edge strikes the Severn the walls close in and the river valley becomes so narrow that a railway bridge springs across it with a single graceful arch, and the river seems to have forced a passage through the ridge with the greatest difficulty. Lincoln Hill continues the line of Wenlock Edge on the north bank of the river, and beyond and about it are seen the chimney stacks and pit mounds which mark the Shropshire " Black Country". Wenlock Edge hides the Southern Plateau of the county but

the culmination of it in the Cleve Hills can generally be seen, while a little to the east of them we may be fortunate enough to catch the Malvern and Abberley Hills and the Cotswolds. In front of these, but hardly visible, lies another plain, and beyond that again the view is closed by the smoke pall -of the Staffordshire " Black Country."

Thus we find that the county is made up of two distinct parts about equal in size, the Upland and the Plain. The Severn may be taken as the approximate boundary between the two, for the Upland only three times transgresses this line ; once towards Oswestry, next where the northern end of the Longmynd crosses to Haughmond Hill, near Shrewsbury, and once again, at our feet, where Wenlock Edge crosses the river at the Gorge between Buildwas and Ironbridge, accompanied by the Wrekin range on the west, and the uplands of the Coalfield on the east. These last converge upon the steep little crag of Lilleshall, which may be identified by its column, away to the north-east, the last outpost of the mountain land, wrapped round by the Midland Plain which spreads away to the east and south. This Peninsula of high land divides the Plain into two parts which we may call the Northern and the Eastern Plains.

The Northern Plain is a land of gentle slopes, broad valleys, and sluggish streams, with meres and marshes. Its average elevation is from 200 to 300 feet above the sea but there are large areas under 200 feet. One of these is about the junction of the Severn and Vyrnwy, a second about Shrewsbury, and a third, larger than the other two together, in the basin of the River Tern. Along a crescent-shaped line there stretches a band of isolated sandstone hills with their steep sides looking east and south. These begin at Ness Cliff, and continue through Pimhill and Webscott, near Myddle, to Grinshill ; they form a large area of high ground at Hawkstone, and pass out of the county at Cheswardine and Woore. They are generally from 400 to 500 feet high but at Hawkstone they reach their highest point 674 feet. They rise sharply from the plain, and, from their abruptness, they are conspicuous objects when viewed from any direction but the north. Near at hand their cliffs of white, red, or brown sandstone stand out against the deep shadow of their pines and make them exceedingly beautiful. This is especially the case at Hawkstone Park. The hill-line, though conspicuous, is of little importance as a watershed for it is pierced by three streams, at the picturesque " narrows" of the Perry and the Roden, and the broad " strath " of the Tern.

There are few industries on the Plain except those connected with agriculture and forestry, but in places there are brickyards and stone-quarries. The houses may be built of stone, but more often of brick or of a timber framework filled in with brick or plaster. The towns inside the Plain are few and small, Wem, Prees, Hodnet, Ruyton, Baschurch, and Whittington, only two of them with more than 2000 inhabitants. There are, however, important market towns at the edges : Shrewsbury on the south, Oswestry on the west, Ellesmere, Whitchurch, and Market Drayton on the north, Newport and Wellington on the east.

The Eastern Plain differs from the Northern in one very important respect. The northern rivers have a very gentle gradient from source to outfall into the Severn. The Tern falls

less than 100 feet in 25 miles from Market Drayton to its mouth at Atcham, a gradient of 4 feet per mile. The Worf, on the other hand, falls 200 feet in 20 miles, a gradient of 10 feet per mile. This gives the eastern rivers much greater speed and in consequence they have cut out deep, steep-sided valleys, which contrast strongly with the open " straths " of the north. The Eastern Plain has thus become " dissected " into valleys with portions of the plain still standing between them as plateaux, or reduced to ridges. The ridges and valleys trend from N.N.W. to S.S.E., a direction about parallel to the course of the Severn south of its great bend at Coalport. The chief of these ridges are Shatterford, Tuckhill with its continuation the High Rock and Apley Terrace near Bridgnorth, and Abbott's Castle Hill. Like the northern sand stone hills these ridges are cut through by streams, the Rivers Worf and Stour, and the Bowhill and Claverley Brooks ; but the main course of the streams is parallel to the ridges. The agriculture is similar to that of the Northern Plain, the villages are small, and the towns are at the edge ; Bridgnorth on the west, and Shifnal on the north. The needs of the east and south are supplied by Wolverhampton (Staffordshire) and Bewdley or Kidderminster (Worcestershire). Worfield, Claverley, and Albrighton, all under 1500 inhabitants, are the chief villages of the Eastern Plain.

The key to the structure of the Upland is furnished by Wenlock Edge. This trends away S.W. from the Severn at Buildwas in an unbroken line for 17 miles, when it is cut through by the Onny River. It then runs another 6 miles to Downton (Herefordshire) where it is trenched by the Teme, and swings round in a horseshoe curve the toe of which abuts on Ludlow. Throughout most of its course it is a double ridge made of two " edges " the lower, westward one (Wenlock Edge proper) seldom reaching 1000 feet, while the eastern, which may be called View Edge, attains nearly 1200 feet. The steep slopes or " scarps " of both edges look to the north-west and are densely clad with woods of beech, oak, and elm, while the gentler eastern slopes (the " dip-slopes ") are arable or pasture. Between the two Edges there is a discontinuous depression known as Hope Dale, in which rise numerous streams that all turn at right angles, cut gaps through View Edge, and so escape to the S.E.

The double ridge is flanked by a valley on each side of a type called " longitudinal " because it runs parallel to the trend of the ridge, i.e. along the " grain " of the country. That to the east, called Corve Dale, is over 17 miles long and carries the River Corve. That on the west is known as Ape Dale and has a watershed about its middle, at Longville-in-the-Dale, from which the Sheinton Brook has a longitudinal, N.E. course to the Severn, and the Eaton or Byne Brook a similar course S.W. to the Onny.

Approximately parallel to Wenlock Edge and its Dales run other main ridges of similar character, also with their scarp faces to the west. Two of the chief of these are known as Yell Bank and Hoar Edge. Passing westward over these and then another 7 miles in the same direction (leaving the Stretton Hills and Valley and the Longmynd out of account for a time), we meet another great ridge reaching over 1700 feet above the sea. This is crowned by bare crags of white sparkling rock called quartzite, one of which from its curious shape is known as the " Devil's Chair," and another from its vegetation the " Cranberry Rock," while the rocks themselves have given the name of the Stiperstones (or

steep stones) to the ridge. Edge after edge follows, all trending in the same direction N.E. to S.W., Shelve Hill, the Oak Edge, Stapeley Hill, and the Kenton, Hagley, and Whittery ridges. These are likewise separated one from another by longitudinal valleys among which is the exquisite rift of Hope Dingle, and the dainty Marrington Dingle, with rivers which flow northward, and the valley of the West Onny which flows south.

Crossing the mile-wide Marton Valley, also longitudinal, with the Rea flowing north-east and the Hailsford Brook flowing south-west from a watershed so inconspicuous that in times of heavy rain Marton Pool drains out in both directions, we encounter the mass of the Long Mountain trending N.E. to S.W., which rises to 1336 feet, and is cultivated on its flanks up to 1000 feet. Looking across the last longitudinal valley, that of the Trewern, we see in front the Breidden range, of which, however, only a small fraction is included in our county. But, beyond the Breiddens, the boundary crosses the Severn flats and the Vyrnwy to encroach upon the Berwyn outpost of the Welsh mountains from Llanymynech to Selattyn.

Having thus grasped the law of the Upland with its N.E.-S.W. ridges and parallel valleys we must return to a few features which seem at first to transgress the law. Recrossing the Rea into the Shelve country we are at once struck by the cone-like mountain of Corndon, 1684 feet high, on an outpost of Montgomeryshire, which protrudes into Shropshire. From its summit we get a clear picture of the ridges and at once notice that they are all cut off abruptly to the south by a great " transverse " valley running across the " grain " of the country. This also has a low watershed in its middle, about Lydham, from which the Camlad drains to the N.W., a small stream soon joined by the West and East Onny, to the S.E., and a third to join the Kemp to the south. Beyond the valley lies a mass of cultivated land, the Kerry Hills, rather like the Long Mountain in aspect and rising to 1600 feet. The part visible is in Montgomeryshire, but behind it flow the network of streams that unite to form the Clun River, the basin of which is wholly in Shropshire and is the site of the Forest of Clun. Passing eastward down the Onny valley we are soon confronted by the dark south-western acclivity of the Longmynd, 5 miles long, and, though clad with bracken and heather, so steep that it rises 600 feet in less than half a mile. This trends, a little east of north, and the East Onny river, which runs parallel to it, is a longitudinal stream.

The summit of the Longmynd is a plateau 4 or 5 square miles in area, 1696 feet high, and nearly level. The plateau slopes gradually to the north and south but round its edges it has been deeply trenched by streams forming combe-like valleys with very steep sides locally known as " batches " and " gutters." Standing on a spur between two gutters we look out eastward over the Church Stretton valley towards Hoar Edge, Wenlock Edge, and the Clee Hills. But these are in part hidden by a range of curious hills called hog-backs from their shape. If a segment is broken from a round biscuit and set up on its broken edge it will illustrate the shape of these hills, with their abrupt flanks, and sharp ridges declining gently towards both ends. This is the shape of Ragleth, Caradoc, and the Lawley ; their ridges all run from S.W. to N.E., the three lie on a line in the same direction, and this line points straight to the Wrekin 14 miles off, which is of the same shape. It is even

continued another 8 miles to Lilleshall Hill. The Church Stretton valley is longitudinal and parallel. Its watershed is at Church Stretton, from which the Cound Brook flows N.E. to the Severn. To the south the Quinny Brook starts flowing to the S.W. but as the hog-backs die down the stream cuts across them' to join the Onny before that river trenches Wenlock Edge at Stokesay, but after it has carved its valley across the southern Longmynd.

The Upland is a complex area, often wild and barren, with rock, heath, moorland, and mountain pasture, but with many rich and fertile valleys folded away among the hills. Villages except in the valleys are small and scattered. Towns are mostly at the edges, Oswestry on the N. Wales coalfield to the north-west, Shrewsbury, Wenlock, and Minsterley on the north, Chirbury on the west. But there are also important towns in the valleys- like Clun, or else on the low watersheds, as at Bishop's Castle and Church Stretton. Besides these there was once a large population in the lead-mining ground about Shelve. On the other hand the Longmynd is practically devoid even of hamlets.

Beyond Corve Dale stretches a great triangular Plateau bounded roughly by this Dale, the R. Teme, and the Severn. It averages 500 feet in height but a central terrace rises abruptly to 700 feet, and on that again, stand two table-topped mountains, the Brown Clee with a double summit 1792 feet high, mainly covered with woodland and heath, and the Titterstone Clee 1749 feet (See frontispiece), with a craggy summit looking west and north. This is a land of heavy red soil, of fields and orchards, of oaks, hazels, beech, and ash, and with im- portant stone-quarries and small coal mines. It is dotted over with innumerable tiny villages accessible by narrow, stony, muddy lanes which branch out from the few main roads and are steep and tortuous to enable them to negotiate the abrupt slopes cut out by swift-flowing streams hastening to the Severn. The only important town on this Southern Plateau is Ludlow but it is served by Wenlock and Broseley to the north, Bridgnorth on the east, Cleobury Mortimer to the south, and the growing town of Craven Arms on the west.

One other portion of the county remains for description, the wedge or Peninsula of high land which separates the Northern from the Eastern Plain, the Coalbrookdale Coalfield and its environs. The western flank of this tract springs abruptly from the Plain at the Wrekin and Lilleshall, but elsewhere it rises more gently, and everywhere on its eastern edge it slopes by easy stages to the Eastern Plain. Its natural features are masked by the refuse heaps of limestone quarries, of coal and iron mines, and of blast furnaces while the drainage is diverted among the tips and through deserted mines. Some of the waste mounds are lofty and the older ones are often covered with trees. The principal valleys have been deeply trenched by streams that flow to the Severn, or more lightly hollowed where the drainage is towards the Worf. The deeper valleys hum with the industries of secluded towns whose straggling streets clamber over the intervening hills. This is the area of the Coalbrookdale Coalfield, the industrial centre of the county, thickly peopled, full of towns and villages living on the wealth mined from the coalfield. Agriculture is practically negligible, forests have almost disappeared, and as is so often the case, the wealthier part of the population lives outside the margin of the coalfield in such towns as

Wellington, Newport, and Shifnal. But there are inside it many important industrial towns, such as Madeley, Dawley, Wrockwardine Wood, Hadley, Lilleshall, Prior's Lee, St. George's, Ironbridge, Ketley, Oakengates, Coalbrookdale, and, where the Coalfield crosses the river, Broseley and Jackfield. The population of the towns mentioned above is a quarter of that of the whole county. Thus we have in Shropshire two divisions of the great Plain, a Northern and an Eastern part ; and we have found it convenient to divide the Upland into three parts, the Main Upland, including the Western Hills of Oswestry and Clun Forest, the Southern Plateau, and the Peninsula or Coalfield area, the only considerable part of the Upland which crosses the Severn.

There are two peculiarities in the river system of Salop. Almost the whole county is tributary to the Severn, and, with the exception of that brought into the county by the Severn, Vyrnwy, and Teme, practically all its water comes from the rainfall on its own hills. A very small area in the north drains to the Dee or Mersey, and the drainage of a large region in the South only reaches the Severn indirectly through the Teme ; but all the rest drains to the Severn directly or through tributaries wholly contained within the county. The Severn enters Salop near Molverley at its confluence with the Vyrnwy, and its valley has a length of 56 miles inside the county. For 35 miles its course runs E.S.E. to Coalport, where it bends sharply to S.S.E. and holds this direction till it leaves the county near Highley. In this S.S.E. part it should be noted that the river runs in straight reaches or in curves with a radius from 1 to 3 miles in length. The walls of the valley are steep and they close in upon the river so that it is often cutting into the live rock. The stream is so shallow and swift that navigation has always been difficult. The river falls 60 feet in 21 miles or 3 feet per mile, a steep gradient for so large a stream. This is the cause of its speed and straightness, as it is not easily turned aside by small obstacles, and it cuts rapidly down into its bed, producing a steep-sided valley. Where this condition begins, just below Buildwas, the river has seen a gap through Wenlock Edge and the rocks of the Coalfield, and made the steep-sided gorge through which it flows for 5 or 6 miles, with the speed and turbulence of a mountain torrent.

Above Buildwas all is different. Here the valley walls are far apart, sometimes nearly a mile back from the river, and the space between them is occupied by broad flat meadows growing on the silt and gravel deposited by the river when, as is often the case, it floods its plain. Over this " alluvial " plain the river meanders in curves with a radius of as much as three-quarters or as little as a quarter of a mile. The banks are generally soft gravel or sand, but sometimes the river touches the valley walls and cuts a cliff in the live rock. Sometimes, too, the larger curves, like that of the Isle above Shrewsbury, are cut down into solid rock so that the valley-walls themselves swing in great curves. Its behaviour may be connected with the fact that the stream, though carrying much water, is travelling slowly, its gradient for 35 miles being rather less than 2 feet per mile.

Above Molverley, but outside the county, the character of the river changes again. The valley-walls are straight and more than a mile apart, and over the wide alluvial plain between them the river meanders in curves of only $1/5$ to $1/4$ mile radius. The fall here is

also about 2 feet per mile and the difference in behaviour is to be attributed to its low velocity, the result of the smaller mass of water, for the Severn has not yet received the Vyrnwy, which at Melferley nearly doubles its volume..

Before it reaches the Melferley bend the Severn receives the Camlad on its right bank and the Vyrnwy on its left. The first of these rivers rises at a low watershed near Bishop's Castle, flows through the oak-clad gorge known as Marrington Dingle and reaches the Severn near Montgomery, after a remarkably inconstant course.

The bends of the Vyrnwy have already been referred to and it has been shown that the county boundary at times follows curves which the river has now abandoned. Below Melferley there is no important tributary from the right bank until the Severn reaches Shrewsbury where the Rea brings in the drainage from several longitudinal valleys, including Hope Dingle and others from the north of the Shelve country, together with that from valleys in both flanks of the Long Mountain. Cound Brook which falls in between Uriconium and Cressage, collects from the north of the Longmynd and is the northern longitudinal stream of the Stretton valley.

Three gentle winding rivers drain the Northern Plain. First the Perry, rising near the county boundary at Oswestry and meeting the Severn above Shrewsbury ; second the Roden, rising in Whixall Moss and joining the Tern ; thirdly the Tern itself, receiving its water from Whitchurch, Woore, and Newport (some coming in here from Staffordshire) and reaching the Severn near Atcham. These streams are in strange contrast to the southern tributaries just mentioned. The latter are straight, swift, strenuous, with well-marked valley-walls, and scenery of wild beauty. The northern streams are slack, sluggish, and serpentine, with no definite structural directions, bounded by alluvial meadows, easily flooded, often passing through lowly lying and swampy land, and only occasionally with marked valley-walls, such as where they cut through the sandstone hills at Ruyton, Myddle, and Lee Brockhurst.

In and near to the Ironbridge Gorge the Severn receives from the Wrekin and the Coalfield a few small torrents in deep-cut valleys, notably those of Coalbrookdale and Madeley. Below the Coalport bend the tributary valleys are called " dingles," steep wooded hollows with rapid streams. The chief of these is the River Worf on the left bank above Bridgnorth and the Mor and Borle Brooks on the right bank below that town.

A valley analogous and roughly parallel to that of the Severn from Melferley to Coalport carries the southern drainage of the Upland to the Severn. In its upper part it is the valley of the Onny, in its lower the Teme. The West Onny gathers the water from the Shelve country and Corndon ; it is joined by the East Onny which occupies a striking longitudinal valley between the Stiperstones and the Longmynd. Later come in the Quinny and Byne Brooks from Church Stretton and Ape Dale before the Onny cuts through Wenlock Edge. Just above Ludlow it receives the Corve on its left bank and the Teme on its right. The latter, before it cuts through Wenlock Edge at Downton, has received the Clun and

carries so much water that it gives its name to the joint streams. Flowing past Ludlow it is finally met by the Ledwyche Brook and the Rea River which drain much of the Southern Plateau and the Clee Hills.

In the extreme north of the county there are a few streams about Adderley draining towards the Weaver and so reaching the Mersey, while about Whitchurch and to the north-west the drainage passes to the Dee.

The maps of the river system of the county bring out several important points,

(1) The much larger number of streams in the Upland compared with those of an equal area in the Plain. This is largely due to the fact that the streams rise in the high ground and join up with one another in flowing to the low. But the hardness and impervious character of the Upland rocks is not without its influence.

(2) The radiating character of the streams in the Longmynd and from the Gleys and the Coalfield, compared with the longitudinal and transverse directions among the Edges.

(3) The exceptionally small number of streams on the Bunter and Permian porous sand-rock areas.

(4) The rarity of streams in the Coalfield Peninsula.

(5) the irregular and apparently planless character of the drainage of the Northern Plain.

If on a map all the land draining directly to the Severn were painted in one colour and that draining to the Teme in another the basins or drainage areas of those rivers would be displayed. The colours would meet along a line from which water flows off in opposite directions ; it is consequently called a water-parting, water-shed, or divide. This line is found to run from Bishop's Castle to near Shelve and then approximately N.W. S.E. to Cleobury Mortimer. It is, however, sinuous and varies much in height. Thus it crosses some of the highest land in the Shelve country, the Longmynd, and Wenlock Edge ; but, between these points it passes through low ground at Marsh Pool, Church Stretton, Longville-in-the-Dale, and Bourton. On the other hand it leaves Caradoc and the Lawley wholly within the Severn drainage and Clun Forest and the Clee Hills in that of the Teme. This line is called a tertiary watershed because it only divides the waters of two sets of tributaries of one river. The only secondary watershed in Shropshire divides the waters of the Mersey from those of the Dee. A primary watershed separates rivers flowing to separate seas. A line from near Selattyn eastward to Welshampton and then through Fenns Moss to Woore, divides the Bristol Channel drainage from that of the Irish Sea. A second primary watershed runs from near Newcastle outside the N.E. corner of the county and divides the Irish Sea drainage from that carried by the Trent to the North Sea and a third running south from the same point to near Wolverhampton divides the Trent drainage from that of the Severn. It is this last line which for a short distance forms the county boundary near Boscobel.

The first of these three primary watersheds is remarkable in that within the county it traverses low ground and even marshes like Whixall, part of which drains north and part south ; and throughout its course it does not touch 500 feet. And yet rivers from it cut through hills of at least the same height. This accounts for the slack currents, the winding

curves, and the broad valleys of the Northern Plain. It also explains the water-logged character of some of the ground such as the marshes in the middle course of the Perry and in the Weald Moors. The sluggish character of the drainage is also responsible for the meres of the Northern Plain, the chief of which are clustered about Ellesmere. There are others near Conover and in the Perry basin about Baschurch, while in the ground between Whitchurch and Market Drayton there is a wonderful area of tiny meres, one or more occurring in every field. The tertiary watershed lines drawn to divide the drainage basins of the chief Severn tributaries bring out two other important geographical facts. These watersheds often cross the longitudinal valleys of the Upland and streams drain away northward and southward from quite low elevations. This is the case in Corve Dale, Ape Dale, the Stretton valley, the Hope Valley at Marsh Pool, and most remarkably at Marton where the north and south streams actually at times flow out of the same pool. Thus these longitudinal valleys form natural pathways through the county the watersheds presenting no obstacle to the construction of roads and railways. Secondly while several streams flow into the Severn near the county town, a map of watersheds brings out much more clearly that some five drainage basins with all the advantages they offer to roads, railways, and canals, converge upon Shrewsbury, and three others close by, a fact the geographical significance of which must not be overlooked.

6. Soil and Rock.

Soil consists of sand, clay, or marl, mingled with decomposing vegetable matter. According to the proportions of these ingredients we have a loamy, sandy, or light soil ; a clayey or heavy soil ; a calcareous or limey soil ; and a peaty soil. As one digs down into the soil the vegetable matter rapidly decreases in quantity and the inorganic contents, sand, clay, or marl, increase. At the same time stones get more numerous, larger, and more angular, until at last we reach solid, undisturbed rock. This second stage is called subsoil, a substance that is always being formed by the breaking up of the rock below by means of frost and rain-water. The rock fragments become fractured again and again in the higher layers of the subsoil by the same agencies, aided by bacteria, roots of plants, worms and -moles, vegetable acids, etc. Thus the character of a soil varies with the nature of the rock beneath it. Under sandy soils we find sandstone ; under clay soils, clay, shale, or slate ; and under marly soils, marls, clay with limestone, or limestone alone. At the junction of two dissimilar rocks there are mixed soils, generally the richest and most fertile of all.

An opening down into the rock below the subsoil, such as that made to carry a road over Wenlock Edge, displays the rock under the subsoil at that spot. When the cutting was made the rock was found to consist of plates of limestone resting on and alternating with plates of clay, like the sheets, blankets, and quilt of a bed. It is the edges of the plates thus cut through which give the striped character seen in the photograph. A rock arranged in plates is said to be bedded or stratified, and it is found that most common rocks, conglomerate or pudding-stone, sandstone, shale, clay, slate, marl, limestone, ironstone, and coal, are of this character. About 95 per cent of the Shropshire rocks are stratified.

At the top of the cutting a number of quarries have been opened in a mass of limestone over 100 feet high which has been given the name of the Wenlock Limestone. As the workings extend, the limestone can be followed below ground and proved to be a sheet or stratum over 100 feet thick lying parallel to the thin beds of the cutting and everywhere resting upon them. All the layers incline, or " dip " downward towards the S.E. at an angle of about 10 degrees. The quarries extend in a line N.E. from Wenlock to the Severn at Ironbridge, while to the S.W. they run all along Wenlock Edge as far as Ludlow and beyond. Thus the edge of this sheet of limestone rises out of the ground into contact with the soil along a N.E. to S.W. line for at least 30 miles. Such a line is called the " outcrop " of the limestone, and the following facts with regard to it are worthy of note :

(1) Everywhere it weathers up into calcareous and marly soil, fertile, and supporting a great growth of trees and lime-loving plants

(2) All the quarries show that it inclines steadily to the S.E.

(3) Underneath it there are always clays alternating with thin sheets of limestones, followed by a sheet of hardened clay or shale nearly 2000 feet thick. This is called the " Wenlock Shale."

(4) Resting on it where it plunges into the ground, and therefore outcropping in a parallel band on its S.E. side, is another sheet of sandy clay or mudstone (so called because it easily weathers into mud), the " Lower Ludlow Mudstone."

(5) Everywhere it forms a ridge or edge line dropping steeply downwards on its N.W. flank or " scarp face," where the sheet is often broken into a cliff; but inclining gently away on its S.E. side, that towards which the beds are inclining (the " dip-slope ").

(6) It is a hard band of resistant rock between two soft ones, consequently under the wear and tear of rain and streams it stands up better than its softer neighbours, which have been worn out into the parallel depressions of Hope Dale on the S.E. and Ape Dale on the N.W.

These features are depicted in the annexed section, which shows what would be visible if the Edge and its neighbouring country were cut through down to sea level by a deep trench. It displays the rock sheets which have just been described and also those which lie below and those which follow above them. It also brings out the shape of the ground and the relation it bears to the position and arrangement of bands of hard and soft rock.

Among the debris of the limestone quarries one can pick up hundreds of fossil shells, bits of coral, fragments of sea-mats, or of shrimp-like creatures, all more or less related to such as now live in the sea. An examination of a bit of weathered limestone shows that it is almost entirely made of such fossils, and that it was once a shell bank or a coral reef forming on a sea -bed. Fossils are less abundant in the strata above and below, but they

are common enough to demonstrate that these also were formed by the deposit of mud on a sea-floor, the dwelling- place of shellfish, sponges, and corals. As the sheets of rock lie parallel the deposition must have proceeded regularly and without disturbance. Only at first the sea was muddy, when the Wenlock Shale was laid down ; then it cleared and the abundant growth of animals formed the Limestones ; lastly mud and sand were again washed into the sea and the Ludlow Mudstones originated.

Thus the stratified rocks are deposits, formed under still water, which have subsequently hardened and then been heaved up above sea level ; later they have been carved by the sea, or by rain and rivers into the hills and valleys of which the landscape consists.

But things have not always been as quiet and placid as this. Generally when heaved above the sea, the sediments have been bent and crumpled, or even broken and crushed. To the first of these causes their " dip " is due, to the second the want of continuity or regular succession sometimes presented by their outcrops. Moreover the present position of rocks is often the outcome of more than one phase of uplift. If rocks are bent or folded during the movement of one Period and then again lowered beneath the sea the new series of sediments will not lie parallel to the layers of the folded strata on which they rest. Such a relationship is illustrated by the section which shows that the coal-bearing rocks were laid down after disturbance of the Wenlock Limestone and its associates, and also after the surface of some of the sheets had been broken into and worn away. A junction of this kind is called uncon- formity, while a parallel relationship between two sets of strata, such as that between the Wenlock Limestone and the beds immediately above or below it, is called conformity.

Again volcanoes burst out in Uriconium and Ordovician times bringing up melted rock from the hot interior of the earth, which flowed over the surface as lava. The same mateaial was at these and other periods intrusively forced into the crevices among the bedded rocks, or even parallel to their strata. In both cases it solidified into hard, crystalline, rock.

By taking note of the order in which bedded rocks rest one upon another it is possible to ascertain their relative age on the principle that of any two in contact the one underneath is the older of the two. In this way the relative age of all the stratified rocks of Britain has been learnt, and names have been given to them, generally derived from their character or -the locality where they occur. At any particular spot, however, one or more members of the sequence may be missing, either because it was never formed there, or, having been formed, it has afterwards been washed away. There are only a few minor gaps in Shropshire until we reach the Middle Lias. Everything above that except the Pleistocene deposits is absent, and of the Lias only a comparatively small patch survives.

The geographical position occupied in the county by the outcrops of each important member of the rock sequence is displayed in the Geological Map at the end of this volume, which should be carefully compared with the physical map at the beginning. The

older rocks are, the better are the chances that they will become hardened. Thus it is not surprising to find that the Upland is made of the oldest rocks, the Archaean, Cambrian, Ordovician, and Silurian ; the Southern Plateau and the Coalfields which come next in height are built of the Old Red Sandstone and Carboniferous Rocks, later in age ; the Plains are founded on the newest rocks the Permian, Trias, and Lias.

But among both old and new rocks some bands are harder than others, and the hills run along the outcrop of these, while the nearly parallel longitudinal valleys are cut out along the outcrop of the softer members. This is well seen in the Upland, where View Edge, Wenlock Edge, the Caradoc and Wrekin hog-backs, the Stiperstones, the N.E. to S.W. ridges in the Shelve Country, follow the outcrop of hard bands ; while Corve Dale, Hope Dale, Ape Dale, the valleys of Stretton, the East and West Onny, and the Rea, each pursue the line of some soft bed. Of course streams cut transverse rifts through hard bands when they cannot help it, but, wherever they do so their valleys are narrow, steep-sided, gorge-like, and often very beautiful. Instances are the Severn Gorge, the Onny at Horderley and at Stokesay, and the Roden at Lee Brockhurst.

The relationships of the rocks which constitute the Upland, the Southern Plateau, and the Eastern Plain may be gathered from the section which cuts across the strata from N.W. to S.E. This shows that the older rocks are bent as a whole into an arch lying between two troughs. The centre of the arch is broken by " faults " at Church Stretton, and crumpled at the Longmynd, and there is one subsidiary buckle on each side. The oldest rocks in the county outcrop along the line of hog-backs extending from Lilleshall, through the Wrekin, to the Lawley and Caradoc. These are of Archaean age and consist of volcanic lavas and tuffs. The next in point of age are the conglomerates, grits, and slates of the Longmynd, of vast thickness and so ancient that no fossils except worm burrows have been found in them. The rocks are very well consolidated throughout, there are practically no weak strata to form structural valleys, and the mass of them makes a flat-topped plateau. Cambrian rocks succeed, hard quartzites and sandstones with soft shales (the Sheinton Shale), the latter eaten out into the hollow under Hoar Edge and that west of the Longmynd. The Ordovician System has as resistant rocks the quartzite of the Stiperstones, the volcanic ashes of Shelve Hill, Stapeley Hill, and the Hagley and Whittery ridges, the grits of Priest Weston and Snailbeach, the sandstones of Hoar Edge and Chatwall, the limestone of Middleton, and a few intrusions of volcanic rocks. As weak rocks there are the shales and flags of Rorrington, Aldress, and Harnage. The sandstones are useful as building stones and the grits furnish lead and zinc. The Silurian rocks are based upon hard grits at Kenley and Little Wenlock but they mainly consist of the mudstones of Wenlock and Ludlow with the inter-stratified Wenlock and Aymestry Limestones, much quarried for lime-burning and for iron smelting. In the Long Mountain there are mudstones but no hard limestones and there are in consequence no scarps or edges. All these rocks were formed in the sea and contain abundant marine fossils.

The next rock group was formed in lakes and consists of soft red sandstones and marls with some hard limestone-conglomerate bands. These latter form the great terrace round the Clee Hills, and the hills themselves stand so high because the Old Red

Sandstone is here covered by the next division, the Carboniferous, which has been locally preserved by its capping of hard, igneous, intrusive dolerite known locally as "dhu-stone." There are limestones and grits at the base of the Carboniferous rocks at the Clee Hills, near the Wrekin and Lilleshall, and at Llanymynech, the rock being quarried at all these localities.

Elsewhere in the Hanwood, Leebotwood, Forest of Wyre, and Coalbrookdale coalfields these lower rocks are absent and the coal-bearing "Coal-measures" rest directly and unconformably on Silurian, Ordovician, and Cambrian rocks, which were bent, broken, and denuded before their deposition. The Coal-measures are of immense economic importance to the county as they not only yield several beds or "seams" of workable coal, varying from 2 to 10 feet thick, but seams of ironstone, fireclay, brick-clay, and sandstone suitable for building. The Coal-measures appear to have been laid down in the swampy delta of a great river on which grew the forests that have provided the material for the coal-seams.

The Permian rocks are limestone conglomerates, with dark red and purple sands and marls, which are conformable to the Coal-measures. They are lake-formed sediments. After their formation there happened one of the most important periods of earth movement that has occurred in Shropshire. All rocks older than the Permian were bent, broken, and carved by the denudation of rain and rivers into hills and valleys. These were partly submerged under the waters of a lake in a desert climate, but in part they stood up for a time as peninsulas and islands. Sediments of pebbles, sand, and marl were deposited on the lake bed and in the gulfs and straits among the peninsulas and islands. In very few cases are the deposits of this Period, the Trias, found south of the present line of the Severn. The lake may have extended farther south but if it did its deposits have been swept away. It is more likely that the southern shore-line of the lake was not very far from the present borders of the Upland and the Southern Plateau, and that its western shore-line was near the Welsh boundary, the Breiddens, and Oswestry. On the other hand any peninsulas or islands which may have stretched into the lake to the north have been destroyed or buried up and hidden in the red sand, except two, Haughmond Hill and the land of Longmyndian Rock and the Coalfield peninsula running north to Lilleshall. Whether in covering up islands the deposits have also buried a coalfield or other rocks of economic value, is a matter for the future to determine, but it is known that the eastern margin of the Coalbrookdale Coalfield is so covered, as, when the Trias is pierced, coal seams have been found and worked. The sandstones are in great demand for building stone, and wells sunk in the softer sands yield excellent water. When subsidence of the land let the sea into the Triassic lake the marine Liassic clays and limestones found about Wem and Frees were laid down.

Of the later geological history of the county with the exception of two phases we know little from evidence in Shropshire. At some period the Triassic rocks were bent into a basin in the centre of which lies the Lias. Fractures and irregular folds were made, and denudation of these brought various members of the Trias to the surface. Wherever conglomerates or breccias outcrop there are hills like those of Ness, Pimhill, Grinshill, and

Hawkstone in the Northern Plain, and ridges like Abbott's Castle in the Eastern. At some time also the intrusive igneous rock of the Clees, Kinlet, and about Little Wenlock, was forced in among the other rocks : And, gradually a river system was developing on the surface of the land.

The last phase is an even more remarkable one. As the Trias covers all older rocks unconformably, so, both it and the older rocks are covered unconformably in many places by Pleistocene deposits irregular masses of clay stuffed with boulders, gravels and sands, or the alluvial muds of the flatter river valleys. Of these the oldest and most remarkable are the boulder-clays.

Although sediments they are not stratified or sorted. They are most irregular in thickness, and they fill up valleys or spread over plateaux and hill flanks. Many of the boulders found in them are granites which have come from South Scotland, granites and lavas from the Lake Country, or grits and slaty rocks from North Wales.

As some of these weigh several tons the method of their transport for such distances must have been an unusual one. It is now generally agreed that the agent was moving ice in a form like that now covering Greenland or the Antarctic Continent. This travelled outwards from the northern and western high lands and over-spread the low countries, and when it melted it dropped its burden of boulders, gravel, sand, and mud in confused masses like the moraines of the Swiss Glaciers. Such a moraine covers much of North Shropshire and some of the South, and so plentiful are the boulders in it that where the ice was brought up against the Wrekin at Eaton Constantine, every wall is built of rock carried by the ice-sheets from Scotland or Lakeland. The water escaping from the melting ice distributed some of the material as gravels and sands, such as are seen near Buildwas railway station.

The dumping down of moraine material in irregular masses in some cases obliterated the channels of pre-glacial rivers, and prevented those rivers from resuming their channels when the climate improved and the Glacial Epoch passed away. The greater meres and the innumerable lakelets of the North lie on its irregular surface, and it is possible that some of the anomalies of the northern tributaries of the Severn with their slack currents and wide valleys may be due to the same cause. It has even been suggested that before the Glacial Epoch the upper Severn itself may have flowed into the Dee or Mersey but that it was blocked by the ice or its deposits and compelled to cleave a new channel through the north end of Wenlock Edge, and so to escape southward to the Bristol Channel, a course which it has maintained ever since. This would explain why the course of the river south of Buildwas is straight and swift and would also explain why it and its northern tributaries, held back by the hard rock of the Gorge, effect little denudation, but meander slowly about their plains and deposit alluvium on them.

7. Climate.

The Climate of a place may be deemed as the average of its weather conditions taken over a series of years. Its main factors are the temperature, pressure and moisture of the air, its movement as wind, the rain or snow-fall that it brings, and the sunshine that it permits. All these factors at any place are dependent upon four circumstances :

- (1) its latitude,
- (2) its position with regard to the great belts of high and low air-pressure,
- (3) its distance from the sea,
- (4) its height, slope, and surface.

Shropshire is situated in lat. 52 and is therefore in the temperate zone. Its average temperature through- out a series of years is about 50, the same as that of Liverpool and Dublin. Its July average is 63, two degrees warmer than those two towns, and its January average 39, one degree colder than Liverpool and two degrees colder than Dublin. This gives a range between summer and winter of 24 degrees, while that of the Land's End is 18 and that of the S.VV. of Ireland only 15 degrees. This is because the influence of the Atlantic Ocean in cooling the land in summer and warming it in winter diminishes as we pass inland. The effect of the ocean is further brought out by the fact that in winter Shropshire is a little colder than Shetland which is 500 miles farther north . The Upland is cooler than the Plain both in summer and winter, a result due to its greater height. The average harvest is about 3 weeks later than in, Eastern England.

Wind blows from areas of high pressure to those of low, and the dominant wind in Britain is the S.W. anti-trade which blows outward from the high pressure belt along the tropic of Cancer. This wind, like all others in the northern hemisphere, is deflected towards its right hand and thus comes from S.W. instead of S. In addition to this constant wind areas of low pressure travel across the Atlantic along a path from the West Indies towards Iceland, i.e. usually N.W. of the British Isles. Round these disturbances or cyclones the wind circles in a direction contrary to that of the hands of a watch. Therefore as they advance we feel in England first a southerly and then a south-westerly wind ; later the wind veers to the west and north-west as the disturbance passes away. But each cyclone generally brings with it heavy winds and gales with rain or snow, particularly in the south-easterly quadrant which passes over England. Most of our storms are due to these cyclones, the track of which is variable, their centres usually passing over the sea to the W. of the British Isles, but sometimes right over the country, or even, much more rarely, to the south of it.

Other air disturbances are regions of high pressure, called anticyclones, round which the wind circles in the same direction as the hands of a watch. An anti-cyclone is generally present in the North Atlantic and in western Europe and, moving much more slowly than a cyclone, it occasionally spreads over England or may remain stationary for weeks together. The winds are gentle breezes, the air is dry, and the weather in summer is steadfastly fine ; but in winter the very clearness brings frost and frequently fog. Thus the warm winds of England are from the W., S.W., and S., and the cold ones from N., N.E., and E. The first are wet because they blow from the ocean on to land, and warm because

of the heat given to the air by condensing moisture ; the second are dry because they travel over land, and cold because that land is generally cold at the time they prevail.

The rainfall of England and Wales is expressed as the number of inches by which the land would be submerged if the rain of a year remained where it fell. It will be seen that on the ocean side of the island rain is heavier than on the side of the narrow seas and the continent ; that it tends to be greater in the south than in the north, and, above all, that it is greatest on hills, and especially the higher hills which happen to be situated to the west and south-west. On the other hand it is small to the east and particularly under the shelter of windward hills, as behind the Pennine, the Welsh Mountains, and the Chilterns. This is because rain is brought by W. and S.W. winds which, coming warm from the sea, strike the colder land. Thus they are cooled, can no longer hold the moisture they carry, and drop it in the form of clouds, mist, and rain. They are further cooled by mountains and especially by lofty ones, and descend to the plains comparatively dry.

While on the Harlech mountains and those of the Lake District over 5 feet of water falls in the year, the Shropshire Plain gets about 28 inches and the Upland about 33 inches. At Oswestry the average for 10 years was 37 inches, at Bromfield near Ludlow and at Much Wenlock 31, at Market Drayton 27, and at Shrewsbury 25. The highest rainfalls have been registered at the stations of Oswestry, Westbury, Clun, and Church Stretton, and the lowest at Shrewsbury, Bridgnorth, Pontesbury, and Newport. The year 1903 was an exceptionally wet one, over 57 inches falling on one station, while 1911 was a dry one, as little as 18 inches being registered at Shrewsbury and 21 at Shifnal.

The wettest month is as a rule November, followed in order by January, October, and August. The driest month is March, followed by April, May, September, and June in order. Of course this refers to total rainfall and not to the number of rainy days. In many cases, the smaller the actual fall, the larger the number of days through which it is distributed. The amount of sunshine is dependent upon the other features of climate, more particularly those which cause rain, mist, and cloud. The maximum possible amount of sunshine in the latitude of Shropshire is about 4500 hours in a year. The sunshine records taken in 1881 at Church Stoke, just outside the county, gave a total rather under 1400 hours. Thus we may say that the probability is that a place in the county will see the sun.

for rather more than one third of the time he is above the horizon. In this particular the Plains have an advantage over the Upland, and the Severn valley lying in the shelter of the hills is probably the sunniest of all, for here the air descends from the hills, is warmed by the process, and " eats up " the clouds which have been formed in cold air about the hill tops.

Fogs are common in valleys and especially in those that are broad and flat, and it is not an uncommon sight to see the mist filling all the tract between Wenlock Edge and the Longmynd with only the tops of the Caradoc range, the Longmynd, and perhaps the Edges, peering out of it like islands. On the other hand in fine weather there are often " cloud banners " on the Clees and the Wrekin when all else is clear. The highest land is not

high enough to have snow lying unmelted on it for long periods in an average winter, but during a bad season it is often difficult and even dangerous to cross the Longmynd or the Stiperstones on account of snow.

S. Plants and Animals.

Shropshire is still a well-wooded county, not less than 51,000 acres being occupied by woodland. This, however, is only a relic of the primeval forests with which about two-thirds of the surface was covered in the time of the Saxons, and not less than half in Norman times. These forests were mainly situated in the south of the county and particularly in the Upland and the Southern Plateau. Of Clun Forest much still remains in the S.W. corner of the county. The Stiperstones Forest extended from Pontesbury to Lydham and much of this country is still well-wooded. The Long Forest ran along Wenlock Edge and spread on either side of it, and this is still a thickly wooded tract. Much of the Southern Plateau was forest-clad, the Forest of the Clees being in the south, that of Wyre in the south-east, and that of Shirlot in the north. The last passed up to the Severn Gorge, which was thickly wooded on both sides, and joined hands to the north with the Wrekin Forest, and to the east with Morfe Forest which ran from Apley. The Wrekin (or Mount Gilbert) Forest followed the Coalfield, but spread westward over the Plain to Pimhill, and eastward to join the Forest of Brewood in Staffordshire. Reference will be made later to the clearings made in these great forests by the Saxons, but a much more effective clearance was brought about in making charcoal before coal and coke were used for iron smelting.

The tree most characteristic of the county is unquestionably the oak, which is found everywhere and frequently attains great size and beauty. It is especially prevalent in the Forest of Wyre and the Severn Gorge. It is accompanied by ash, elm, poplar, alder, beech, sycamore, maple, mountain ash, horse chestnut, willow, crab, hawthorn, elder, walnut, and hazel. Birch and Spanish chestnut grow freely in the coalfields and even on the disused pitmounds. Larch, holly, and Scots pine are plentiful on the sandy soils ; the last and birch grow on the high lands ; yew and beech on limestone out-crops such as Wenlock Edge. There are extremely fine yews at Acton Burnell and Buildwas, and large oaks at Holt Preen, Kinlet, and Willey. In the Middle Ages yew and ash were often planted together to provide wood for bows and arrows. In Linley Park, near More, are some of the earliest larches planted in Britain.

The hedges are mostly of hawthorn, but holly, hazel, privet, and sometimes spindlewood and beech, are used; mixed with these grows the blackberry and at times the raspberry ; honeysuckle, convolvulus, wild rose, or hop climb over them ; and on the hedge banks grow the blue speedwell, wood sorrel (" cuckoo's bread and cheese ") cuckoo-pint, and wild strawberry. In the fields at their proper season are to be found abundance of snowdrops, daffodils, cowslips, violets, birds-foot trefoil, ox-eye, harebell, the purple or spotted orchis, and the beautiful meadow saffron. On plough-land the scarlet pimpernel

grows freely. The ground in the woods may be white with wood anemone, yellow with celandine or St. John's wort, blue with forget-me-not or bluebell, or a sober green with a carpet of the male or lady fern, the prickly shield or the hard fern, or more rarely with the beech fern. A stiff soil will yield the centaury and the willow herb ; bogs the asphodel and bog myrtle, cotton grass, the royal fern, the yellow flag, and the sundew ; and limestone ground the lady's-finger vetch, traveller's joy, the scabious and hound 's-tongue, spurge laurel, bee or butterfly orchids, and such ferns as the polypody. In ponds we meet with the water violet, the bulrush, and the horsetail ; on the sides of brooks are hartstongue and liverwort, garlic, meadow sweet, and butter-bur ; while on walls and rocks we find the wallflower, the wall- rue, the black and maiden-hair spleenworts, and more rarely the oak fern. Over the cottages there climb honeysuckle, clematis, pyrus japonica, pyracanthus, and Virginia creeper ; on the tiles we may find the houseleek, and on the thatch polypody. On the drier hills the yellow pansy grows freely and at times the field gentian, maiden pink, and great mullein ; at greater heights we meet with ling and heather, the sweet wild thyme, bilberries, crowberries and cranberries, and at times the stag's-horn moss. Gorse, bracken, and broom are everywhere when not kept back by cultivation. Close by the Roman Camp near Stokesay there survives what may possibly be a relic of the Roman occupation, *Astrantia major*, a plant which is rare in Britain but grows freely in Italy. The algae growing in the meres fructify and produce in summer or autumn the phenomenon known as the " breaking of the meres."

The county is not rich in butterflies or land-shells and does not appear to show any very rare forms. Crayfish occur in some of the streams. Salmon though once frequent are now comparatively rare in the Severn ; the brown trout, grayling, and chub are common, but the barbel is seldom seen. Pike and eels are everywhere, and the river lamprey occurs. Perch, carp, and tench are caught in the pools, and the rudd lives in Bomere and Shomere Pools. Three species of newts (" askels ") occur, and the natterjack toad sparingly, while of course both frogs and ordinary toads are abundant. Lizards and the blindworm are well known, the ringed snake is fairly common, and the viper, our only venomous snake, is found usually in dry, warm, and stony places, but is also abundant on the peat of Whixall Moss.

Shropshire abounds in birds, and it is only possible to name a few of the more important. The nightingale occurs regularly in the southern Severn Valley, the goldfinch or " seven-coloured linnet " is still found where there is thistledown for it to feed on, and the bullfinch is at times very destructive to fruit buds. The raven is a very rare bird, and the carrion crow is diminishing ; the swift or " jacksquealer " is locally common during its short season, but its relative the nightjar is much less frequently seen. The buzzard is getting rare, and the white-tailed eagle occurs as a wanderer, though the golden eagle has never been recorded. Five species of owl are known from the county, but the kestrel and sparrow-hawk are the commonest birds of prey. Black-game still occur in Clun Forest and the red grouse inhabits the Longmynd, the Clees, and Clun. Waterfowl are plentiful on the meres and pools, including the greater and lesser grebe, the heron, the mute swan, the shoveller and tufted ducks, and gulls of many kinds pass up and down the Severn Valley.

About the mammals there is little to say. The wild boar and the beaver have passed away and left little mark, but the wolf has perhaps given its name to Wolverley and Wollaston. There are no wild deer, but while red deer and roe-deer lived here in early historic times, fallow deer are preserved in numerous parks. Dormice, squirrels and otters are plentiful and the badger not scarce. Though the polecat, and the wild cat, are extinct, the weasel and stoat are abundant. There are six species of bat, of which two, Daubenton's bat and the whiskered bat have only recently been recorded.

CHAPTER III.

COMMERCIAL GEOGRAPHY OF SHROPSHIRE.

9. Agriculture.

It has already been pointed out that much of Shropshire was originally covered with forest, but there was also scrub, marsh, and moorland. The marshes were chiefly about the Upper Severn and its northern tributaries. These have now been converted into meadows for pasturage but some of them are still liable to floods. Much of the primeval woodland is or has been converted into arable, but a large proportion is now laid down in permanent grass. The moorland is the least altered, though in places it has been made to yield a grudging return for cultivation. This applies to the high moorlands and also to the lower barren heaths occasionally found on the Plain.

About 110,000 acres or one-eighth of the entire acreage is at any one time growing grain and less than half as much is under root crops. Of cereals barley is the most widely grown. Oats come next and wheat last with only 26,000 acres, the Southern Plateau once known as "Wheatland" being now pasture. Turnips, swedes, mangolds, and potatoes account for 48,000 acres, peas, beans, and other small crops for 10,000 acres. Potatoes, barley, and beans are especially characteristic of the Eastern Plain. More and more of the arable is being used for growing hay and clover or laid down as permanent pasture, much of the latter being used for hay as well as grazing. Permanent pasture at present covers 488,000 acres, over half the area of the county, and, in addition to this, there are 45,000 acres under clover and seeded grass. Some of the finest pasture is on the Severn floodlands, especially about Molverley. The woodland left covers 51,000 acres and of moor and mountain land suitable for grazing there is about 39,000 acres. There are not more than 55,000 acres of waste land, much of it over 1000 feet above sea level.

In the south and particularly on the red soil of the Southern Plateau where the county passes towards Herefordshire, there are many orchards, chiefly growing apples from which cider is made. At one time a cider mill was to be found at most of the farms in this district. Four thousand acres are occupied by apple orchards. Many excellent dessert apples and pears are also grown in the same district. The mistletoe grows freely in these orchards and is quite a valuable commodity. A considerable area is also occupied by damson orchards, the fruit being largely used for making dye. Cherries and bush fruit, walnuts and filberts are also grown. There are, however, few nursery gardens, and those

chiefly near the larger towns. Bilberries or whinberries, grow freely on the Longmynd, Clun Forest, and other hills, and gathering the crop for market is an important local occupation for a week or two. Cranberries are only occasionally met with, but blackberries are very abundant. In the extreme south, and in favourable spots, particularly in the Teme valley, hops are grown. Mushrooms grow freely in the Upland.

Probably pigs were the most important domestic animals of the Saxons because they could be fed on acorns and beechmast and turned out into the woods to get their own living. But as the woods were cleared their numbers diminished while they were fed in a different way. At the same time cattle and sheep increased. Pigs now number 82,000, rather more than one per family of 4 people. Shropshire is not a great dairying county. It has no special brand of cheese or butter of its own and the only extensive dairying is in the Northern Plain, especially from Market Drayton to Ellesmere where " Cheshire " cheese is largely made. Here the cattle are chiefly shorthorns, but in the rest of the county cattle are mainly used for store or for fattening, and the white-faced Herefords are preferred for the purpose.

The Eastern Plain, the great valleys of the Rea and the Lower Severn, and the southern fringe of the Northern Plain are among the chief localities where stock is fattened at the farms, while the Stretton Valley, Corve Dale, Chin Forest, and the south of the county generally raise large numbers of store cattle. The total number of cattle is approximately 200,000 or roughly 3 head for every family of 4 people. At Lydham Heath there are a few cattle said to be only slightly modified descendants of the prehistoric herds of wild cattle which once existed in the county.

The chief domestic animal in Shropshire is now the sheep, suited to all types of pasturage, whether water meadows, grass land, turnips, or mountain pasture. Sheep could not exist in large flocks until the wolf had been much reduced in numbers, a task seriously under- taken as soon as man possessed metal weapons. Considerable reduction had been effected by the end of the 13th Century but the entire extinction was not completed till two centuries later in the time of Henry VII. By the 13th Century, however, Britain had become the greatest wool-growing country in the world. When agricultural labour became scarce and dear, after the decimation wrought by the Black Death in the middle of the 14th Century, the landowners devoted much more of their land to sheep-farming, an occupation which called for less labour than raising cattle or grain. Shropshire therefore took its share in making England the centre of the wool trade, a position which she still holds although to-day the whole world is under tribute for a supply of the raw material. The repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 caused the devotion of still more of the arable to pasturage. The sheep now in the county amount to 520,000 or about 8 sheep to each family of 4. Shropshire has long been noted for its own breed of sheep which has been much improved of late years by judicious crossing with the South Downs. The sheep have valuable fleeces and also produce excellent mutton. Another breed of sheep is that of the Kerry Hills related to the older Clun Forest breed.

Horses are also bred in considerable numbers, mainly for agricultural purposes though many are used for hunting and driving. Ponies are allowed to run practically wild on the Longmynd and in Clun Forest, being driven in for sale once a year. Adding these to the other horses the total in the county amounts to about 37,000 or one between each two families of 4 people.

Large quantities of poultry are kept and the sale of eggs and chickens contributes to the profit of farming. Ducks, geese, turkeys, and guinea-fowl are also reared. Little is done in the way of canning fruit or preserving it in the form of jam, or in preserving eggs on a large scale. A great number of bees are kept by the cottagers and the honey sold, though the making of mead has almost died out. The county abounds in ground game and partridges, and numbers of pheasants are reared.

The Harper-Adams Agricultural College, founded by private endowment at Edgmond, near Newport, and aided by the County Council, provides agricultural education, and it has an experimental farm from which valuable reports are issued.

10. Mines and Minerals.

At least as important to the county as its agriculture is its mineral wealth, and a large population is supported by it and the industries to which it has given rise.

The chief coalfields are those of Coalbrookdale, Oswestry, the Forest of Wyre, and Hanwood, but there are a few smaller fields such as those of Dryton, Leebotwood, and the Clee Hills. Only in the larger fields are the lower or middle Coal-measures present in which the more valuable seams occur. The upper Measures yield thin seams of sulphurous coal which are not very good for manufactures or for domestic purposes. In the Coalbrookdale Coalfield there are 6 seams of coal over 2 feet thick, giving altogether 27 feet of coal, contained in about 1000 feet of measures. Coal was probably worked by the Romans, and it is known to have been got in the Coalbrookdale Field in the 12th century, while a proclamation against its use was issued in 1308. Over 60 mines are yielding coal, ironstone, or clay, giving employment to more than 3,500 men. Although parts of the Coalfield are now worked out it is estimated that not less than 320 million tons of coal remain for extraction in the county. The seams come to the surface on the western side of the field and dip downwards towards the east where the Measures eventually pass under Permian and Triassic rocks, east of a line drawn from Lilleshall to Coalport. The chief mining is now carried on in the deeper parts of the field to the east, and some pits are worked through the cover of the newer rocks near Lilleshall and at Kemberton. How far east it may be possible to find coal, or to work it if found, is not yet known.

While much of the coal is used for house warming and some is exported from the county, the bulk is employed in local manufactures. The chief of these was formerly that of iron, derived from ironstone which occurs as layers of nodules interbedded with the coal seams so that the two could be worked in the same pits. The ironstone was smelted and

iron obtained from it by a large number of blast furnaces, the fires of which used to light up the whole coalfield and produce a weird spectacle at night. There were 32 blast furnaces in the county in 1860 but all except 3 have been blown out, and the rest are now represented only by old slag heaps.

Limestone is required for smelting ironstone and although there is none in the Coal measures there is plenty of it in the rocks below. The two chief beds are in the Lower Carboniferous and in the Silurian Systems, the former restricted in distribution, the latter extending in two bands from Ironbridge to Ludlow and the county boundary. Besides these there are others good for building purposes and agriculture in the Shelve country, near Stretton and Cardington, in the Southern Plateau, and about Frees in the Lias. The Wenlock Limestone along Wenlock Edge has been opened up in a very extensive series of quarries and underground workings, some of which are now abandoned and left as "caverns." Here and there the limestones are exceptionally pure ; these masses, called "ball-stones," were especially sought after for smelting purposes : Sometimes they were as much as 80 feet in diameter. The Carboniferous Limestone is practically exhausted near the Wrekin and Lilleshall but it is still worked near the Titterstone Clee, and at Llanymynech there are very large quarries in it. The lime is now mainly used for making mortar or as a fertiliser, and some of it is used for road making.

Interbedded with the coal-seams there also occur thick and thin seams of clay, the mining of which gives rise to other important industries. Some of the clays are suitable for making bricks, etc., others will stand a very high temperature without fusing and are hence called fire-clays. The clays of the upper Coal-measures are the most important and they are worked about Lightmoor and Horsehay, Madeley, Jackfield, and Broseley. Brick clays are also found in the other coalfields. The waste tips of the older coal mines, consisting largely of shale, "chinch," "batt," and clay have in many cases become disintegrated by weathering since the material was brought up from below and it has been found possible to use them for brick-making. Consequently many of these unsightly mounds have been dug away.

There are several other clays which have been used for brick-making including the marls of the Upper Trias, the Lias about Wem and Frees, the boulder-clay, and the alluvium or brick-earth that is deposited by some of the rivers on the floor of their valleys. In the Oswestry Coalfield there occur beds of fine siliceous sandstones known as gannister and employed for making bricks capable of standing a very high temperature. Such bricks are used for lining iron furnaces.

In the Coal-measures there are also beds of sandstone that are quarried for building purposes and also used for grindstones. The chief building-stone in the county, however, is the sandstone of the Upper Trias which is much quarried in the Northern Plain, and, to some extent, in the Eastern. The most famous quarries are at Grinshill. The stone is usually white or red but it may be brown or orange ; it is easily obtained in large masses and the quarries are deep, with steep walls. It is known as a free-stone from the readiness with which it may be sawn or cut in all directions so as to make squared blocks

of any desired size. When freshly quarried it is soft and readily worked, but on exposure, when the "quarry water" has dried out, it becomes hard and serviceable. These qualities are well displayed in the Grinshill stone used for building Buildwas Abbey in the twelfth century, which, although it has long been exposed to the weather, retains the chisel and mason's marks. In the north a special character is given to the walls and buildings by the use of large flat slabs of sandstone set on edge, so that walls often consist of only two or three courses of stone.

Most of the other hard stones, even the limestones and igneous rocks, are used locally for building material. These are hard and intractable and are more suitable for rubble masonry than for "ashlar" made of squared stones. Volcanic ashes and related rocks are used in the Shelve district, the Old Red Sandstone and highest Silurian rocks in the Southern Plateau and about Downton. But one of the Caradoc Sandstones is the chief stone used in the Upland, being quarried about Chatwall and on the River Onny. When carefully selected it makes an excellent and beautiful stone. The number of glacial boulders about Eaton Constantine (See fig. 29), and to the N.W. of the Wrekin generally is so great that walls are often constructed exclusively of them. There is no slate in the county good enough for roofing, but fissile sandstones called "tilestones" are sometimes employed in the south. When more thickly bedded similar stones are also used for flagging, and for this purpose also the limestone-conglomerate of Alberbury is employed in cottages and farms near the area of its occurrence.

Any hard, tough rock may be made to serve for road metal, but nowadays, when traffic on the roads has become heavy and continuous, it is found economical to use selected stones which wear well and do not give rise to much dust. Shropshire is fortunate in this respect. The famous dolerite, or as it is locally termed "dhu-stone," which forms a capping of the Brown and Titterstone Clees is one of the best road metals in the world. It breaks into roughly cubical pieces which set well together under the roller; it does not form sharp-edged chips, it remains gritty and affords good foot hold, does not crush or grind up easily, and so forms little dust and less mud, and above all it drains and dries quickly. This rock, under various names, is quarried extensively on the Clees, where it is associated with sufficient coal to run the requisite machinery. Rocks of similar composition occur at Kinlet and near Little Wenlock.

Other igneous rocks are quarried for the same purpose at the Wrekin, near Shelve, and near Chirbury. Some of the harder grits of the Longmynd and Shelve, the quartzite of the Stiperstones, and even the limestones and harder sandstones are locally employed. In the clay localities refuse bricks, tiles, and even china, have been employed for road-mending but the practice is not to be recommended. The "dhu-stone" can frequently be broken by hand into the large cubical blocks which are used as paving "setts," or into kerb-stones and gate-posts, and the finer chippings from the rock-crushers are an admirable material for making concrete, for garden paths, for gritting slippery roads and for strewing over freshly tarred roads. The people employed in quarrying in 1910 numbered 1652 persons, and the output of over 70 quarries yielded three quarters of a million tons of stone and clay.

The metal next in importance to iron is lead. This is found in the district between the Stiperstones and Comdon which is generally called the Shelve country. This used to be one of the richest lead localities in Britain but so much ore has now been extracted that it can only with difficulty compete with newer districts where the lead lies nearer the surface. The most important mines were along the line from Snailbeach to the Bog-Mine, and about Shelve Hill, the latter having been worked by the Romans. There are deep shafts all over the district and the amount of lead that has been raised is indicated by the tips of waste spar which can be seen from a distance of twenty miles. The refuse is mainly calcite, but quartz and other minerals occur, often in beautiful crystals. The chief ore is galena, a sulphide of lead, bearing silver, which was smelted at Snailbeach and Pontesbury, where tall chimney shafts still stand, with hundreds of yards of flues to recover such by-products as arsenic. The galena is accompanied by "blackjack" or blende, a sulphide of zinc, which was at one time thrown away but is now sufficiently valuable to be worth picking off the tips, and is mined to some extent by "plunderers." In the same veins, and in others in the region, occurs barytes or "heavy spar," sulphate of barium, a dense, white mineral used in making paint and to give weight to paper and fabrics. This was much worked at Wotherton near Chirbury but now the chief mines are near Corndon, on the Longmynd and on the Shelve Hills. Another has been reopened on the English side of the Breiddens and quite near to it felspar was quarried for glazing china. The metalliferous mines employed over 200 persons in 1910 and about 10,000 tons were produced.

Mineral pitch and tar have been obtained at Pitchford; and, near Coalport in a dingle called Tarbatch tar can be obtained in small quantities from a spring. This was formerly sold as Betton's British Oil. Petroleum also welled out formerly at Coalport but the supply ceased on the extension of mine-draining operations. Natural gas once escaped in quantity from a well at Broseley which was called the burning well and was looked upon as a great natural curiosity, but this, too, has ceased.

Some copper has been obtained in the Longmynd and from the Trias at Hawkstone, but more has been extracted from the Carboniferous Limestone at Llanymynech, where it was mined by the Romans, and was the origin of an important station there.

A little underground water is drawn from the older rocks of the Upland but excellent and abundant over-ground water could be obtained by impounding rain and streams as has been done in the Longmynd for Church Stretton. In the Plain, underground water is abundant and can be reached by wells in the Triassic and Permian Sandstones. In the Coalfield a supply of good water is always a difficulty, and within the last thirty years it was customary to sell it in buckets in the streets of the smaller towns. Shrewsbury is exceptional in having a dual water-supply, one of drinking water laid on to hydrants in the streets, and a second for other purposes, laid on to the houses. At Admaston there are chalybeate and sulphur springs and a spa has been established. There are abundant supplies of gravel and sand, especially in and near the rivers. A curious source of gravel is the granite of the Ercal at the northern extremity of the Wrekin chain, which breaks up

naturally into small pieces without being crushed. One of the soft Triassic Sandstones is used for iron casting, and crushed Stiperstones quartzite as a refractory material.

ii. Manufacture and Industry.

The largest group of the population is employed in agriculture directly, but many people are engaged in employments dependent upon it. The great amount of barley grown in the county supplies a number of maltings, which exist in all the chief towns. These furnish malt to breweries, not large but widely distributed, employing about 200 people. The chief are in Shrewsbury, Oswestry, Whitchurch, Newport, and Wellington. Most of them obtain the hard water they require from the Trias, which is well suited for the purpose. Hops are obtained from the South.

Almost every stream of importance supplies power for flour mills. There are few windmills, and several of the larger water-mills have supplementary steam-power for use when business is pressing or water scarce. A large wheel constructed to use a small supply with a deep fall exists at Ironbridge. The streams and coal supply are also harnessed to run saw mills which deal with the abundant timber oak, ash, elm, and sycamore grown in the county. The oak is much used for palings, gates, wagons, and carts. The smaller timber is either burnt or converted into charcoal, the latter once an important industry, but now fallen off as charcoal is no longer essential for iron or steel making. Oak bark is needed in the tanneries at Ludlow, Bridgnorth, Shrewsbury, Oswestry, and Wem, the centres of agricultural districts which supply the hides. Larches are employed for pit props and for telegraph poles

Very important industries depend upon the supply of power or raw material obtained in the coalfields and elsewhere. Those engaged in getting these materials have already been referred to. It was at Madeley that works were erected in 1810 for "obtaining fossil tar or petroleum from the condensed smoke of pit-coal." This process of gas making, patented by Lord Dundonald, included an improvement in coke manufacture. The county has long held a great reputation for its cast and wrought iron. These commodities were expensive because of the charcoal required in smelting and working them,, and eventually all the timber of the forests was practically burnt up. The furnaces were called "blow-shops" and were erected on high ground where the strong winds supplied the draught. Dud Dudley-, early in the 17th century, had discovered that it was possible to use pit coal for iron manufacture but no development followed the discovery till a century later when Abraham Darby of Coalbrookdale applied it in his works. It was not a great success until the further discovery was made in 1750 that coke was much better for the purpose than coal. Iron was manufactured in two chief forms. That which was obtained directly by smelting the ore was poured into moulds and called cast iron. It was hard but brittle and its chief advantages lay in its cheapness and the sharpness of the castings. Indeed the Coalbrookdale works gained a very high reputation under the Darbys and Reynolds for their delicate and accurate work, and for the large size of the castings they turned out, one of the most famous series being that for the first cast-iron bridge ever erected which still spans the Severn and gives its name to the town of Ironbridge.

Wrought iron, softer but malleable and with great tensile strength, requires prolonged and costly treatment and is hence more expensive. From wrought iron the first iron rails were made at the Coalbrookdale works and there was a great demand for these when railways were first being laid, so that Shropshire shared with South Staffordshire in the great prosperity which this industry brought. It was also much used for chains, nails, plates, and rivets, and for the manufacture of steel. At one of the works guns, and also the first iron boat, were made by Wilkinson, who afterwards founded the famous Creusot works in France. At his works was used one of the first engines and afterwards the first steam-hammer made by Boulton and Watt. Steel can now be made cheaply, by a direct process, but unfortunately the Shropshire iron ores are not so suitable as others for the purpose. The trade in wrought and cast iron still continues, but on a lesser scale, and the steel work now manufactured is chiefly made with imported raw material. There are works at Coalbrookdale, Horsehay, Madeley, Lilleshall, and elsewhere in the Coalfield ; and from these, girders, bridges, plates and the like are turned out, as well as hollow ware, fencing, chains, galvanised iron, fire-grates, kitchen ranges, and a host of other articles. In all the agricultural centres and especially Wellington and Whitchurch there is an industry employing coal and iron, the manufacture of agricultural implements, such as ploughs and harrows, reaping and mowing machines, traction engines, and thrashing machinery. The people employed about all these iron and steel trades number over 8,000. Very important industries have sprung from the exploitation of the Coal-measure clays. They are mainly located on the east of the Coalbrookdale Coalfield, where the chief clay seams come to the surface or are workable in shallow mines. Bricks, white or red in colour, as well as the " Staffordshire " blue brick, are largely manufactured from the local clays, and from the same source are made the roof-tiles for which the district is especially famous. Fire-bricks and terracotta are made from the local fire-clays. Coarse pottery, earthenware, stoneware, and " art pottery " are also mainly made from Coal-measure clays, and there is a large manufacture of drain-pipes, chimney pots, and sanitary ware. Another clay industry for which the Severn valley Coal-measures have gained a great reputation is the making of the " encaustic " tiles used for paving and for lining walls. These are either made of finely powdered clay pressed in a steel mould, or are moulded from clay in the plastic state. Much imported fine clay and colouring matter are used for the face of the tile but the body and back can be made of the local product.

The Severn banks have also long been famous for the manufacture of china. This was originally started at Caughley on the right bank about 1772 by Turner from Worcester who made a fine porcelain and discovered the art of transferring printed designs to it. The willow-pattern was a famous product of these works, which, with their processes, were shifted to the left bank at Coalport at the beginning of the 18th century. The materials used are china-clay or " kaolin " imported from Cornwall, flint, and bone ash. The flint is calcined, powdered, mixed with the other substances and then ground into the finest possible mud or " slip " which in some cases is used for making ware by a process allied to casting, or is dried so that it can be moulded on the potter's wheel. It is then fired, painted and ornamented, glazed, and fired again as often as may be necessary.

There are two reasons why an industry of this nature is carried on in a coalfield rather than at the place that the kaolin comes from. It requires more coal than clay to make a piece of china, and the local clay can be used for the cases or " saggars " in which the china is stacked for burning. Coalport china has long been famous for its purity and translucency, for the rich and beautiful colours employed, and for the skill with which it is printed or painted.

The town of Broseley has long been associated with the manufacture of clay tobacco-pipes, especially the " churchwarden " or " yard-of-clay " variety. These are also made from kaolin and they require special skill for the manufacture as they are very fragile and delicate. The industry is now on a small scale but it has been in operation here for three centuries. The people engaged in the industries dependent upon clay number about 2,000.

Lime is made from the Wenlock or other limestones by burning them in kilns. It is mostly used for making mortar. As it is free from clay not much cement or hydraulic lime is made except at Wenlock. The lead-smelting industry was important in the past but has now almost died out. In place of it barytes is now ground and prepared for market near Minsterley.

Shrewsbury in the Middle Ages was closely associated with woollen manufacture, and was in continual competition with Oswestry and Ludlow. The Shrewsbury people appear to have done little but collect and " dress " for sale the flannel and cloth woven in Wales. The same town was associated with cotton manufacture and also, later, with that of linen thread, but all these industries have died out, as has the making of rugs at the Carding Mill at Stretton. Pillow-lace and woollen caps were at one time made at Bridgnorth, followed by the spinning and dyeing of worsted. This is largely used in the manufacture of carpets which has been carried on here for a century. Brussels, Wilton, and Axminster carpets are all woven in this town.

Quite a number of other industries that were formerly practised have now almost or entirely disappeared. Some have shifted elsewhere and in other cases demand for the product has ceased. The making of bells, parchment, paper, gloves and hats, clogs and pattens, needles, hair-weaving at Market Drayton, and the making and staining of glass, all come within this category. Ludlow was once famous for its smith work. On the other hand there are now important manufactures of tram-cars and steel motor wheels at Shrewsbury and Hadley. The works and headquarters of the Cambrian Railway, where engines, trucks, and carriages are built, are situated at Oswestry. The making of turret clocks, once a famous industry at Whitchurch has been revived there. Smaller industries now carried on comprise carriage and motor body building, the making of ropes, sacks and tarpaulins at Shrewsbury and elsewhere, yarn-spinning at Oswestry ; chemical manufacture at Dawley ; mineral water making, boatbuilding, tobacco manufacture, and cake-making at Shrewsbury ; wood-carving at Chelmarsh ; furniture making, bone-

crushing, and the making of artificial manures. A local need is supplied by the making of presses and dies for encaustic tiles at Jackfield.

Ten weekly newspapers are published in the county but there is no daily paper and no large amount of printing is done, though important works or serials have been published at Shrewsbury, Oswestry, and Wellington .

CHAPTER IV.

HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF SHROPSHIRE.

12. Races and Population.

It is strange that the earliest races of mankind of which we have any knowledge, although they must have lived in Britain for tens of thousands of years, have left no trace in Shropshire. These men were hunters who had not learnt to keep flocks or herds or to till the ground, and they seem to have lived like the Eskimos in a severely cold climate. It is probable that the intense cold of Salop during the Glacial Epoch and its icy covering may have made it impossible for Palaeolithic Man to live in the county or to leave there any trace of his uncouth weapons of roughly chipped stone.

These hunters were apparently exterminated by an Iberian race, probably of small, dark, long-headed, men, related to the surviving Basques of the Pyrenees. They had learnt to grind and polish their stone weapons, thus earning the title Neolithic, and to fashion rude earthenware without the aid of a potter's wheel. They domesticated some of the wild animals and probably sowed some kinds of grain. They burnt or buried their distinguished dead in long-shaped tombs or barrows, and the circles made of unhewn stone are generally attributed to them. These show that they were governed by chieftains and were possessed of a religion. They do not appear to have been exterminated by their conquerors but to have associated and intermarried with them, and their descendants can be recognised in Shropshire, and generally in larger numbers in the west than elsewhere in Britain.

The next conquerors were the Celts who like their predecessors came over from Europe. They came in two hordes, the first at a time when the use of bronze had been discovered. These people are the Goidels or Gaels, who have left a few of their bronze implements in the county but little other mark except possibly a few burial mounds.

The second wave of the Celts known as the Brythons, not only made their mark but survive to-day as a considerable element, possibly about one-tenth, of the population of the county. They were a tall, fair, people ; had learnt to make weapons and implements of iron, and had correspondingly advanced in the other arts of civilisation. The widely scattered round and disc-like burial mounds give evidence of their numbers and importance, just as the camps, with which they crowned almost every hill, bear witness to the stubborn bravery with which they defended their liberty, retreating only step by step, and again and again making good the lost ground.

They could not stand, however, against the arms and discipline of the Roman legions, who drove them back, settled in their land, and established themselves wherever there was sufficient wealth or other inducement to attract them. The conquerors, however, lived aloof as rulers, and when they withdrew, even such Brythons as had become Romanised relapsed into " barbarism." There is hardly a Latin name left except a few " chesters," and even the most permanent work of the Romans, their roads and fords, like the Watling Street and Stanford, are now known by Saxon names, while the name of their great city Uriconium lapsed into Wroxeter.

Of the various groups of Northmen Jutes, Angles, Saxons, and Danes practically only the Angles reached Shropshire, and founded there an important part of the kingdom of Mercia. During 5 or 6 centuries the Angles were establishing themselves. They drove the Brythons, whom they called Welsh (unintelligibles) before them, built stockaded villages, cleared the land and brought it into cultivation. More than most counties, mainly because of its physical character and its junction of upland and plain, Shropshire felt the clash of the two peoples, but the Angles made sure of their ground by wiping out their enemies, people, dwellings, camps, and even names, leaving only the names of the chief natural features which they adopted probably without needing to know their meanings. As the Anglo-Saxon kingdom grew, the Brythons (who called themselves Cymry or comrades) were pushed back and were at last held by the great Dyke of Offa which for centuries marked their approximate border.

The Danes hardly reached the county, as the Watling Street, their boundary, was only once or twice transgressed.

The Normans, like the Romans, came as conquerors, picked men in their own land, but with this great difference, that they were Northmen related in blood to the Anglo-Saxons, and were possessed of institutions which, though more advanced, were descended from the same stock as those of the vanquished. Being few in number, and placed in exalted positions, they found it best to adapt rather than change customs and institutions just as they had adopted the country, and thus in a generation or two they became practically English, a consummation which was helped on by the quarrels between the Normans in France and those in this country.

The last racial struggles were between the English thus constituted and the Welsh, and though they ended in the nominal defeat of the latter, and the union of the two peoples, the boundary line of the " Marches " continued to make, and still constitutes, a very important denning line between the two peoples. As Shropshire includes a part of the Marches, the site of the last struggles and the region of compromise, we find, as would be expected, two main elements in the present population, Anglo-Saxon to the east, Welsh to the west, and a border zone where the two stocks are closely commingled.

In Domesday Book there are recognisable 211 villages which have given names to the same number out of the 267 existing civil parishes : 80 of these appear to have been

towns, and the total population recorded in the county according to Ellis was 5,080. At the first census, that of 1801, the inhabitants numbered 169,248, and their numbers increased steadily up to 248,111 in 1871. They remained stationary for ten years, and then declined to 236,339 in 1891. Both increase and decline are to be attributed to fluctuations in the mining industries, particularly those connected with iron and lead, but the decline is also associated with migration from country to town, a movement which specially affected all agricultural counties. The population rose to 239,783 by 1901, and, at the last census in 1911 it reached 246,307, an increase of 45 per cent since 1801. This gives an average of 183 persons to the square mile. Only six English and seven Welsh counties are less densely peopled, and the average density of England and Wales was 618 in 1911. Out of the total there were 121,835 males and 124,472 females, and nine persons out of ten were born in the county. Over 85,000 persons are returned as "unoccupied," but this number includes children, students, and women living in their own homes. Nearly 19,000- people were in domestic service, 23,000 were engaged in agriculture, 7,000 in connexion with the conveyance of goods and passengers, and 8,000 with the building and allied trades.

The map indicates by depth of tint the density of population in different parts of the county. The average agricultural population is between 50 and 100 per square mile, falling below 50 in the Longmynd and Clun Forest, and in part of the Southern Plateau. Only two parishes in the Northern Plain and one in the Eastern fall below 50, and the tendency in the more fertile districts is to rise above 100. The market towns rise above 1000, Ellesmere being 1,024 ; Shrewsbury reaches 5,312 ; and Wellington, with the aid of the Coalfield for its industries attains to 7,104. Round these towns residential districts of course occur. The Southern towns are less densely peopled than the northern ones. The great industries of the Coalbrookdale Coalfield give it a dense population over a large area, attaining 3,840 per square mile at Wrockwardine Wood. Recent coal developments at Weston Rhyn and Highley account for the density at those places, the former increasing in total population from 1,523 to 1,863 in ten years, and the latter from 526 to 1,489 in twenty. The building-stone industry reacts on Grinshill, the limestone on Wenlock, and the " dhu-stone" on Knowbury, while Church Stretton is becoming an important recreative and residential centre, its total population having risen from 816 in 1901 to 1,455 in 1911.

13. Place Names.

Names are often more lasting than peoples, things, or places, and the study of them often brings to light long vanished conditions. Such names as Battlefield, the New Road, Bishop's Castle, the Bull Ring, the Coach and Horses, Ironbridge, the Aqueduct Inn, at once suggest some military, historical, customary, social, or structural event in the immediate neighbourhood ; and, even when the name itself expresses little, the language in which it is written or spoken may tell of vanished people and of their distribution and habits.

Taking negative evidence first, we have in Shropshire no village names ending in the suffixes "by", "thorpe", "kirk", "thwaite", "beck", "haugh" or "fell", which the Danes and other Norsemen used in naming their settlements. We have only a Danesford near Bridgnorth and a doubtful Daneshill elsewhere. Again distinctive Goidelic words such as "ben," "cerrig," "magh," are absent, the name Knockin being a possible exception. Further there are no Roman names left in use and though we know the position of Uriconium we are not sure of Uxacona or Bravinium .

The Brythonic Celts, have, however, left a good record, which is also rather a remarkable one. The great natural features retain to this day their Celtic names. Of rivers, for example, we have Severn, Camlad, Vyrnwy, Rea, Roden, Tern, Worf, Teme, Onny, Clun, and Corve. Many of these names are derived from words signifying water or one of its attributes, clear, smooth, running, etc. Such words settlers would find it convenient to adopt if they had the opportunity of hearing them, perhaps modifying them a little, as the Romans called the Severn Sabrina, and enshrined Wrekin in Uriconium, while the Saxons probably buried the same word in Wrockwardine and Wroxeter. Again the home-making Saxons avoided the hills, partly because they had no use for them, but chiefly because their forests and crags sheltered wild beasts and the more terrible wild Celts. Here again the Celtic names survived, Wrekin, Lawley, Caer Caradoc, Gaerstone, Clee, Breidden, Llanfawr, and Corndon. Within their own borders, however, the Celts inhabited the plains and valleys as well as the hills, and they are strongly represented there to-day. The Welsh border and particularly the angles of Oswestry and Clun swarm with Welsh names such as "tre," "bettws," "llan," "cefn," "nant," "hendre," "pen," "pant," "pentre," "gwyn," "uchaf."

The Saxons called their settlements hams (or homes) but when it was imperative to seek safety by fortification or concealment they used other names. The word "tun" or "ton" meant a hedge or enclosure, and a "stock" or "stoke" was stockaded ; while if the dwellings were on or round a hill or strengthened by a stone or earth-built fort they were called "burys," "burghs," or "barrows." Now there are but four "hams" in Shropshire and of these, Lydham, Caynham, and Atcham, were close to fortified posts. On the other hand there are nearly 100 "tons" scattered all over the county. They are conspicuously absent from the Celtic corners just mentioned and from the aieas where they are replaced by "leys." "Stokes," "stocks," and "burys," are similarly distributed but tend to occur on the higher ground like Diddlebury, Lydbury, Stoke St. Milborough, though there are some in defensible positions on low ground such as Stoke on Tern, Hinstock, and Shawbury. These names indicate a conquering people settling among enemies and not too trustful of one another.

The other great Anglo-Saxon suffix in the county is "ley" and there are 120 of them. The word has two meanings (1) a river meadow (lea), (2) a clearing in a forest, a position hard to find and difficult to approach. The leys cluster about the old forests between the Severn and Wenlock Edge, in the Severn Gorge, in the Coalfield Forest, and down the River Severn to the county boundary. Names with "field" (also a forest clearing), "hurst," and "wood," are associated with "leys," like Bromfield, Brockhurst, Leebotwood,

and about the Coalfield many towns had woodland annexes, Broseley Wood, Wrockwardine Wood, etc., Comparison of the maps will show that the " concealment " names are complementary to the " fortification " names. Other natural features indicated in Saxon names are " ness," indicating capelike hills, " rudge " or " ridge," "hales" or slopes, and "hill" itself e.g., Great Ness, Rudge, Sheriff Hales, Grinshill ; lakes or marshes, Ellesmere, Bomere, Morville ; sheltered valleys or " hopes," like Monkhopton, Hopesay, Millichope. " Hopes " mainly occur in valleys in the Upland, " hills " entirely in the Plain. Great estates are indicated by " wardine," Wrockwardine, Stanwardine, Shrawardine, Belswardine, and Cheswardine ; villages about great (stone) houses are " halls," " sals," or " els," Posenhall, Shifnal, Bucknell, Ercall.

" Roads," " fords," " bridges," and " chesters," are Saxon names having reference to Roman roads and settlements. There are 60 " fords " and many " strettons," Ford itself, Pitchford, Tugford, Burford, Stretford, Chesterton, Wroxeter. These represent nearly all that the Romans have left in the way of names. " Cold-harbours " are absent but there is Cold Hill, Cold well, and Cold Oak ; "Hunger" also occurs.

The Saxons have left their family names (ings), Uffmgton, Eardington, Wellington, Chenington, Lulling- fields, Harrington, and Merrington. The Normans also gave their personal names to places, Moreton Say, Stokesay, Hopesay, Hope Bagot, Stanton Lacy, Cleobury Mortimer, and their language in Haughmond and Caus Castle (pays de Caux) .

Occupation has given such words as Smethcott, Shipton, Presthope (priest), Prior's Lee, Minsterley, Hinstock (hind), Charlton (ceorl). Natural products are responsible for many others ; the oak, Acton Burnell ; the ash, Ashford ; the broom, Bromfield ; . the fern, Farley ; wolves, Wollaston ; the badger, Brockhurst ; and the stoat, Stottesden.

Many words are duplicated. There are many Astons (east), such as Chetwynd Aston, Church Aston, Aston Botterel, Pigott, Eyres, Rogers, and Aston-on-Clun ; 4 Westons, Weston under Redcastle, Rhyn, Lullingfields, and Cotton, ; 5 plain Buttons (south) as well as Great and Little Sutton and Sutton Haddock ; and 7 Nortons including Norton-in-Hales. Sometimes great and little distinguish two villages as in Great and Little Ness, and Bolas ; or Dawley, Magna and Parva. Little Wenlock however has Much (monks ?) Wenlock, Little Drayton has Market Drayton, or Drayton-in-Hales, Little Stretton has Church Stretton and All Stretton, while Child's Ercall has High Ercall. Upton Magna has Waters Upton and Upton Cressett ; there is Acton Burnell, Acton Round, Acton Pigot, Acton Reynald, and Acton Scott ; Preston Brockhurst and Preston Gubbals as well as Preston-on-the-Weald-Moors ; and in addition to Great and Little Ryton there is Ruyton-of-the-Eleven-Towns.

There are a few distinctively local words. Edge of Wenlock Edge, with Edgton, Edgmond, Edgeley, and Edgerley. There are 50 " batches "or " beaches " (much the same as a " combe " in the south or a " cwm " in Wales), Snailbeach, Batch Gutter, and the Batches ; while leasow, tump, rough, and stocking are all used. The word thrift or frith frequently used for a coppice on a brook is possibly the Welsh ffridd (pronounced freethe).

14. Written History of the County

The written history of the county begins early in the Christian Era with the account by Tacitus of the defeat of the Brythonic tribes, the Ordovices, Silures, and Cornovii under Caractacus by Ostorius Scapula between A.D. 50 and 60. *Caer Caradoc* at *Stretton* and *Gaer Ditches* (also called *Caer Caradoc*) near *Clun*, both powerful encampments, claim to be the site of the British defeat, but neither of these fits the description as closely as the *Breidden*, just outside the county. This lofty crag, crowned by a very strong entrenchment, rising 1,000 feet sheer out of the marshes of the Severn, " *amnis vado incerto*," gives a worthy setting to the last struggle of the brave chieftain, and suits well with the dogged pluck and resource of the Romans. Caractacus, though not personally captured, was afterwards given up and sent to Rome, and an extensive settlement of the district by the conquerors followed, *Uriconium* probably being founded before 69 A.D.

The occupation by the Romans was primarily a military one. They did not displace the aboriginal population, but held them under a system of enforced labour akin to slavery, to work their mines and quarries, to till the ground, and to render domestic and military service. But they taught their subjects little of self-government and self-reliance, so that when they abandoned the occupation of the country in the fifth century they left it a prey to the Picts, and the Britons had little choice but to call in the aid of the Jutes to keep the " *painted men* " in check. They chiefly succeeded, however, in showing the value of their country to the terrible Norse pirates who were not slow to come and share its possession with the Jutish allies. The West Saxons came in by the south, the East Saxons by the south-east, the Angles or English by the east and north-east. Gaining possession of the coast each group pushed into the " *hinterland*," exterminating the Britons and colonising as it advanced.

The Angles, who chiefly concern us, pressed up the Trent, and pushed a wedge to the mouth of the *Dee* which cut the Britons' territory in two. That part of their new conquest which bordered, or " *marched with* " that of the west Britons, grew strong, separated from the parent kingdom of Northumbria, and became the land of the *Marches* or " *Mercia* " which eventually comprised all middle England. The edge of this kingdom was in contact with the Britons (Welsh or *Cymry*) in *Shropshire* and the *Mercians* first drove their enemies to the forests, marshes, and mountains, and eventually pushed them as far westward as they dared, establishing such encampments as were necessary, and founding towns and villages with names explained in the last chapter. The village of *Minton* on the *Longmynd* is supposed still to possess the chief characteristics of a Saxon village. At first the *Mercians* refused to accept Christianity, and their king *Penda* defeated at *Oswestry* (*Oswald's cross*) the North-umbrian king *Oswald* who came to impress it upon them. Eventually they embraced this religion, *Penda's* grand-daughter *St. Milburga* founding a nunnery at *Much Wenlock* ; and many churches were built, some of which still remain.

The Romans, possessing Uriconium, appear to have had little need of Shrewsbury. When, however, the Angles expelled the Britons from Uriconium of which they had retaken possession, the vanquished people took refuge at Shrewsbury, calling it Pengwern (the hill of alders), until they were at last driven out by the Angles who named it Scrobbesbyrig (the fortress in the scrub). This valuable position helped them to keep the Britons in check, though the latter continued to give trouble until (about A.D. 784) King Offa resolved to delimit his kingdom definitely by constructing, or re-constructing and linking up, the great dyke which bears his name.

The Watling Street was accepted as the boundary of their kingdom by the Danes in the time of King Alfred, but this people has little to do with Shropshire history. An advance party of them was destroyed at Buttington, and a second body spent a winter of discontent at Quatford, leaving behind them little but the name of Danesford.

In 1066 came the last branch of the Northmen, this time from Normandy in which they had previously settled. Like the Romans they established their rule by road and fortress, by delegated authority and a strong military organisation ; unlike the Romans, however, they did not impress an alien code upon the country but grafted their own institutions on those they found on the soil ; and so they succeeded in reconciling the population as well as winning the territory. Shropshire it is true, made some resistance, and traditions of the achievements of Wild Edric still survive. But the subjugation of the county was in the capable hands of Roger de Montgomery, Earl of Arundel and afterwards Earl of Shrewsbury, a stem conqueror but a wise ruler. Being rewarded with 357 Shropshire manors, he fortified the Castle of Shrewsbury for his own occupation, and, later, founded the Cluniac Priory of Wenlock and the Benedictine Abbey at Shrewsbury where he died after becoming a monk in his own foundation. His eldest son Robert de Belesme built the castle at Bridgnorth and espoused the cause of Robert of Normandy. He was defeated and banished by Henry 1 who surprised him at Shrewsbury by a rapid march across Wenlock Edge when he either made a new road or discovered and used a Roman one. Henry paid other visits to the county and conferred privileges upon Shrewsbury. By this time several other castles had been built, making a chain comparable to the line of Offa's Dyke, but occupying positions of greater strategic advantage. Several of these were garrisoned for Matilda in her struggle with Stephen. Ludlow resisted this king's attack but Shrewsbury was taken and its garrison slain.

In reducing the power of the barons and lessening the number of their strongholds, Henry II took the castles of Cleobury Mortimer and Bridgnorth, held by Hugh de Mortimer. But while thus strengthening his own position against the barons he weakened the English resistance to the Welsh, and for more than a century Shropshire was the centre of border warfare. Llewellyn the Great early in the 13th century made many successful raids ; Oswestry was burnt twice, Chin besieged and burnt, Shrewsbury taken and plundered, and Shrawardine destroyed. Shrewsbury and Bridgnorth were taken and retaken in fights between Henry III and his barons. It was Edward I who resolved to remove the Welsh menace, and in 1282 he killed Llewellyn and captured David, the grandsons of Llewellyn the Great. A Parliament was held at Shrewsbury to which not only

no earls and barons, but 2 deputies from each of 20 towns, of which Shrewsbury was one, were summoned, and David was tried and executed. The Parliament adjourned to Acton Burnell, where the king was probably visiting his friend Burnell, Bishop of Bath and Wells, and, among other business, passed the important act relating to the recovery of debts which is known as the Statute of Acton Burnell. Even more important was the work of repairing and renewing the chain of border castles, which secured the quiet of the Marches till the end of the 14th century. During this period Edward II held a tournament in Shrewsbury ; the " Black Death" was rampant in the county in the middle of the century ; and towards the end of it the " Great Parliament " held at Shrewsbury constituted the evanescent " Principality of Chester " and nominated Richard II its prince. The disturbances which culminated in the deposition of this monarch encouraged a fresh rebellion of the Welsh under Glendower in which Clun and Oswestry were again burnt or destroyed.

The Percys in their rebellion against Henry IV joined forces with the Welsh and gave battle to the King north of Shrewsbury. They were defeated by him with the death of Hotspur and a slaughter which for a battle in those days was a heavy one. This engagement was commemorated by the erection on its site of Battlefield Church. The tranquillity which followed was at last broken by the Wars of the Roses. The Yorkists, victorious at Blore Heath (close to Market Drayton but beyond the county boundary) were betrayed to the King at Ludford near Ludlow, but they won the battle at Mortimer's Cross (also beyond the boundary near Ludlow), under the Earl of March, son of the Duke of York who had been killed at Wakefield. The Earl after a further victory at Towton was crowned as Edward IV. He frequently stayed at Shrewsbury, and two of his sons were born there. Henry, Earl of Richmond, marched through " Shrosberie " literally " over the body " of the Head Bailiff, and spent the night in a house on the Wyle Cop. Then with a strong Welsh force, reinforced by 2000 Salopians, he passed to his victory over Richard III at Bosworth, and so became King Henry VII of England. About 1473, in the reign of Edward IV a " Council of the Marches " was established to administer the Welsh borderland. This Court first became important in the reign of Henry VII, and, during its two centuries of existence, had its usual meeting place in Ludlow. Rowland Lee held the office of President from 1534-1543 and suppressed riot and murder on the border. During his term the union of England and Wales was effected by Parliament and the jurisdiction of the Council was confirmed. Sir Henry Sidney, the father of Sir Philip (who was educated at Shrewsbury School) was Lord President from 1559-1586, and frequently resided at Ludlow. He repaired the Castle and erected a new range of buildings in it. The Council fell into disrepute in its later days, but one incident in connection with it must be recorded. In 1633 Milton's masque of Comus, the scene of which is laid in Shropshire, was performed in the great Hall of the Castle, on the occasion of the entry into office at Ludlow of the Earl of Bridgwater.

Although during the Civil War no great battles were fought in Shropshire there were many smaller fights, skirmishes, and sieges. Wem was the first stronghold of the Parliamentarians and although often invested it remained in their hands throughout the war, and to it were added Longford and Hopton. A score or more of places were

garrisoned for King Charles I and several of them, particularly Shrewsbury, were very active. One by one, however, they fell, until High Ercall, Bridgnorth, and Ludlow alone were left. These three were taken in 1646, Ludlow holding out till the last. Thus the county was strongly loyal, and at the beginning of the war Charles himself came to Wellington, Shrewsbury, and Bridgnorth, made a declaration to maintain the Protestant religion and the freedom of Parliament, raised soldiers, coined money possibly in a house still known as "the Mint," and passed on to the battle of Edge Hill. Lord Capel was the first commander in the county but he was replaced by Prince Rupert; while Colonel Mytton and Thomas Hunt were among the chief of the Parliamentarians. Sir Francis Ottley was the loyal governor of Shrewsbury. Cromwell himself had a narrow escape at Bridgnorth where an officer with whom he was talking was shot at his side. The Cavaliers won battles at Market Drayton, Lilleshall, Knockin Heath, and High Ercall; the Roundheads at Whittington, Stokesay, and near Montgomery. The war left the county with many of its castles, manor houses, and churches destroyed or greatly damaged.

Charles II passed through Market Drayton, Newport, and Tong on his way to Worcester in 1651, and, escaping after his defeat, hid first in a barn at Madeley, and later at Boscobel.

Two years after his accession in 1685 James II visited Ludlow and Shrewsbury for a few days, holding his court at the Council House and passing out of the county through Whitchurch. One of the first acts of the reign of William and Mary was to abolish the Council of the Marches in 1689. A century later began the great and peaceful industrial revolution resulting from the development of mineral resources which has effected so great a change in the life, occupation, food, and distribution of the population.

15. Pre-History and Antiquities.

It might reasonably be expected that a region which has so long been a focus of border warfare would be rich in the type of antiquarian relics that are best fitted for survival, those marking sieges and battlefields, the marches and headquarters of armies, or the memorials of triumph and death. There is abundance of such relics in Shropshire, but there are also many remains of peaceful habitation and pursuits.

Of Palaeolithic man there is no trace, but of the presence of his successor, the Neolithic Iberian, who had improved on the chipped stone weapons of his predecessor, and learnt to grind and polish them, we have ample evidence, mostly gleaned from the Upland. The most remarkable are a large series of flint arrow heads and other weapons found at Clun. No suitable flint occurs nearer than Berkshire, 100 miles away, and either the raw material or the weapons must have been carried at least this distance. Other neolithic implements have been discovered at Church Preen, Cound, Newport, Grinshill, and Harmer Hill and several examples are preserved, with those from Clun, in the Museum at Shrewsbury. None of the long barrows in which these people buried or burnt their dead have yet been discovered.

It is generally thought that stone circles made of unhewn stones are the work of neolithic people, and those with hewn stones, like Stonehenge, of the men of the bronze age. This has not been demonstrated with certainty. Shropshire has relics of several stone circles. That near the Marsh Pool and the " Whetstones, " have practically disappeared, but several stones of " Mitchell's Fold " and another on Stapeley Hill are left, and also a circle on Pen-y-wern Hill near Clun.

There are a few " menhirs " or single standing stones, one being on the top of the Brown Clee. The burial barrows had sometimes chambers of stone slabs within them, and at times the chambers were used without a barrow or tumulus being erected over them. Such a " dolmen " as it is called, was known by the name of the " Giant's Grave " at Llanymynech, but it has now been destroyed. Indeed, though surrounded and guarded by superstition, such relics were frequently broken up and carried away for building ; and within quite recent years they have been deliberately taken for road metal. Metal seems to have been introduced by the first Celtic horde, the Goidels, and, though these people left no mark in the place-names in the county, their weapons have been frequently picked up. Hoards have been found at Broadward near Clungunford, and the Wrekin Farm near Little Wenlock, and single examples at Battlefield, Hawkstone, Mitchell's Fold, Chirbury, and the Titterstone Clee. The most characteristic relics are bronze axes, the earliest of which were modelled on those of polished stone, and like them, were originally hafted by lashing them with thongs to clubs made of wood or antler. Gradually types better adapted to hafting were evolved and at last the idea of fitting the haft inside the axe was invented. Bronze spears, swords, and parts of shields, have also been found, and one or two instances of dug-out canoes, discovered in peat, can hardly be earlier than the bronze period.

The Brythons of the second Celtic invasion brought iron along with them. Such implements are seldom found, as they rust and decay, but there is an abundance of other relics unquestionably belonging to Celts, to which branch it is difficult to say. All the tumuli in Shropshire are hemispherical, like those of Bromneld, or shaped like a saucer or ring. They were undoubtedly burial places, but few of them have been excavated. They chiefly occur on the Longmynd, Chin Forest, the Shelve country, and other parts of the Upland.

Shropshire is very rich in encampments, or fortresses erected on hills or other places of defence or refuge. The majority are summit camps such as crown nearly every conspicuous hill, and notably Abdon Burf on the Brown Clee (which will, apparently, soon be quarried away), Caynham Camp, the two Caer Caradocs of Stretton and Clun, " Old Oswestry," and the Wrekin Camp. Others were on the spurs or buttresses of hills, places strong by nature but with their weaker sides specially strengthened, like the Bury Walls of Hawkstone. Others again owe their main strength to their commanding situation and to their entrenchments, though any natural slopes they may possess are fully utilised. Nordy Bank on an outpost of the Brown Clee, Norton Camp near Stokesay, and Chesterton Walls, near Worfield are fine examples. It is difficult to assign these to a definite period, and in many cases they were used by successive peoples. The three last

named are almost certainly Roman, while the Walls at Kinnersley, Bury Ditches, Castle Hill at All Stretton, and Caynham Camp are considered to be Saxon. The others named, with Coxwall Knoll near Bucknell and Pengwern (Shrewsbury) are almost unquestionably British (Celtic).

The last named group fortify the outpost hills of Wales. Like the Wrekin, Caradoc, and the Clees, or, like the six-fold embankment of Old Oswestry, Bodbury Ring and Brockhurst near Stretton, Coxwall Knoll and Gaer Ditches (or Caer Caradoc) near Clun, they guard the valleys and other approaches to the Welsh fastnesses. In other words they were built by a western people to resist pressure from the east. These people probably did not make roads, for one of their best defences was the natural difficulty of the ground, and they communicated with one another by a tangle of narrow trackways winding among the crags, forests, and marshes, where it was practically impossible for an invader to follow them.

The Roman method was to drive their attack right into the heart of the enemy along straight military roads, built for the rapid transport of troops and stores, reinforced by fortresses and stations, protected by wide clearings, to reach points required for some specific purpose. Having determined the limits of their empire for the time being they concentrated their chief strength on its borders, trusting to their reputation and mobility to meet disturbances within. Their purpose in Shropshire was to keep the border ; to guard their great road and the junction of the northern, western, and southern, branches with its eastern trunk, the Watling Street ; and to obtain supplies of lead and copper, and probably of coal and limestone. Thus they built a great city, Uriconium, in a strong position at the road junction ; and fortified camps, one at Chesterton Walls to watch the Eastern Plain and the river crossing at Bridgnorth, one at Nordy Bank, to overlook Corve Dale, and a third at Norton Camp to secure the Caerleon road where it passed through the Onny Gorge. These three camps are finely preserved and of great size. Under the shelter of these powerful centres, from which they could strike hard and quickly, they built villas, stations, and even towns linked by roads which we can vaguely trace by such words as " fords, pavements, causeways, chesters, strettons," and the like. Such settlements as have been recognised cluster about the desirable land of Corve Dale, the Church Stretton Valley, along the Teme, Clun, and Onny, about the upper Severn and Vyrnwy, along the northern tributaries of the Severn, and about the lower Severn valley by Bridgnorth, though here they seem to have chosen the ridges on account of the treacherous, steep, and wooded valleys. Villas have been found and partially excavated at the Lea near Pontesbury, Acton Scott, and Linley Hall near More, and other remains have been found at Rushbury (? Bravinium) Yarchester S.E. of Harley, and at Oakengates, which may be Uxacona. But the chief discoveries of Roman dwellings are at Uriconium.

It is not certain whether the name of this city was Uriconium or Viroconium but the former is the variant usually heard in the county. It is situated on the left bank of a bend on the river Severn near an island and ford. There may have been a bridge, as one road certainly, and another probably, led away from the right bank. Excavation has been confined to small portions of the 170 acres contained within a wall, which has been

traced, proving that the city was larger than Pompeii. The great mass of masonry which is the conspicuous object still standing above ground is built of stone and mortar with the usual courses of tiles. It formed one side of a building rather narrow but 229 feet long, which has been identified as the basilica, probably a meeting place or exchange. Adjoining it on the south side is a great bathing establishment in which it has been possible to trace the usual annexes, dressing rooms, warm room, hot rooms, hot and cold baths, a cooling room, and probably the site of a swimming bath, with attached offices and fuel stores containing coal and charcoal. Roofs and drains were constructed of tiles, the floors of concrete,- herring-bone brick, or mosaic. The roofs were in some cases vaulted and the floors were supported on innumerable small brick pillars 3 feet high, which were found in place. Furnaces in the foundations filled the hypocausts, or spaces under the floors, with hot air, and the hottest rooms were further heated by flue-tiles and pipes in the walls. Other discoveries include traces of a building once supposed to be the forum of the city, many other scattered buildings, pavements, a street, and, outside the city, at least one cemetery. Recent excavations have brought to light wells and furnaces, a temple, large houses abutting on a street, baths, a water supply and drainage system, and a large building of unknown use.

When the Romans retired from Britain they took away with them their portable property and valuables. Many Romanised Britons however did not leave, but lived on in the cities till these were destroyed. Consequently relics belonging to the actual Roman occupation are likely to be rare and to consist of articles of little value, things broken, lost, or thrown away, or else of such property as could not be removed. The last would be treated with scant respect, and it is only by chance that we have one or two readable but mutilated inscriptions left, one of which commemorates the death of a soldier of the XIV legion which was withdrawn from Britain in A.D. 69. This is important because it proves that the city was founded very soon after the defeat of Caractacus. A few skeletons have been found. In one of the hypocausts were the remains of an old man with a bag of coins of which the latest were minted in the latter part of the 4th century. This man was thought by Wright to have taken refuge here when the city was sacked and burnt, and if that was really the fate of the city, he was probably suffocated where the remains were discovered. Oyster shells and remains of deer, sheep, oxen, and wild boars, evidently used for food, were found. Some of the bones had been partially fashioned on a lathe. Hairpins, brooches, needles, rings of silver and bronze, combs, bracelets, and glass beads are the chief ornaments discovered. One or two of the rooms seem to have been occupied by a metal worker, as shown by a furnace and anvil-base. Weights and a steel-yard, keys, knives, spear-heads, adzes, spoons, ladles, sword-handles, and a lead toy were also discovered, and these and other relics are preserved in the Museum at Shrewsbury, together with portions of pavements, tiles, hinges, bolts, and the shafts and capitals of pillars, The pottery is of great interest, for it includes not only genuine Samian ware imported into the country, but some made in Kent, and some almost certainly made in the county from Shropshire clay. These are in the form of vases, cups, jugs, and cinerary urns, some of which contain bones. Among other relics we may mention flat or window-glass, glass bottles, a strigil used in the hot room of the baths, masks made of terra cotta and other clay, an iron horseshoe and a bit, and a bronze statuette of Venus.

Lead was a scarce and precious commodity to the Romans before they discovered it in Britain. It was exceedingly abundant in the Shelve district, rich veins cropping out at the surface of the ground and easily mined in open trenches down to a considerable depth. The chief workings were at the Old Grit and Roman Gravels mines where, as will be seen from the picture, the whole surface of the hill was turned over in search of the metal. Actual proof that mining and smelting were carried out by the Romans is furnished by the discovery of several pigs of lead stamped with the name of the Emperor Hadrian (A.D. 117-138). In the old workings there have also been found curious oak spades shaped like those on a playing card.

Similar relics have been found in old copper mines at Llanymynech. There can be little doubt that the Romans also worked for lime to make the mortar which has set as hard as stone, and for coal, though of this we have no certain evidence. But there are "old men's workings" along the outcrop of coal seams in the Coalfield from which so much coal as could be reached in open trenches has been got out. As fragments of coal are found at Uriconium the Roman miners may have been the "old men" in question. There is little or no evidence that they worked the ironstone of the county but they apparently mined iron-ore in the Forest of Dean.

How long the Angles took to reach the border is not known, though there is some evidence to connect their advent with the fifth century. It seems very likely that they found the city in the hands of the Brythons, and if Llywarch Hen is to be trusted, they burnt it, drove out the inhabitants, and compelled them to take refuge at Pengwern. The recent excavations, however, give no support to the theory of destruction by a fire. The Brythons who had lived with and in subjection to the Romans, had no hesitation in living in their cities; but the Angles preferred the open air and dwellings erected by their own hands: They naturally looked with suspicion on the buildings of a former age, avoiding them and their neighbourhood, and even going so far as to divert the roads round them. Thus superstitions grew up about the Romans, their cities, villas, and roads. Content with defacing, destroying, and perhaps burning them the Angles left the ruins severely alone, and the accumulation of soil and debris has preserved the foundations and lower parts of the buildings intact. In a later age, though probably dreaded by night, the ruins were often pillaged by day, and stones from them may often be recognised in houses, gardens, and churches. It is curious to note that such names as Devil's pavement or causeway still cling about the relics of Roman roads.

There are very many small mound-forts of which there is a capital example near Brockton and a host of moated enclosures chiefly away from the border. These seem to have afforded protection in country which was not very close to the Welsh border.

The Angles did not place much reliance in fortresses. Their hams, tuns, burghs, and stokes, were individually fortified or moated, but few larger camps were erected or adopted by them. The most important were Bury Ditches near Clun, Caynham Camp

(probably Reman originally), Castle Hill near All Stretton, and the Walls at Kinnersley. But their chief work was Offa's Dyke, erected to define the Saxon kingdom and to check the raids of the Welsh. It ran from the mouth of the Dee to that of the Wye and in many places is still shown by its bank and ditch. In some parts its line appears to have occupied natural defences, and in others it has been broken down, destroyed, or cultivated, but still in places it marks the boundary of the county and country. In all probability parts of it and " Wat's Dyke " are much older than the time of Offa but it seems to be established that it was at least reconstructed and completed by that king.

A strange mound and causeway protected by a marsh exists at the Berth near Baschurch, and something similar has been described at Bomere. These may be fortified islands of the lake-dwelling or crannog type known in Ireland and elsewhere. Both Neolithic and Bronze peoples lived in such dwellings in other countries but it has not been possible to assign a date in this case. A "Berth House" occurs near Shelve Pool. Certain pits within the camp at Abdon Burf have been taken for dwellings, but it is likely that some at least are " old men's workings" for coal or ironstone.

Of later " antiquities " it may be mentioned that stocks or whipping posts are of fairly frequent occurrence; and a " scold's bridle " is still preserved in Shrewsbury Museum. The coracle, a tiny round boat with a wicker framework over which tarpaulin is stretched, is still used for fishing, and very primitive ferries have been in use up to recent years. The most ingenious consisted of old barges moored in mid-stream and actuated by steering with the rudder against the swift current of the river. There is a seventeenth century hour-glass attached to the pulpit of Easthope Church.

16. Shropshire Buildings.

The buildings of a county are of great value in supplementing written history, in giving evidence of advance in skill and the employment of materials, and in throwing light on the habits and customs of their builders and users. They are not only enduring in themselves but are often associated with deeds, registers, charters, or other documents from which details of history may be obtained. Ecclesiastical buildings are especially valuable because of their connexion with communities rather than families, and because of the veneration with which they have usually been treated. Storm and stress, with periodical destruction and re- construction, form an important part of the story of military buildings and also of the more important domestic buildings. Smaller dwellings, on the other hand, have often remained immune and unchanged for long periods.

The chief building materials used are stone, timber, plaster, and brick. The oldest houses and churches are of stone, and stone has been continuously employed up to the present day, though in steadily decreasing quantity. The local sandstones are the principal and earliest material, but limestones and marbles have been imported from elsewhere for special work. From the middle of the 15th to the middle of the 17th century houses were largely constructed with a timber framework filled in at first with lath and plaster but later on with brick.

This method lent itself to highly ornamental treatment both in construction and decoration and the later examples are often elaborate and beautiful. Brick was at first used only for chimneys (towards the end of the 16th century), but for entire houses early in the lyth. At first it admitted only of severe treatment but gradually greater skill and license were displayed. Slate for roofing comes from Wales, but slabs of local sandstone, called tilestone, are employed in the south, and tiles are of course supplied by the county itself. A certain amount of thatch is still used and the county supplies plenty of lime for mortar.

16a. Ecclesiastical Architecture.

With the exception of the Roman buildings already described none earlier than Saxon are known to exist in the county. There were, however, 70 churches in Shropshire by the year 1086, the majority of which must have been of Saxon foundation. Traces of actual buildings are only left in about half-a-dozen cases, chiefly distributed over the Southern Plateau and especially about Corve Dale. The surviving work consists of walling generally made of unsquared stones or rubble masonry, with corners of oblong stones placed alternately upright and flat (" long and short work "), a few round-headed doors or windows, and narrow arches. Diddlebury, Rushbury, Stanton Lacy, Stottesdon, Wroxeter, and Barrow may be mentioned.

After the compilation of Domesday Book, and before the end of the 12th century the number of churches had increased to about 120, and as there are just over 300 churches in the county it is evident that a large proportion should show Norman work. This style is characterised by very massive structure, generally of squared stone ; the pillars are generally round, with sculptured, square-headed capitals ; the heads of arches, windows, and doorways, are round (See fig. 80), the vaulting simple and narrow, and the effect of the carving, though beautiful in mass, is obtained by repetition of simple forms of ornament such as the zigzag or chevron, billet, or nailhead. Rounded east ends, or apses, are replaced in England by square chancels. The simple and beautiful Chapel of Heath on the flanks of the Brown Clee is an example of pure Norman work, lately repaired, and the ruined Chapel of Malin's Lee is another. These consisted simply of nave and chancel with round-headed doors and windows.

Important churches were broadened by annexing an aisle to the north or south side of the nave, the lower part of the nave walls being replaced by pier arches and the upper part " the clerestory " pierced for windows. Transepts were also built out at right angles to the length of the church at the junction of nave and chancel, and separated from them by great arches which often supported a central tower. Thus the church became cruciform. In many cases however a second or the only tower was built at the west end, or annexed to a side or corner of the nave, " Fortress towers " are a characteristic of many of the Shropshire churches. Morville and Wenlock contain much work of early 12th century. The pier arches, much of the nave of Holy Cross (the Abbey Church) in Shrewsbury, and the chancel of Wroxeter are extremely fine. Norman work in towers is seen in Wenlock, Clun (damaged in the Civil War), Atcham, and St. Mary's, Shrewsbury.

There are fine doorways at Holgate and Edstaston, and grand chancel arches at Morville, Upton Cressett, Shifnal, and Stirchley. Many of the fonts are Norman, that at Stottesden being one of the most beautiful known, but there are others at Claverley, Holgate, Edgmond, and Lilleshall, while that at Wroxeter is the base of a Roman pillar inverted and hollowed out. One of the few round churches of this date is the chapel in Ludlow Castle of which the walls of the nave, a fine doorway, three windows, and the chancel arch remain, though the chancel itself is lost. The ruined abbeys of Haughmond and Lilleshall were founded for the Austin Canons in the 12th century and both show fine late Norman work.

Shropshire is well off in examples of what is called transitional work, in which distinct changes in style were being introduced leading up to the features characteristic of Early English, the next period. The Cistercian Abbey of Buildwas, built in 1135, is a fine illustration. The chancel, nave, and transepts remain, though the aisles and much of the outer walls have gone. The tall windows of the east end, and those of the clerestory all have round heads, but the pier arches and the very fine arches of the central tower, come to a scarcely noticeable point, although the ornamentation is typically Norman. The chapter-house has a beautiful vaulted roof. The situation of the Abbey on a narrow river flat near the entrance to the Severn Gorge is exceedingly beautiful, the site having doubtless been chosen for its sequestered position in the woods and away from lines of traffic (Build was means sheltered valley). This however did not save it when the monasteries were dissolved by Henry VIII.

The Early English style which followed has equilateral pointed arches, lancet windows, single or grouped, shafts made of clustered pillars, terminated by rounded capitals, and ornament or moulding more elaborate than that of the Normans. This style prevailed from the end of the 12th till late in the 13th century, a period which comprises the foundation of 30 churches. Acton Burnell, except the modern tower, is exclusively Early English, and there is much good work of the period at Cleobury Mortimer, Chirbury, and the nave of St. Mary's, Shrewsbury. In the last church are five lancet windows grouped together ; while the west window at Acton Burnell has three grouped and included under a single moulding, and the east window is similar but the spaces between the lancets are pierced by simple openings, one of the earliest forms of " plate tracery." The towers of Oswestry (restored) and Bromfield, the saddle-back tower of Alberbury, the pier arches of Shifnal and Chirbury, the transepts of Church Stretton, the south doorways of Cleobury Mortimer and Ludlow, and the north doorway of St. Mary's, Shrewsbury, are all good examples of Early English building.

There is nothing left at Much Wenlock of St. Milburga's foundation of the 7th century, or of the restoration by Lady Godiva in the 9th, and the principal parts of the Cluniac Priory remaining were built after the time of Roger de Montgomery. The chapter-house, however, has a beautiful Norman interior with elaborate entrance arches and a splendid interlaced arcading. The church was 300 feet long and typically Early English. The clerestory of lancet windows is high above the pier arches and between comes a gallery

or " triforium " separated from the church by beautiful open lancet arches. Relics of a groined roof remain.

During the next hundred years 1270 to 1370 a further advance took place in the handling of material, and the buildings of this period are known as Decorated. Probably not more than n churches were founded, but the style was much employed when new work was undertaken in older churches. In the Early English plate-tracery the window openings were generally of simple geometrical shapes. But, later, attention was devoted also to the shape and geometrical curves of the stone between the lights, sometimes to the detriment of the lights themselves. The stonework became more slender and graceful and there was much greater freedom in design. This style is illustrated by the famous " reader's pulpit " at Shrewsbury, the cross in Bitterley Churchyard, the chancels of Worfield and Edgmond, the chancel and aisle of Stottesden, the nave and beautiful hexagonal porch of Ludlow, parts of Cleobury Mortimer, Shawbury, and Albrighton near Shifnal, the square towers of Stanton Lacy and of Holy Cross Shrewsbury, the octagonal tower of Hodnet, and the font at Burford. The tracery placed in the triforium arches of Holy Cross Shrewsbury, to convert them into windows is a good modern example of the work of the period, and the grand west window of the same church shows Decorated passing towards Perpendicular work. The tracery, inserted in 1858, for the beautiful old glass of the eastern " Jesse window " of St. Mary's Shrewsbury, is a good example of the Decorated style.

From 1370 to 1520, the Perpendicular style, which is almost exclusively British, prevailed. Here the window tracery is made up chiefly of vertical lines ; walls were covered with arcading ; roofs were elaborately vaulted, often with fan tracery ; and effects of shadow and relief were obtained rather by deep carving than by thickness of wall and structure. The only church exclusively belonging to this period is Battlefield built in 1406. Tong, Loppington, and Edgmond, are also mainly Perpendicular, as are the beautiful chancel of Lucflow, the towers of Edgmond, Ightfield, Baschurch, and Ruyton, and the fine spires of St. Mary's, Shrewsbury, and of Worfield. The tower of Ludlow, from its position and workmanship (Frontispiece] one of the most commanding in England, was erected about 1470. Possibly one of the two half-timbered churches, that of Molverley, may be attributed to this period, but that of Halstoli is later. To the Perpendicular style belongs the Oteley Chapel, Ellesmere, and also much of the beautiful carved woodwork in many of the churches, especially in Ludlow.

Eight churches were founded between the 16th and 17th, and 50 more in the 18th century, and, in addition, numerous churches, particularly in the towns, were rebuilt or restored about this time. Indeed a sequestered position was almost as desirable for safety during the period of restoration as during times of spoliation. In some cases new churches were in a classical style like the new St. Chad's 1792 and St. Julian in Shrewsbury, 1750, Wellington 1790, Whitchurch 1713, Madeley 1796, and Minsterley 1690. In others one of the Gothic styles was followed, as at Condovery 1665 and Broseley 1845. The new church at Batchcott, near Richard's Castle, is a handsome building by Norman Shaw ; and that of Clive, built in 1888 1894, is one of the finest modern buildings

in Shropshire. But the best reconstructions have been those built of old materials and including unchanged or reconstructed portions of the old fabric. Of this class the great churches of Newport, Market Drayton, Bridgnorth, Ellesmere, and Oswestry are excellent examples. In conclusion mention may be made of the fine roofs in Alberbury, Clun, and Conover churches, and at St. Mary's, Shrewsbury, the painted ceiling of Brotnfield, and the tombs of Tong, famous throughout the country.

16b. Military Architecture.

Mr. Eyton divides the castles of Shropshire into three groups. In the first place there is the outer chain, all of them Norman built, protecting England from the Welsh. Taking them from north to south they include the following : Oswestry, Whittington, Knockin, Kinner- ley, Carreghofa (near Llanymynech), Alberbury, Wattlesborough, Caus (near Westbury), Lea, Bishop's Castle, Hopton, and Clun. The sites of some of them can be traced but others have lost all their original buildings, and of the rest only parts are left. Inside this first line of defence came a second line, embracing Whitchurch, Ellesmere, Myddle, Ruyton, Shrawardine, and Stretton. Of this line nothing but foundations remain except in two cases. In the third place there is a group of inner castles, in some cases of great administrative importance, the headquarters of nobles or officials, which felt the shock of battle from without only when the outer line was broken, but suffered more frequently from intestine war. These include Wem, Red Castle, (Hawkstone), Shrewsbury, Bridgnorth, Quatford, Castle Pulverbatch, Corfham, associated with the " Fair Rosamond," Holgate, Cleobury Mortimer, and, last but not least, Ludlow. Shrewsbury was erected by Roger de Montgomery, and it, Oswestry, and Holgate are the only ones mentioned in Domesday ; Ludlow was built in the time of Rufus by one of the de Lacys ; while Bridgnorth and Carreghofa were the work of the rebellious son of Roger de Montgomery.

Shrewsbury, from its central position and facility of access, its site so well defended by the river loop, and its relation to the guarded Welsh border and the roads into that country, was the heart of the county ; Bridgnorth guarded the approach from the S.E., where the Severn was bridged and the road to Shrewsbury from the S.E. avoided the forest and other obstructions of the Gorge ; Ludlow was not only a guard for the Marches against the west, but commanded the approach from the south, being more useful in this respect than Stretton, which fell into disuse. These are vital spots and round them the events of history naturally concentrated. There were times of peace, prosperity, or stress, when a castle would be enlarged, beautified, or fortified, and times of misfortune when it was damaged or destroyed.

Ludlow, alike by its size and its history stands easily first in importance, and indeed in these respects vies with some of the finest in Britain. At the same time the striking beauty of its situation, as well as that of its buildings, and the charm of the town of which it is the chief but by no means the only ornament, renders it one of the best known. The ground slopes steeply upwards from the river Teme and the crest of the rise is everywhere crowned by walls and towers. Thus it was triply defended on the north and

west, doubly on the south, and singly on the east. The east side was protected by a wall and probably an outer moat. This formed the outer bailey or ward, over 300 yards long and 200 wide. Admission is gained from the town by a strong gateway tower in the east wall.

The buildings of the bailey are not noteworthy. In the south-west corner are the court-house and record office of the Court of the Presidency of the Marches, built by Sir Henry Sidney. To the north of these buildings the outer wall carries a semi-circular tower supposed to have been the prison of Mortimer when captured by Joce de Dinan, Lord of Ludlow in the reign of Henry II.

The north-west corner of the bailey is occupied by the main stronghold or citadel, built for defence if the outer works should be captured. It was defended by a quadrant-shaped wall and moat with a drawbridge. On the west side of the gate is the great tower or keep built in the time of Rufus, but showing signs of later alteration especially in the enlargement of its windows. Such a tower was usually designed and provisioned for a last stand, but as this tower was deficient in certain requisites, notably a well, which was situated near the outer wall with another small Norman tower near it, it is likely that these were all included, with other buildings now lost, in the original keep. This would have been fortified by three towers, one looking upon the bailey, one on the outer wall, and a third looking on both. In the third of these towers was the kitchen of which the oven is still preserved. The wall of the main keep contains a bye-pass passage.

On the east side of the portal are the residential buildings erected during the Presidency of Sir Henry Sidney in 1581, built in Elizabethan style. The chief buildings against the north wall of the citadel are mainly 14th century work though earlier traces are left. They include Prince Arthur's room, protected by the tower at the N.W., and the Hall or Council Room. The latter is a fine apartment 60 by 30 feet, with lofty pointed windows, rendered famous by the first performance of Milton's *Masque of Comus*. East of this are the State Apartments, the Armoury, and the apartments occupied by the two young sons of Edward IV, also protected by a watch tower. But the gem of the citadel is the round Norman chapel which has already been mentioned.

Shrewsbury Castle stands on the isthmus which guards the town as it lies inside the horseshoe formed by the river. The Norman gateway is the oldest building and it may be part of that erected by Roger de Montgomery. The tower and part of the walls of the inner bailey belong to the time of Edward I, but the rest was modernised by the engineer Telford who converted it into a residence for Sir W. Pulteney. Of the third of the great inner castles Bridgnorth, erected by Robert de Belesme and quickly captured by Henry I, nothing remains but the "leaning tower," the only part of the keep to survive the bombardment of the Parliamentarians. It was one of the last castles to stand for the King, only surrendering when threatened by a sap driven through the rock from below which rendered it no longer tenable. At Holgate in Corve Dale, there remains as part of a farmhouse a circular tower, part of Helgot's Castle. Of Red Castle only a few remains are left.

Of the outer belt Whittington Castle is the best preserved. The towers of the 13th century gatehouse and a few other relics exist. It was defended by a morass, and by a moat of which a part still remains. Wattlesborough Castle near Cardeston is now a farmhouse and shows a square Norman tower, the upper part of which has been destroyed. The castle was moated and was almost certainly a strong post as it guarded an important road. Caus Castle, near Westbury, was built by Roger Fitz Corbet and named after the Pays de Caux in Normandy. It is now only represented by earthworks, having been destroyed in the 17th century. Clun (probably the Castle of Garde Doloureuse of Scott's "Betrothed,") stands in a fine position, and portions of a 12th century tower, a wall, and part of two bastions are left. It was originally built by Picot de Say and shows some work as late as the 14th century. A portion of Lea Castle near Bishop's Castle survives as part of a farm house, and the keep of Hopton still stands.

Of the second line Ruyton shows little and Myddle only the moat, part of an outer wall, and a turret. This castle played a small part in the Civil War.

Shrewsbury was surrounded by walls in the 12th century, and these were rebuilt in the 13th. Part of them can still be traced where the hill abuts upon the plain (Murivance) on the floor of the Severn Valley. Here there is a 13th century tower, and on the other side of the town a water-gate. Other walled towns were Ludlow, Bridgnorth, and Oswestry.

16c. Domestic Architecture.

Shropshire is dotted over with many beautiful residences, some, like Burwarton, Hawkstone, Apley Park, and Lutwyche, owing much of their beauty to their site ; others to their charming buildings, like Park Hall, Pitchford, Ludford, Condover, Preston Brockhurst, Benthall, Shipton, and Marrington. Others, again, like Wenlock, Buildwas, Acton Burnell, Tong, and High Ercall, are full of historic interest, while the Styche, Frodesley Rectory, and the Mount, Shrewsbury, are consecrated by the great names with which they are associated.

Among the oldest inhabited houses are Holgate, Wattlesborough, and the Prior's Lodge at Wenlock Abbey in which original Norman work remains. The Abbott's house at Buildwas erected in 1220 is also used as a dwelling and has been modernised.

One of the most famous houses is Stokesay Castle, really a manor house fortified by one of the Ludlow family by permission of the King in 1291. It is protected by a tower and the main stone building contains a beautiful hall with fine, lofty, windows. The gem of the house is the "Solar" or withdrawing room with two small windows looking into the hall. It is completely panelled and still preserves an extremely beautiful carved chimney-piece. At the north end of the building is a curious projecting timbered storey, and there is a gatehouse also with an overhanging upper storey, the woodwork of which is finely carved.

Acton Burnell Hall is modern, but in the park are the remains of the old Castle erected by Bishop Burnell, the friend of Edward I. Here the Lords sat at the Acton Burnell Parliament, while the Commons then summoned for the first time, met in a barn, supposed to be the building of which the gables still stand in the park. Another 13th century building is Ludford Hall. Its lower part is of stone and above there is timber and brick work. Portions of a 14th century house remain in the rectory of Edgmond, near Newport, and there is much 15th century stone work at the Prior's Lodge of Wenlock Abbey.

It is however in timber buildings that Shropshire is exceptionally rich, many of them being world-famed for their perfection and beauty. Some of them date back to the 15th century, most of them are 16th, and the style was practised in the 17th. Such buildings occur not only in the country and as large houses, but in the towns and as small houses and cottages. Shrewsbury. Ludlow, Bridgnorth, and Oswestry all possess good examples. In Shrewsbury we have the houses of Butcher Row probably of the 15th century, the hall of the Drapers' Guild, Ireland's and Owen's mansions near the Square (16th century) and the Council House of which the gateway house (1620) remains in its original state. At Ludlow there is the Reader's House near the church, built of timber and stone ; the Feathers Hotel erected apparently for one of the Lords of the Marches and containing panelling carved with the royal arms ; several houses near the Castle ; and the very picturesque old Bell Inn at Ludford. In Bridgnorth we have the house of Bishop Percy marked with the date 1580 and the legend " Except the Lord build the Owse, the Labourers thereof evail not."

But the choicest examples in the county are Pitchford Hall near Acton Burnell and Park Hall near Whittington. The former is a large building of two courts and fully timbered, with much diagonal work. It is thought to date from about 1570, and was the residence of Sir Francis Ottley, the loyal Governor of Shrewsbury during the Civil War. There are several fine ceilings in the interior and beautiful oak panelling. There is also a summer house built in a great lime tree in the garden. Park Hall was perhaps even more striking in its general composition, the vertical lines of timber being more strongly emphasised than at Pitchford. It was erected about 1560 and destroyed by fire in 1918.

There is only space to mention a few other timbered houses ; Harrington Hall, situated on the dingle of that name near Chirbury; and Boscobel the exact date of which is unknown. It was here that Charles II took refuge during the day in the Boscobel Oak, and spent the night in the hiding-place in the house. The oak now marked by a tablet is said to have been grown from an acorn of the original tree. In the house one of the bedrooms has a door in the panelling leading to a secret chamber. In the floor is a small trap-door giving access to a stair hidden in the massive chimney breast, by means of which a fugitive could reach the garden and so escape pursuit. On a mound in the garden stands a summer house in which the King is supposed to have passed the following day. Other half-timbered houses are Wycherley, Petsey, Cherrington Manor, Claverley Rectory, and Broughton Hall near Yorton.

Turning to houses of stone and brick, Benthall Hall, beautiful in its position near the northern extremity of Wenlock Edge, and in its structure, was erected about 1580. Plaish Hall is also an Elizabethan building, with fine chimneys said to have been erected for Judge Leighton by a prisoner who assured him that they would always remain unique. It was in Elizabethan times that the greatest amount of building was done ; Stanwardine (1560) built of brick and stone, Shipton (1589), and Conover (1590) a building of exceptionally fine design. To these must be added High Ercall, built of red sandstone in 1608 ; Moreton Corbet Castle, an ambitious building erected (but never finished), by a supporter of the Parliamentarians, and seriously damaged by the Royalists in 1644 ; Preston Brockhurst, Longden-upon-Tern, Ludstone near Claverley, and Whitton Court. Cound Hall and Hampton Hall are examples of Queen Anne style, and Kinlet Hall is Georgian.

Tong Castle, like Clun, is on a site whose history dates back to Saxon times, but the present building was mainly erected in the 18th century in Moorish style. At the park lodge which gives on to the main road, is a summer-house on the boundary wall erected apparently to watch the coaches go by on the road to the north.

The smaller houses and cottages are often extremely picturesque. The older ones are usually built of timber with plaster or brick, and often carry their date marked on them. In the districts where stone is easily obtained as in parts of the Northern Plain, about the Caradoc district, and in the south, one of the sandstones is generally used, and some of the villages, particularly Clive and Grinshill, are almost entirely built of this material. But clay in some form is so widely distributed that brick-making has been easy and bricks are commonly used, particularly in the coalfields. Here the architecture of both churches and houses is of a somewhat depressing character and its beauty is not enhanced by the iron plates and rods required to tie the- buildings together in consequence of collapse of the ground following mining operations.

In the Trias country at a few spots on the Northern Plain, and about Bridgnorth, caves excavated in the soft rock are inhabited and small buildings are generally annexed to them.

A few words may be said here about the schools of the county. The Grammar School of Ludlow is probably one of the oldest in the kingdom, dating back to at least the 14th century ; Bridgnorth followed, and Oswestry, founded in 1404, was the first school entirely free from a religious house. Wellington Grammar School does not appear to have been carried on long, but Whitchurch, endowed in 1550, is still at work.

Shrewsbury School received a Charter from Edward VI in 1551-2, and sprang to the first rank under Ashton in 1561, at whose request Queen Elizabeth made grants to the School. After a period of decline Samuel Butler, appointed in 1798, raised the numbers to 300. In 1882 the School was moved from the old building in Castle Gates to a fine site, at Kingsland where the original structure has had many important additions made to it. Other Schools founded in the 16th century include Market Drayton and Shifnal, the latter

now extinct. In the 17th century Schools were founded at Worfield, Donnington, Wem, Newport (which however existed in the 16th century), High Ercall, and Whittington, the two last no longer existing. Of later date are the Woodard School of St. Oswald at Ellesmere, and the Priory County Secondary School at Shrewsbury.

Richard Baxter endeavoured to establish a University for Wales in Shropshire but was unable to effect his purpose. A provincial University was however started in the later 17th century by John Woodhouse at Sheriff Hales, and carried on for twenty years on ambitious lines.

17. Great Salopians.

Many men distinguished in their lives have been born in Shropshire or closely identified with the county. Beginning with men of action Roger de Montgomery, the commander of William's right wing at Senlac, claims the prominent place. Talbot, who afterwards became Earl of Shrewsbury was born at Whitchurch in 1373. He fought for Henry VI in France against Joan of Arc, and his name was so much feared that the mere rumour of his approach caused the French to raise the siege of Bordeaux. The memory of this "Scourge of France" is enshrined in Shakespeare's play. He was finally defeated and slain at Chatillon and his body was brought to Whitchurch for burial. Sir Francis Ottley was the mainstay of the Royalist Party in the county as Colonel Mytton was of the Parliamentarians.

Admiral Benbow was born in Shrewsbury about 1653, in a house that still stands. He served in the merchant service and carried on what would now be called privateering, received an appointment in the navy, and, after fighting the French in the Channel, was sent to command a fleet in the West Indies, where he was eventually wounded and died in 1702.

Robert Clive, born at Styche Hall near Market Drayton in 1725 entered the service of the East India Company at a critical time in its history. It was largely through his military talents that India was won for England against the French, whom he defeated at Plassy. He is commemorated by a statue erected in front of the old market hall at Shrewsbury Rowland, first Lord Hill of Hawkstone, born in 1772, became one of Wellington's most distinguished generals. He fought in the Peninsular War, and commanded the brigade which destroyed the Old Guard of Napoleon at Waterloo.

The column at the top of the Abbey Foregate was erected in 1816 to commemorate his achievements, and it bears his statue on its summit. Sir Herbert Edwardes, born at Frodesley Rectory 1819, did excellent service in India by twice defeating the ruler of Multan and capturing his city, while he was charged with securing the neutrality of the Amir of Afghanistan during the Mutiny.

It is stated that no less than 24 Salopians served as Lord Mayors of London between 1512 and 1632. Of these the first was Sir Roger Atcherley of Stanwardine. Later came Sir

Rowland Hill (1550) whose statue stands on a column finely situated in Hawkstone Park. He was the first Lord Mayor to profess the reformed faith. John Boydell (1790) was born at Stanton-on-Hine-Heath, and by practising the art of engraving made a considerable fortune which he devoted to an attempt to produce a monumental edition of Shakespeare's works. It is thought probable that Sir Richard Whittington, (Dick Whittington) was a native of the county.

Many Shropshire men have attained high positions in the law. Sir Robert Brooke who built Madeley Court, was Speaker of the House of Commons and Chief Justice of Common Pleas from 1554 1558. Thomas Owen, another Judge of Common Pleas about 1590 was a descendant of the builder of Owen's Mansion in Shrewsbury, and himself built one of our finest houses, Condover Hall. Judge Jeffreys, though not a Shropshire man, was educated at Shrewsbury School, visited the county, and took the title of Baron of Wem. Sir T. Hanmer was Speaker of the House of Commons in the 18th century.

Of eminent ecclesiastics and divines we may mention Robert of Shrewsbury, bishop of Bangor in the 13th century ; Ralph of Shrewsbury, bishop of Bath and Wells in 1329 ; Rowland Lee who was not only bishop of Coventry and Lichfield but as Lord President of the Marches brought them into order in the 16th century ; and Samuel Butler, who revived Shrewsbury School in the 18th century, and afterwards became bishop of Lichfield. Robert Burnell, born at Acton Burnell in the beginning of the 13th century became Chancellor and friend of Edward I. who probably owed much to his influence : He was made bishop of Bath and Wells and did much for his native village and church. Richard Baxter was a famous Nonconformist divine associated with High Ercall, Bridgnorth, and Eaton Constantine, in the 17th century. Dr. Bray 1658=1730 was founder of the Societies for the Propagation of the Gospel and for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge. John Fletcher was an eminent rector of Madeley in the 18th century ; he was a friend of Wesley, who made a study of his life. Thomas Percy, bishop of Dromore, and author of the " Reliques of Ancient English Poetry " founded on a manuscript said to have been discovered in a house in Shifnal, was born in 1729 in the beautiful timbered house on the Cart way, in Bridgnorth. Bishop Heber was for a time rector of Hodnet in the early part of the 19th century.

Of artists, poets, and musicians the county has produced a fair number. Dr. Charles Burney, father of Fanny Burney (Madame d'Arblay) and author of the " History of Music " and of books of travel, was born in 1726 at Shrewsbury. Salopians cherish the fact that part of "Hudibras" was written by Butler, in Ludlow Castle. Of native poets there are William Langland, author of " The Vision of Piers Plowman " (1332) born at Cleobury Mortimer, John Audelay (1430), Thomas Churchyard (1520) the author of more than 60 volumes of verse and prose, and Lord Herbert of Cherbury, in turn soldier, statesman, poet, and philosopher, born at Eyton-on-Severn in 1583. William Wycherley, a dramatist of the first rank who attracted the patronage of both Charles II and James II, was born near Shrewsbury about 1640 and later owned the Clive estate. Tom Brown, a brilliant writer, was born near Shifnal in 1663 and was buried in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey. Ambrose Philips, poet and friend of Addison and Steele, was born at Shrewsbury ;

but he is chiefly famous for Pope's ridicule of him. The art of painting is represented by William Owen (1769) the portrait painter, Edward Pryce Owen (1788), Sir Wyke Bayliss (1835), and John Randall (1810) ; and that of acting by Tarleton, the Elizabethan comedian, and Betty the " Young Roscius." Matthew Webb the swimmer of the English Channel was born at Dawley in 1848. The county also claims the Fair Rosamond, Dick Whittington, the original Robin Hood (Fulke Fitzwarine of Whittington), and the education of Sir Philip Sidney at Shrewsbury.

The chronicler, Ordericus Vitalis, was baptised at Atcham in 1075. Other historians were Francis Plowden, 1749, and Sir Archibald Alison, born in 1792 at Kenley. The industrial development of the county owed much to three generations of Darbys, to the great ironmaster Wilkinson, and to Hazledine who built the Menai Bridge. Of its scientific men the county has good reason to be proud. The list includes Beddoes the chemist, Brown, Withering, Leighton, Babington and Phillips, the botanists, Eyton the antiquary, Wright the excavator of Uriconium, Beckwith and Eyton the ornithologists, Houghton the author of " British Freshwater Fishes," George Maw the great traveller and botanist, associate of Sir Joseph Hooker, and J. D. La Touche the geologist. The county can nearly claim Prestwich, who sprang from a Shropshire stock and wrote the best description of the geology of the Coalbrookdale Coalfield ; while the great engineer Telford was closely identified with the county.

Finally there is Charles Darwin, born at the Mount, Shrewsbury, and educated at Shrewsbury School and Christ's College, Cambridge, whose service for the science of the eighteenth century equalled that of Newton for his century. His great work on the " Origin of Species " may claim to have co-ordinated and explained the facts which it had taken a hundred years to collect in the domain of biology and geology, to have given a new inspiration to the work which followed its publication, and to have revolutionised man's outlook upon matters scientific, religious, and social. A fine statue has been erected to his memory in front of his old School ; and in Westminster Abbey there is no nobler memorial than that expressed by the two words " Charles Darwin."

CHAPTER V.

POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY OF SHROPSHIRE.

18. Communications.

The communications of a county are the lines along which passengers, supplies, power, and news are conveyed into it from outside, or from place to place within it. They follow as a rule the shortest, easiest, and cheapest directions ; or rather, in each case, they are a compromise between these three factors. They will therefore depend upon

(1) the relative situation of places as shown on a map ;

(2) the relief of the surface and character of the country between them, i.e. the obstacles or facilities presented by it ;

(3) the material of the soil and rock beneath it in relation to such engineering work as may be required.

A line of communication consists of two parts, the route or direction, and the transit medium whether road, water, rail, pipe, or wire.

The most obvious routes are the river valleys whether the loads are carried on land or water. Rivers may be swift and dangerous, or slack and winding and thus wasteful of time ; their valleys are closed in by watersheds, their floors are often marshy and liable to floods, tributaries and the winding current require bridging, or the valley walls may be too steep to hold a road or railway. It may be necessary to cross watersheds even when they are important hills, to bridge wide streams, to lay causeways over marsh or morass, to cut or even tunnel through abrupt slopes : But the route will be carefully selected beforehand to avoid as much as possible these expensive expedients. Thus the routes will generally be in intimate relationship to the surface relief.

Waterways, whether rivers or canals, have the closest dependence on relief, and for this reason canals are in Shropshire practically confined, with one exception, to the Northern Plain. For the level water surface must follow the devious course of a contour line, only occasionally shortened by cuttings or tunnels through minor spurs and by embankments or aqueducts across valleys. Chains of locks must be constructed where a watershed or a slope has to be dealt with and this requires the storage of large quantities of water at the highest level to make good that lost when the locks are opened.

Roads are much more independent, as they can ascend slopes with a gradient of 1 in 4, though main roads should never exceed 1 in 15. They can also make sharp bends, and deal with natural difficulties cheaply and easily. Heavy engineering work such as tunnelling is, however, unsuitable because, since the abolition of toll-gates, roads (with one exception) make no direct charge on the traffic, as canals and railways do. Roads should of course be free from the disadvantages due to flooding and to damage by frost, landslips, and torrents.

Railways, carrying swift traffic, while utilising for the most part the natural communication lines, must have routes with gentle curves and low gradients, and, for the sake of their passengers and perishable goods, must take the shortest cuts possible, even at the expense of great engineering works which are paid for by the tolls charged on traffic.

In many cases the same route may be occupied by two or more transit media. The route of Watling Street through the county corresponds with that taken by the Great Western Railway. It is accompanied throughout by telegraph lines and in part by the Shrewsbury canal. An inspection of the map will give many other examples. In every case bridges are one of the great sources of expense, both in construction and maintenance. For this reason narrow crossings are chosen at places where they can accommodate several traffic lines. These " bridge-places " become points of great geographical importance,

especially on a large river. The Severn is crossed by 11 bridges carrying roads, by 5 railway and 2 or 3 foot-bridges. Bridgnorth is the lowest road-bridge in the county and Montford the highest ; there are 3 at Shrewsbury, the English and Welsh bridges being the old ones, one at Atcham, an old trestle-bridge at Cressage now re-built , and 4 in or near the Gorge, one being at Buildwas, 2 at Ironbridge, and one at Coalport. The roads, as the oldest communications, although ruled by geographical factors still in operation, often bear traces of conditions partly or wholly obsolete. One of these conditions was the work of conquest and occupation of a hostile country. The chief and boldest road constructors were the Romans, who, while not neglecting strategic points, or encountering needless obstacles, swept their roads along straight routes over hill and dale so as to be able to move troops from point to point in the quickest and most effective fashion. They guarded against surprise by clearing timber away from the sides of the roads, and for defence relied upon frequent garrisons and the military traffic which constantly patrolled the road. A second condition was the occurrence of civil war, raiding, brigandage, and high- way robbery, the effects of which may be seen in the fact that many main roads traverse observation heights and ridges, while avoiding forests and points of ambush.

On the other hand minor roads and lanes are tortuous and difficult as they formed lines of retreat to places of refuge or concealment. A third condition was the existence of physical obstacles such as forests, marshes, and steep or rocky slopes, which have been overcome by improved engineering methods. The study of Shropshire roads is rendered much easier when the influence, greater in the past but still serious, of two especially great obstacles is understood. First the Severn Gorge with its steep walls, its swift river, its maze of dingles, its heavy covering of forest, and its overhang by the Wrekin and Wenlock Edge : These facts made it practically impenetrable and to this day there is no road along the valley from Coalport to Bridgnorth or south of the river from Ironbridge to Cressage, while there is practically no road to Linley Station on the Severn Valley Railway. The second difficulty was presented by the flats, marshes, and flood-plains of the rivers of the Northern Plain. For instance no roads cross the Perry flats and marshes.

Unfortunately we do not know the dates of the different Roman roads, and whether they were built for conquest or occupation. From the fact that Ostorius Scapula drove back the Silures about the lower Severn before defeating Caractacus it is likely that he came into the county by the south and probably pushed north from Bridgnorth avoiding the river gorge but being compelled to overcome another great natural obstacle in Wenlock Edge. The skill with which the Watling Street gets on to high and safe ground within a mile or two of Uriconium, avoids the Gorge by passing north of the Wrekin, crosses the Coalfield along almost its best route, and then pushes due east across the Midland Plain to near Penkrige (Pennocrucium), makes it highly probable that this portion was constructed from west to east. The course of this road is easily traced on the maps. Uriconium was a ford and perhaps a bridge and a natural centre from which roads ran north to Chester and west into North Wales. The exact courses of these are lost. A road now also called Watling Street ran south through Church Stretton to Caerleon, the course of which is well known.

Of the other probable Roman roads there is space only to mention that from Weston-under-Lizard northward to Whitchurch and Chester by the Longford, and that southward to Chesterton ; that which leads by the " Devil's Causeway " and a Roman bridge to Rushbury and Wall and then over Wenlock Edge by the " Roman Bank " to Corve Dale, Nordy Bank Camp, and probably southward ; and the road over Wenlock Edge to Bridgnorth probably the one discovered and improved by Henry I in his surprise attack upon Robert de Belesme at Shrewsbury. Whether the Portway along the Longmynd and the summit road of the Long Mountain are Roman or earlier is not known ; the roads too by which the Romans carried their lead are lost or merged into modern ones.

When Telford constructed his great coach-road from London to Holyhead he naturally brought it through Birmingham and Wolverhampton and, by passing through Shifnal, he found a better route through the Coalfield than the Roman one : He joined the Watling Street near Ketley and followed it nearly to Uriconium. Here he branched off to Shrewsbury and Whittington and left the county by crossing the River Ceiriog at Chirk. This is typical of the roads of the Northern Plain ; they branch out from Shrewsbury, Wellington, and Newport, and, avoiding such obstacles as Nesscliffe, Pimhill, Grinshill, and Hawkstone, reach the towns of Oswestry, Ellesmere, Whitchurch, and Market Drayton. These roads make use of the stream-routes through the sandstone hills, while they avoid marshes like those of the Perry and Roden, Whixall Moss, and the Weald Moors.

In the Upland the dependence on physical features is more obvious. The run of the hard rocks, the ridges, and the longitudinal valleys, all give the county a " grain " trending N.E. and S.W., and it is rarely that important roads cross the grain. To get from Molverley to Church Stretton along anything like a straight line is impossible, and it is almost equally difficult to get from Church Stretton to Cleobury Mortimer. But the south-westerly roads make use of the easy gradients of the valleys and the still more important low watersheds.

Thus from Shrewsbury we have the Welshpool road through the Westbury gap, the Chirbury road through the Rea and Marton gap, the Bishop's Castle road through the Shelve and Marsh Pool gap, and the Ludlow road through the Church Stretton valley and down the River Onny. From Buildwas (Ironbridge and Wellington) a hilly road climbs the steep Farley Dingle to Much Wenlock and then slips down Corve Dale to Craven Arms and Ludlow.

Some watersheds are much more difficult to cross. The direct road from Shrewsbury to Bishop's Castle on the west flank of the Longmynd reaches 1,149 feet above sea-level, and that from Wenlock to Church Stretton attains 867 feet on Wenlock Edge and then dips gradually down the escarpment. The road from Ludlow to Bridgnorth between the Clee Hills reaches over 1,000 feet and that to Cleobury Mortimer and Wyre Forest 1,249 feet, besides which both of them have to cross the innumerable deep-cut dingles of the lower Severn system. There are roads down the Severn to the Gorge, but they cling to the valley walls out of reach of floods ; that on the south climbing up the steep face of

Wenlock Edge, while that on the north squeezes through the Gorge as far as Coalport, and then takes to the hills to descend again at Bridgnorth for Kidderminster, keeping well back from the river. It is the only road which has not to face an exceptionally steep climb out of the valley at Bridgnorth. The Coalfield is traversed by the Watling Street and Holyhead roads, and by main roads from Wellington to Ironbridge and to Bridgnorth, but there is of course a network of minor roads.

The roads radiate out from towns most of which owe their sites to other causes, but some, like Shifnal, Hodnet, and Craven Arms, are important primarily because natural routes converge upon them ; while to Wellington, Much Wenlock, Ellesmere, Shrewsbury, and Newport, the convergence of roads has added considerable value.

The Severn is the chief river which has served as a waterway but it never was a convenient one. Where its current is slack it swings into innumerable bends, and where it is straight the water is swift and so shallow that barges were transported only with difficulty : Sails, towing by teams of men, and, at the fords, by windlasses, were the chief means of propulsion. Telford's scheme to render it more easily navigable was defeated by vested interests and now the barge traffic has practically died out.

The canal system is not very extensive and is mainly confined to the Northern Plain and the Peninsula. The chief canal is the Shropshire Union which was designed by Telford, but its branches carry different names. By means of the system it is possible to pass from the Severn south of Welshpool to the Dee near Llangollen, to the Weaver on the Mersey System, to the Tern, Trent, and Stour, and so back to the Severn again through a junction with the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal. There are tunnels and long cuttings and much engineering ingenuity was employed in their construction. The canals run at a height of about 300 feet but the Shrewsbury branch drops to 180 feet by locks near Berwick Maviston where it also tunnels for about half a mile. The chief chains of locks are outside the county but there is a group north of Adderley where the canal rises about 60 feet. In the Coalfield about Coalport, Stirchley, and Lilleshall there are inclined planes where the barges were lifted from 120 to 200 feet above the sea in wheeled carriers.

The canals were constructed when heavy goods traffic had congested the roads and seriously hampered the fast coach traffic. The canals furnished relief, but traffic along them was slow if cheap. Consequently when railways came and carried goods quickly as well as cheaply it was thought that canals would be but little wanted in future and the railways were allowed to purchase them and even to occupy their routes, thus eliminating a possible rival, and destroying a system which would have again become of great importance now that the railways in their turn are congested. In the extreme south of the county runs a part of the aqueduct carrying water from the Rhayader reservoirs to Birmingham, and the Lake Vyrnwy aqueduct touches Oswestry on its way to Liverpool.

When the main traffic was carried on the roads it was discovered that stone rails laid on the hills both eased the heavy traffic and economised the wear of the roads. Grooved iron rails, the next stage, were used earlier in Shropshire than elsewhere, and then

followed raised rails and flanged wheels. Later came the discovery of steam traction, and railways rapidly displaced the use of both roads and canals.

The principal railway in the county is the Great Western which enters near Albrighton, passes through Wellington and Shrewsbury (where the London and North Western has running powers on it), and goes across the Plain through Whittington, whence (giving off a branch to Oswestry) it proceeds to Chirk and Birkenhead. Two branches are given off at Wellington, one northward to Market Drayton and Nantwich, and one traversing the Coalfield to Coalbrookdale, where it receives a small loop from Shifnal, crosses the Severn at the entrance of the Gorge, and runs along Wenlock Edge to Craven Arms. From Shrewsbury the Severn Valley Railway keeps to the right bank of the river all through the county. It has a route of great difficulty and it was considered no small engineering feat on the part of Brunel to carry the line through the Gorge where it clings to the steep valley wall partly on a platform cut out of the rock and partly on viaduct buttresses built up from the river.

Several lines are worked jointly by the Great Western and the London and North Western Companies. The two Companies' lines join at Whitchurch, proceed to Shrewsbury and run on through the Stretton Valley to Craven Arms and so to Ludlow and Hereford. From Shrewsbury another joint line runs to Westbury and Welshpool, giving off a branch to Minsterley, via Pontesbury, whence runs a mineral line to Snailbeach. The L. & N.W. Line from Stafford skirts the N.W. border of the Coalfield to Wellington where it gives off a branch that descends to the Severn Valley at Coalport.

The Cambrian Railway runs from Whitchurch to Ellesmere, giving off a branch to Wrexham, and thence to Oswestry and Welshpool. Branches leave Oswestry and Llanymynech for the Berwyn valleys. The North Staffordshire Railway runs from Market Drayton to Woore and Stoke-on-Trent. An old railway, long derelict, joining Shrewsbury with Llanymynech and the Breidden has been re-opened, and a short line from Craven Arms to Bishop's Castle, which has had a chequered career, is still running. There is a light railway on the Southern Plateau from Ditton Priors through Stottesden to Cleobury Mortimer where it joins the Great Western Railway in the Teme Valley. Only a few miles of the latter lie in Shropshire. Finally there are the mineral railways of the Clee quarries, and the coalfields.

The main railways are between 200 and 300 feet above the sea but the Market Drayton line falls below 170 and the Severn Valley below 120. On the other hand the line from Coalbrookdale to Craven Arms reaches 500 feet in the Coalfield, drops to 200 to cross the Severn and rises again to 700 feet at Presthope where it traverses Wenlock Edge in a tunnel and descends steeply into Ape Dale. The gradients are so steep and the curves so sharp on this line that specially short goods engines are used for working it. The joint line reaches 600 feet at Church Stretton and the Welshpool line passes over a summit of 450 feet.

It will be seen that 8 railroads branch out from Shrewsbury, 6 from Wellington, 5 from Craven Arms and Oswestry, 4 from Whitchurch and Buildwas, and 3 from Ellesmere, Market Drayton, Ludlow, Shifnal, and Cleobury Mortimer. Craven Arms with its coaching inn, of some note as a road junction, is growing rapidly in importance as a railway centre, but Buildwas has made no progress, and the railway has robbed Shifnal of the importance of its position on Telford's road. The Coalfield is reached or traversed by 6 lines belonging to two Companies and is the best served part of the county, numerous colliery and works branches feeding the lines. Some of the stone and lime quarries have their own lines but outside the Coalfield most of the service-traffic is carried on the roads. The only points more than 6 miles from a railway occur near Bettws-y-Crwyn in the S.W. and near Claverley to the east : A good many places are as much as 4 miles, and the nearest stations are not in all cases the easiest to reach because of the " grain " of the county.

19. Origin of the Chief Towns.

A small number of village settlements in a county are destined, through various causes, to grow into important towns or cities. There are several causes of such growth.

1. Fortress towns, chosen for their strong strategic positions by some chieftain requiring protection for his family and his wealth.

2. Market towns, with good access and exit so that they are convenient for the collection of commodities produced in the neighbourhood, easily approached by farmers with flocks, herds, or crops to sell, a good meeting point for sellers and buyers to bargain, and a good centre for sending produce to distant places.

3. Industrial towns, on sites where raw materials for manufacture are obtained, where labour can live and industries thrive, and the goods produced be disposed of. These towns are of two kinds :

- (a) Those on the mineral fields where the population is engaged in winning the mineral wealth or in manufacturing goods from it :

- (b) Those in which the employers of labour reside, with those who trade in the goods produced and those who carry on manufactures which require the combination of several materials, some of them possibly not local, and call for the application of skilled work. Such towns are generally near but not actually on the mineral fields.

4. Traffic towns, which grow up at points where routes converge so that they have access to many places in surrounding districts. The convergence is likely to occur at bridge heads, passes or gaps, junctions of diverse physical features, etc. Here handling, sorting, and storage of goods takes place, and there thus arises a convenient centre for selling and buying, for " dressing," improvement, and adaptation of goods, and for making and dealing in vehicles and power for conveyance.

5. Ecclesiastical, collegiate, judicial, or recreative centres.

Although instances might be given of towns which belong mainly to one or other of these categories such as Gibraltar, Ellesmere, Horsehay, Wolverhampton, Craven Arms, Exeter, Cambridge, or Church Stretton, the majority of Shropshire towns combine two or more of these features, and Shrewsbury, Wellington, Ludlow, and Oswestry several of them.

Certain requirements must be fulfilled in the case of every town or else growth is impossible. It must be fed by a large area of agricultural land or by easy transport from elsewhere ; it must have water and building material ; and it must be able through land-holding, agriculture, manufacture, trade, or transport, to pay for its necessities and luxuries. The site must be healthy, agreeable, and safe, the climate tolerable, and the soil good and fertile. In Shropshire these conditions can generally be found, though water has often proved a difficulty. In early settlements local wells sufficed, but as a community grows its waste products contaminate the water and measures must be taken to obtain a good supply.

Turning first to industrial towns, the more typical cluster on the Coalfields, and the large output of the Coalbrookdale coalfield is sufficiently varied to feed many kinds of manufactures. Hence this area is practically one large industrial town made of many units merging into one another. But a coalfield is never a pleasant place to live in on account of its waste heaps, smoke, and water, and so towns without these disadvantages grew up on its borders such as Wellington, Newport, and Shifnal.

In market towns another law has established itself which may be called the ten mile rule. The farmer must be able to reach his market town easily, do his business there, attend his " ordinary," and drive home in safety before dark. His cattle, sheep, and pigs, must reach the market early and in good condition, his milk must be in time for trains to the distributing centres, his butter and eggs must be in good time for purchasers. The road and not the railway as a rule carries him and his produce to market. Hence we may expect that those centres which have grown naturally into market towns will be distributed about the county at average distances of from 10 15 miles apart, and intervening centres will be to some extent starved. The distance will tend to be longer in flat and easy country, a little less in hilly and difficult country. Moreover each of the main physical divisions of the county is likely to have its own set of market towns, and in many cases those near the border may serve more than one physical division or one county. Thus we have Oswestry, Ellesmere, Whitchurch, Wem, Market Drayton, Shrewsbury, Wellington, Newport, serving the Northern ; Bridgnorth, and Shifnal the Eastern Plain ; Much Wenlock, Craven Arms, Ludlow and Cleobury Mortimer, the Southern Plateau ; and Bishop's Castle, Clun, and Church Stretton the Hills. On the borders we have Nantwich, Stafford, Wolverhampton, Stourbridge, Kidderminster, Bewdley.Tenbury, Knighton, Montgomery, and Welshpool.

Our chief fortress towns are Ludlow, Shrewsbury, Bridgnorth, Oswestry, Bishop's Castle, and Clun, but of these only the first three have been both strong in site and important in strategic position. When attacked they have made a good defence and have been able to resist or obtain honourable terms of surrender. Bishop's Castle has been strong in itself but not of vital importance, Clun and Oswestry were important in position but weak in site.

Of the traffic towns pure and simple Craven Arms is the best example, but even here market conditions very naturally have been added. Wellington is a radiant point but it is also a market and an industrial town, while Shrewsbury is a traffic town, a fortress, a market, and to some extent it is also industrial. Oswestry again has added its traffic influence to its market, its defensive position, and its industrial relation to the North Wales Coalfield.

Ecclesiastical centres have sometimes grown up in the shelter of retirement or in association with judicial or military protection. An abbey and churches at Shrewsbury and Much Wenlock have added to the other causes of their importance but they have left Buildwas, Lilleshall, and Bromfield mere villages. Judicial functions and scholastic institutions are more generally the consequence than the cause of growth. The Court of the Marches, however, contributed much to the growth of Ludlow and Shrewsbury ; and the schools of Shrewsbury, Oswestry, Newport, Bridgnorth, and Ludlow, have not been without their geographical influence.

Finally for permanent residence or holiday resort a position among beautiful scenery, with fine air, and with facilities for hunting, fishing, shooting, golf, or other sport at hand, offers attractions which may cause the origin of new towns or the growth of others already established. No better example could be chosen than the market town of Church Stretton, the population of which has grown from 816 in 1901 to 1,455 in 1911.

20. Administration.

In Saxon times the landowner (the earl or the holder under him) ruled, administered justice, and kept order. But the freemen of the settlements and towns met to discuss their wants and to present their grievances for redress. They elected a head-man or reeve, made town-rules or " by-laws," and appointed a tithing man or constable to ensure that they were carried out. A similar and larger council or " moot " was formed by the " hundreds," meeting less frequently. It was through the latter that the method of taxation was arranged.

At the time of Domesday there were 15 hundreds, including Lenteurde (Leintwardine) and Witentreu, parts of which are now outside the county. All of these except two, Conover and Overs, are now lost, and their names have all disappeared with the exception of Recordin (Wrockwardine), Sciropesberie, Odenet (Hodnet), and Baschurch. The very irregular distribution and boundaries were re-arranged, probably under the

direction of Henry I, and since then there has been little change. The names now stand as follows :

In the Northern Plain, Oswestry, Pimhill, North Bradford, Albrighton ;

In the Peninsula and its vicinity, South Bradford ;

In the Eastern Plain, Brimstree ;

In the Hills, Ford, Conover, Chirbury, Clun, Purslow (and part of Munslow) ;

In the Southern Plateau, Munslow, Stottesden, and Overs.

The Welsh boundary was denned by Rowland Lee in 1537, and Ellesmere, Oswestry, Chirbury, and Clun were assigned to Shropshire. Later changes include the transfer of Halesowen to Worcestershire, and Sheriff Hales and Ludford to Salop. When the shires were established a principal officer, the earl or ealdorman, was appointed as the ruler of the county under the King, and the King likewise appointed a shire reeve or " sheriff " to act as his executive officer for all government business and administration in the shire. The chief court was the " shire-moot " which met twice a year, to administer justice and transact business. Crime as such was not recognised ; but injury to property or person was avenged, up to the 12th century by the family, town, or tribe, later by the hundreds, and last by the county. Compensation even for murder took the form of a fine. Thus the administration of justice was a complex affair as there were so many wheels within wheels, and the establishment of any satisfactory system meant the destruction of privileges and the suppression of minor courts. The first step was taken by Henry II who abolished the barons' private courts and laid the foundation of Assizes and the Jury system.

The administration of justice is now carried on as follows. The two chief officers of the county are the Lord Lieutenant and the High Sheriff, both appointed by the Crown. The highest Court of Justice is the Assize, held at Shrewsbury, and presided over by the Judges of the Oxford Circuit. There are 19 Petty Sessional divisions presided over by local magistrates, who also meet at the Court of Quarter Sessions in the larger towns, but in Shrewsbury this Court is held by the Recorder. There are also County Courts presided over by a Judge, held at various towns, for settling civil actions and the recovery of debts.

The successor of the " Shire-moot " is the modern County Council, which meets at Shrewsbury and consists of 68 councillors elected for 3 years, out of whom 17 aldermen are selected by co-option. This body has charge of roads, rivers and bridges, reformatories and asylums, coroners' courts, and education ; and it has the power of levying rates. There is no town large enough to form a county borough, but there are 6 Boroughs ruled by mayor and corporation, 8 Urban District Councils, and 17 Rural District Councils. In addition to this there are Parish Councils. For Poor Law purposes the county is divided into 15 Unions which correspond vaguely to the Hundreds, but are centred

round the more important of the modern towns. The Hundreds themselves have only one function left. The members of each Hundred are jointly "liable for damage done by rioters to the property of any owner within it."

When the Saxons accepted Christianity the Church had a strong organisation and a system of Government which has changed but little. The dioceses of Lichfield and Hereford, both in the province of Canterbury, divide the county between them, but a few parishes in the west are in the diocese of St. Asaph. There are two archdeaconries, that of Salop under Lichfield and of Ludlow under Hereford. The former is subdivided under 9, and the latter under 10 rural deans. Within these come the 289 ecclesiastical parishes accepted as the basis of the civil parishes, of which there are 267. Some of these are unusually large, for example, Ellesmere over 21,000 acres, Clun over 20,000, Oswestry over 16,000, and Whitchurch over 14,000.

Many religious orders were represented in the county : Shrewsbury was a very important Benedictine abbey, Wenlock a Cluniac priory, Alberbury a Grand-montine priory, Buildwas was Cistercian, Haughmond, Lilleshall, Wombridge, Chirbury, and Ratlinghope belonged to the Austin Canons, and there were Friars at Shrewsbury, Ludlow and elsewhere. Several churches such as Battlefield, Newport, and Tong were collegiate, as the larger Saxon churches had been.

Education is in the hands of the Education Committees formed by, and in part out of, District and Parish Councils. These take charge of the primary education, and in many cases also of secondary and technical education by arrangement with the County Council. The latter, however, has charge of the rest of the secondary and technical education of the county, and indeed supervises and controls the whole of it by means of its grants of money.

The county now returns four members to Parliament, one for each county division, Oswestry, Shrewsbury, Wrekin, and Ludlow ; but it is not many years ago that the boroughs of Much Wenlock, Bridgnorth, and Ludlow had members of their own, and the borough of Shrewsbury has only just lost its member. Shropshire may also be said to be represented in the House of Lords by 6 peers who have residences in the county.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TOPOGRAPHY OF SHROPSHIRE.

21. The Chief Towns and Villages.

Following the name of towns or villages the Domesday (D), or Anglo-Saxon (A.S), or other early (E), name, and the derivation of the name, are given in brackets. The number of the population at the 1911 census follows, and then, in brackets, the number of inhabitants per square mile. The letters added in brackets refer to the physical division of the county served by the place. (N = Northern Plain, E= Eastern Plain, B= Peninsula or Coalfield, H=

Upland, P= Southern Plateau, CClun Forest). The figures at the end of each paragraph refer to pages in the text on which illustrations or further data are given.

Acton Burnell ; (A.S. Ac-tune = oak town) 246 (91) (H), 8 miles from Shrewsbury and 7 from Much Wenlock. The church, with the exception of the tower, is typically Early English, built by Robert Burnell, bishop of Bath and Wells at the end of the 12th century. Its lancet windows are grouped and placed under single hood mouldings (See fig. 76). As the openings between some of the lights are pierced we have here the beginning of plate tracery. Near the Church stand the ruins of the Castle in which the Lords of the Parliament of 1283 assembled. Here there are also ruins which are probably those of the old hall, but they are commonly supposed to be the barn in which the Commons met on the same occasion. Through Ruckley, and over Chatwall Edge runs the " Devil's Causeway," paved with great stone slabs for nearly half a mile and crossing the stream by a bridge which is undoubtedly of Roman work. This is the line of a Roman Road running from Uriconium to Rushbury and probably on to Nordy Bank. A spring on the hill known as " Frog's Well " is enclosed with stone-work which probably is also Roman.

Alberbury ; (D. Alberberie) 758. (60) (N), 9 miles west of Shrewsbury, has a church with Norman and Early English work, a saddle-back tower and an interesting triangular Decorated window : It adjoins the ruins of the Castle of the Fitzwarines. White Abbey (Grand- montine) ,on the Severn bank to the N.E., is now a farm house. Rowton, on the site of the old castle, claims to be the Roman Rutunium, a claim disputed by Ruyton- XI-Towns.

Albrighton ; (by Shifnal, called Auberton) (D. Albricstone=Ealdbricht's 'tun) 1076 (213) (E.), 5 miles S.E. of Shifnal ; a village which was a borough till 1834. The church tower is Transition Norman to Early English and the chancel Decorated, but most of the rest of the fabric was rebuilt in the 13th century. The " Shrewsbury Arms " and " Crown " Inns are interesting buildings, the latter half-timbered.

Albrighton near Shrewsbury (Aiberton) is a picturesque village near Hadnall.

Atcham ; (AS. Eatan-ing-ham=home of Eatan family) 363 (80) (H.N.), a village 4 miles from Shrewsbury, is important as the centre of Atcham Union. Most of the church is Norman and Transitional. Ordericus Vitalis, the chronicler and son of Roger de Montgomery's chaplain was baptised at Atcham Church. The Severn here was bridged before 1221 but this bridge was replaced by Sir Rowland Hill and the present one dates from 1768.

Baschurch ; (D. Bascherche) 1601 (166) (N), 9 miles from Ellesmere and 8 from Shrewsbury. The village possesses a church in which there is late Norman work though rebuilding took place in the 18th century ; it has a chained bible. North of the village is the Berth, a high mound in a marsh the only approach to which was a winding causeway which would be invisible when submerged. It is thought to have been an island dwelling or crannog of neolithic or bronze age, similar to those frequently met with in Ireland.

Battlefield ; 105 (64) (N), a small village 3 miles north of Shrewsbury where Henry IV. won the battle of Shrewsbury in 1403. The church was built on the site of the battlefield by the King and by Roger Ive, rector of Albright Hussey. It is Perpendicular, the tower being later than the rest of the fabric, and it was collegiate with 6 chaplains. A very perfect moat exists at Harlescote House.

Bettws-y-Crwyn ; (Bede-house of the skins) 381 (27) (C), in Clun Forest, near the head of the river, and 7 miles from Clun, is the highest village in the county being 1400 feet above the sea. The church is Early English with a carved oak screen of the 15th century. There are several encampments in the parish.

Bishop's Castle ; 1409 (960) (H.C), one of the 6 corporate boroughs remaining in the county ; 20 miles from Shrewsbury and 6 from Clun. Its charter dates from 1572 but the Castle was the possession of the Bishops of Hereford in the 8th century when it was called Lydbury Castle. The steep streets rise abruptly from the flats of the river Kemp. The church with the exception of the tower was rebuilt in 1860, and the Castle has disappeared, but there are relics of the " Bishop's Moat " to the west, and parts of the castle of Lea are built into a farm house to the east. The Bishops' estates amounted to 18,000 acres but the manor was appropriated by Queen Elizabeth. There are markets and stock fairs which are of great importance from the quality of the cattle and sheep bred in the valleys of the Onny and Camlad, and of the Kemp and other tributaries of the Clun river.

Bitterley ; (D. Buterlie) 1090 (91) (P), a village and extensive parish lying under the Titterstone Clee, 4 miles from Ludlow. The church is chiefly Transition Norman with a font which is probably Saxon, a fine oak chest, and a half-timbered bell turret with interesting bells. In the churchyard is a very fine and well preserved 14th century cross. The Grammar School, founded in 1712 is no longer in existence. In the parish are dhu-stone quarries served by a mineral railway, and there is a camp at the " Giant's Chair " on Titterstone.

Boscobel ; (Bosco bello) 13 (14) (E), 6 miles east of Shifnal is chiefly famous as the hiding place of Charles II. White Ladies was a Cistercian convent in 1185 and was dissolved in 1538. A part of its Norman church is all that survives.

Bridgnorth ; (Brug ; either north bridge or Bruggemorfe, referring to the Forest) 5603 (1300) (P.E), is a market town on the Severn 20 miles from Shrewsbury. It is a municipal borough possessing a charter dated 1157 though this is believed not to be the earliest granted to the town. It is situated on a high red sandstone rock bounded by the Severn and by a small stream, so that the approach from all sides involves steep ascents and descents or, in the case of the railway, a tunnel. On the rock de Belesme built a castle which he soon had to surrender to Henry I. The castle has been several times attacked and taken, and it was finally destroyed, with the exception of part of the keep now leaning at a dangerous angle, by the Parliamentarians in the middle of the 17th century. A " Low Town " has grown at the foot of the cliff and on the left bank of the Severn which

is here crossed by a bridge, the successor of others dating back probably to Saxon times. The name possibly refers to the former existence of another bridge at Quatford to the south. Steep roads, staircases cut into the rock, and a cliff railway connect the two parts of the town. Many of the houses built against the cliff have chambers or cellars in the rock and there are other rock houses in the cliffs on the opposite side of the river at the Hermitage and the High Rock. The latter contains a small cave, the "tailor's hole," of which the usual story is told. The handsome red sandstone church of St. Leonard was rebuilt after the old model in 1860 and has a valuable divinity library bequeathed by Dean Stackhouse. St. Mary's Church near the Castle is a classical building erected by Telford. Round it and the Castle there is a beautiful terrace walk. There are many old houses in the town several of them half-timbered, including Bishop Percy's house in the Cartway. The Grammar School is an ancient foundation with an old boarding house and new school buildings. The Town Hall was burnt during the Civil War and the present one was built with the materials of a barn brought from Wenlock. A small part of the walls and the north gate are still standing. The chief industries of the town are now carpet weaving, the dyeing of worsted, and malting, but formerly lace, caps, and stockings were made, and there was boat-building and gun-making. The town was also a rival to Shrewsbury in the cloth and hide trades. The borough formerly returned two members to Parliament and gave rise to a local saying "all one side like a Bridgnorth election"; but it lost one member in 1867 and the other in 1885. A large disc-shaped mound called "Pan Pudding Hill" exists close to the town at Oldbury, which probably derived its name from it. It has been identified with the castle built by Ethelfleda the daughter of Alfred the Great, to repress the Danes. A handsome modern mansion stands in Apley Park, up the Severn, with a very fine broad drive along Apley Terrace.

Bromfield ; (D. Brunfelde) 539 (60) (P), on the Teme 3 miles from Ludlow, has a church which was once collegiate and was mentioned in Domesday. It contains work of all styles from Norman to Perpendicular and has a painted chancel ceiling. The archway of the gatehouse of the Priory remains, with a later half-timbered story over it. There are seven tumuli on the Ludlow race-course in which bones and cinerary urns have been found and, in one case, a bronze spear head.

Broseley ; (D. Bosle ; 12 th cent. Burwardsley, Burhweard's ley) 3663 (1177) (P.B.) a town standing high above the Severn, on the south bank 4 miles from Much Wenlock and 6 from Bridgnorth. It was once of considerable importance for its collieries and iron furnaces, among them the works of the famous and original ironmaster Wilkinson : Now the chief industries are the manufacture of bricks and tiles, earthenware, and clay pipes. Encaustic tiles are chiefly made at Jackfield, on the Severn, now a separate ecclesiastical parish. The church, built in 1845 is in the Perpendicular style. Benthall Hall is a beautiful Tudor building, and Willey Hall a large Georgian mansion.

Buildwas (pp. 83, 144, 203).

Cardington ; (D. Cardintune) 587 (58) (H), a village somewhat difficult of approach, among the Stretton Hills and 4 miles from Church Stretton. Much of the church is Early

English but restored. The " Royal Oak " is one of the oldest licensed houses in England. Plaish Hall is a beautiful brick building of the 16th century. Holt Preen, now a farm house, is of the same date, while Chatwall is dated 1543.

Chirbury ; (Cyricbyrig, D. Cireberie) 1125 (64) (H), a village on the Montgomeryshire border near the river Camlad, 4 miles from Montgomery and 18 from Shrewsbury, on the west flank of the Shelve country. The fine church is all that is left of a house of the Austin Canons. It possesses some Norman work but is mainly Early English with Decorated tower, and a small brick chancel. There is a valuable chained library at the vicarage. The " King's Orchard " marks the site of Ethelfleda's castle of the 10th century. Marrington Hall above the dingle of the same name is a very beautiful half-timbered Elizabethan house. The Royalists were defeated in a battle between Chirbury and Montgomery. Barytes has been mined at Wotherton.

Church Stretton ; (D. Stratun=town on Roman road) 1455 (928) (H), a market and union town 12 miles from Shrewsbury and 15 from Ludlow, situated on the watershed of a longitudinal valley between the Longmynd and the Caradoc Range, and on the Watling Street (Caerleon road) from which it takes its name. It has long been a health resort and has recently become important as a residential centre. The church contains Norman work, and Transitional arches, but it shows much 15th century insertion, and has been restored. There are camps and numerous barrows on the Longmynd, and camps at Castle Hill and Brockhurst Castle, used probably by Britons, Romans, and Angles in turn. There is a golf course on the Longmynd, across which the steep Burway is the only road, while the Portway, a British or Roman trackway runs at right angles to it along the summit of the plateau. The traffic over this moor was once conducted entirely on horseback but wheeled vehicles are now often seen. On Caradoc and elsewhere on the associated hills there are British camps. Ponies run on the Longmynd and are sold at an annual fair in the autumn. The excellent water supply is employed for making mineral waters at Cwmdale. The Carding Mill is no longer used for its original purpose. Above it there is a waterfall known as the Light Spout.

Claverley ; (D. Claverlege= clover pasture) 1363 (106) (E), is a village and extensive parish 6 miles east of Bridgnorth and 10 from Wolverhampton. The church was founded and built by Roger de Montgomery and the nave arches of his building and a good font remain. There is much Decorated and Perpendicular work, including the upper part of the tower. The old vicarage, one of the earliest half-timbered houses in the county, stands near the church. There are traces of encampments and pit dwellings on Abbot's Castle Hill on the county boundary. Ludstone Hall is a fine moated Jacobean brick building.

Cleobury Mortimer ; (D. Claiberie=burh ori Clee) 1531 (130) (P), has been a market town since 1226 and was named from Ralph de Mortimer (1086). It is 14 miles from Bridgnorth and n from Ludlow and is a typical agricultural town, of importance from its nearness to the Forest of Wyre coalfield and the stone and coal area of the Titterstone Clee. The church has a Transitional Norman Tower, with a twisted wooden spire, from which the curfew is still rung. The castle of the Mortimers was destroyed by Henry II as a hotbed of

rebellion. The College, founded as a boys' School in 1740 is now a secondary school under the Board of Education. Langland is said to have been born here. At one time iron was made near Cleobury and Leland writes " There be some Bio Shopps to make Yren apou the Ripes or Bankes of Mylbroke, comynge out of Caderton Clee or Casset Wood".

Clun ; (D. Clune ; probably Celtic like Clon-mel) 1873 (59) (C), though once much larger is still a very large parish in Clun Forest, the town being beautifully situated in the centre of a rich agricultural district. It is a market town 6 miles from Broome station on the L. & N.W. Railway, 29 miles from Shrewsbury and 6 from Bishop's Castle. It received a charter from Edward II but ceased to be a borough in 1886. Though largely rebuilt many portions of the church are very fine, especially the late Norman arches, the fortress-tower, parts of the roof, and the lych-gate or " scallange." The castle, of which a massive tower remains, was built by Robert (Picot) de Say about 1070, probably near or on the site of a Saxon stronghold. The bridge over the Clun is a curiously narrow and irregular structure. The Hospital of the Holy Trinity was founded in 1614 by an Earl of Northampton for 12 old men. The Forest, partly enclosed in 1875, was evidently a most desirable district for it is protected by numerous camps, Gaer Ditches, Coxwall Knoll, Castle Ditches, Radnor Wood, Bury Ditches, and a very fine stretch of Offa's Dyke. Many neolithic implements have been found in the district and on Pen-y-wern Hill are relics of a stone circle.

Conover ; (D. Conondovre = upper confluence) 1765 (145) (H.N) a village mentioned by the same name in the Domesday Book. The north transept of the church is Norman, the south has a half-timber storey. The Hall, one of the finest Elizabethan stone buildings in the country, was erected by Judge Owen about 1590.

Craven Arms. See Stokesay.

Dawley ; (D. Dalelie) 7701 (1790) (B), including Dawley Magna, Dawley Parva, Horsehay, and Malins Lee, is a parish containing several of the industrial towns of the Coalfield. It is 4 miles from Wellington. The present church was erected in 1845, but contains a Norman font. The town has a monument erected to Matthew Webb the Channel swimmer. The coalfield yields ironstone, coal, and clay, and there are extensive iron and steel works manufacturing bridges and girders at Horsehay, and also drainpipe factories.

Diddlebury or Delbury ; (D. Corf an) (690) (49) (P), a village in Corve Dale 8 miles from Ludlow, has a church with walling and a window probably of Saxon work. It contains examples of almost every British style. At Bouldon there was an iron furnace in the 17th century. Broncroft Castle has been converted into a modern residence, but of Corfham Castle, connected with the Fair Rosamond, nothing but earthworks and moat remain.

Drayton in Hales or Market Drayton ; (D. Draitune=town of the drag net ?) 5761 (473) (N), a market town on a high bank overlooking the upper waters of the Tern near the N.E. border of the county and with easy access to the Weaver valley, 19 miles from Shrewsbury and 16 from Wellington. The market for cattle and cheese was granted by Henry III and a manorial courtleet is still held here, while the fairs are opened in state by

the steward of the manor. A special court of " pie-powder " (pied-pouldre) is held to deal with disputes arising at such times. The church is finely situated above the Tern but it now shows little Transition Norman work having been " improved " in 1786 and restored in 1884 mainly in the Decorated style. The Grammar School was founded and endowed by Sir Rowland Hill, Lord Mayor of London, in 1558, and among its most distinguished pupils it reckons Lord Clive. The industry of hair-weaving has diminished but there are breweries and manufactures of agricultural implements. Blore Heath is just east of the town.

Edgmond ; (D. Edmendune= Edmund's hill) 913 {140} (N), 2 miles from Newport, has a good Decorated church with a Saxon or early Norman font, and a rectory with 14th century hall and chapel. The Harper Adams Agricultural College is situated in the parish.

Edstaston. See Wem.

Ellesmere ; (D. Ellesmeles= Ella's Mere) 1946 (1024) (N), 8 miles from Oswestry and 16 from Shrewsbury. An agricultural centre with fairs and markets for cattle, sheep, and dairy produce. It was once a centre of stocking manufacture. The Castle, of which nothing but a mound remains, was given by King John to Llewellyn. The finely placed church has been much restored but contains some Norman and Perpendicular work, with a fine altar tomb. In the Town Hall are the collections of the Natural History and Field Club including a canoe dug out of Whittal Moss. The fine mere is overlooked by Oteley Park which has been a deer-park since Elizabethan times. There are several large meres, and a host of smaller ones occur in the county to the E. and N.E. The Shropshire Union Canal passes to the south of the town and the Cambrian Railway has a station to the north. Within a mile or two of Ellesmere is situated St. Oswald's College one of the Woodard Secondary Schools.

Ercall Magna or High Ercall ; (D. Archelou and still called " Arkel ") 1672 (91) (N), the centre of some of the best farm land in Shropshire, is 7 miles from Shrewsbury and 5 from Wellington. The church contains Transitional Norman work, but the exterior is mostly of 17th century date. The Hall of red stone and brick is a finely preserved structure built in 1608, which held out stoutly for the King, surrendering only in 1646 after all other Shropshire Castles except Ludlow and Bridgnorth had been taken. A Grammar School was founded in 1663 but is no longer in existence. At Roden is the very fine farm of the Co-operative Wholesale Society.

Hadley ; (D. Hatlege=heath lea) 3108 (800) (B), a parish formed in 1858 from Wellington from which it is 1 mile. In it are situated the iron and steel works of the Shropshire Iron Company and of the Haybridge Iron Company, and there are also tileries, chemical works, and a steel wheel manufactory.

Great Hanwood ; (D. Hanewde) 358 (600) (H.N.), a village 3 1 miles from Shrewsbury. The coal-mines in and near Hanwood give the name of the town to this -coalfield. Its modern church possesses a Norman font.

Highley or Higley ; (D. Hugelei) 1489 (600) (P), a village on the right bank of the Severn 7 miles from Bridgnorth. Its Early English church has been restored. The recent development of a colliery has largely increased the population, and a new branch of the Severn Valley railway has been constructed to carry the coal.

Hodnet ; (D. Odenet=Odo's heath) 1524 (106) (N), a charming village 13 miles from Shrewsbury and 6 from Market Drayton. The church, of which Bishop Heber was rector from 1807 to 1823, is chiefly Decorated, with a fine octagonal tower and a good oak roof. In the interior is a desk with chained books. The hall is a picturesque modern building. The moat of the old castle is still visible, and at Bury Walls, S. of Hawkstone Park, there is a magnificent camp, probably British as bronze weapons have been found here, but also occupied by the Romans. Hawkstone park is very beautiful with irregular wooded sandstone hills scattered among its grass lawns. The highest hill bears on its summit a column with a figure of Sir Rowland Hill, Lord Mayor of London in 1549. Of Red Castle a few fragments of walls and towers remain. The stocks still stand in the village of Weston. Petsey is a good half-timbered building.

Holgate ; (D. Stantune) 85 (44) (P), a village in a commanding position on the east side of Corve Dale, 13 miles from Ludlow, has the remains of one of the four Shropshire castles mentioned in Domesday, built into a farm house. This was erected by Helgot, spoken of as an obscure Norman chief, but evidently one with a good eye for a country. He probably re-built the church, which has a fine Norman doorway and a font of the same date. There is a high tumulus near the church. The village to this day gives a picture of what a Norman settlement was like.

Horsehay. See Dawley.

Kinlet ; (D. Chinlete) 536 (41) (P), 10 miles S. of Bridgnorth, is situated on high ground at the edge of the Forest of Wyre. The church is early Norman with later Decorated work and one of the finest canopied tombs in the country. The park is very large and contains a fine Georgian house and a large camp, " Wall Town," probably British.

Lilleshall ; (D. Linleshelle=Lilla's hill) 2969 (320) (B), 3 miles from Newport, a village grouped about a hogback of Pre-Cambrian rock, crowned by an obelisk erected to the first Duke of Sutherland (See fig. 15). The church is Norman and Early English with a late Perpendicular tower ; and, a mile away, are the ruins of the once splendid abbey founded for the Augustinians in the middle of the 12th century, of which a fine door and windows survived the Parliamentary siege. In Donnington machinery for gas works is manufactured, and the Lilleshall Company has collieries in the parish. The Carboniferous Limestone industry once very important has practically died out. Lilleshall Hall, formerly the residence of the Duke of Sutherland, is a handsome modern building.

Llanymynech ; (place or church of the monks) 577, (25) (H), a village situated on the edge of the Welsh hills 6 miles from Oswestry. The Carboniferous Limestone is now extensively

quarried, and it is probable that the Romans mined for copper at Ogo's Hole, as skeletons, tools, and coins of Antoninus have been found there. A cromlech used to stand on the hill and parts of Offa's Dyke and Wat's Dyke exist in the parish.

Ludlow ; (anciently Lude) 5926 (9024) (H.P), like Chester, Shrewsbury, and Stratford-on-Avon is much visited by American and other travellers. It is a municipal borough and a market and union town, 27 miles from Shrewsbury, contained within a crook formed by the Teme below its confluence with the Corve, and falling steeply towards these rivers. On this peninsula the Castle occupies a most commanding position, parts of it rising from sheer cliffs. The lofty church tower standing behind this makes an impressive picture, which, however, is somewhat spoilt by the modern buildings of the town. The castle was founded about 1085 by Roger de Lacy and, later, passed into the possession of Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, and so to his descendant King Edward IV. The town was much favoured by the Yorkist kings ; Edward IV gave it two representatives in Parliament, and confirmed its charters, and Edward V. was born and proclaimed here. The eldest son of Henry VII, Prince Arthur, resided in the Castle. The town is full of beautiful half-timbered buildings among which the " Feathers " and " Angel " Hotels, the old " Bell " Inn (of Ludford), the Reader's House, the Castle Lodge and other houses near the Castle Gates, stand prominent. The Bull Inn has beautiful panelling. The church is of great size and interest, with Early English, Decorated, and Perpendicular work, beautiful carved oak, some good old glass, and fine tombs. Of the town walls, one gateway and a part abutting on the Castle remain. Ludlow was often attacked but the strength of its position enabled it to offer strong resistance and it was the last Shropshire fortress to yield to the Parliamentarians. Many relics of the Council of the Marches remain, including Sidney's buildings and the Comus Hall in the Castle. The strongest President appears to have been Rowland Lee, who, though in office only for 10 years, was able to say that "in the Marches and in Wales in the wild parts where I have been is order and quiet such as is now in England." In addition to this work he also carried out the shiring of Wales. The town lost one of its members of parliament in 1867 and was merged into the Southern Division of the county in 1885. There are markets for corn and the district is a centre for Hereford cattle. Ludlow was once a rival to Shrewsbury in the dressing and sale of cloth and was also famous for its smith work. Now it has few industries except those connected with agriculture and the sale of " dhu stone " brought down from the Clee Hills by a mineral railway. The museum contains fine collections of fossils and of British birds, and a relief model of part of the county. The Grammar School, one of the oldest foundations in England, due to the Palmer's Guild, is a 14th century stone building.

Lydbury North ; (D. Lideberie, hlith=a slope) 806 (62) (C), a village 4 miles from Bishop's Castle. The church is of various dates and contains the Plowden Chapel built in 1191. The tower is Transition or Early English. The Plowden estate has been in the possession of that family since the conquest and the hall is half-timbered Elizabethan. It contains a chapel and many works of art, and is described in the introduction to " John Inglesant." Bury Ditches and Billings Ring are two important encampments in this parish.

Madeley ; (D. Madelie) 8121 (1792) (B), a large civil parish situated high above the Severn on the north of the Ironbridge Gorge, is 6 miles from Wellington. The church is classical in style and famous for Fletcher's incumbency. Both Great and North Western Railways have stations in the parish. Madeley Court, a beautiful Elizabethan brick and stone house, has fallen into ruin probably owing to undermining. Charles II took refuge in a barn here before going to Boscobel. There are extensive manufactures of iron and steel, and of bricks, tiles, and terracotta. The town of Coalbrookdale with its famous iron works associated with the Darbys and with Reynolds, is in the civil parish, as also is Coalport with its china works. The town of Ironbridge is a separate ecclesiastical parish on the north bank of the Severn Gorge, which is crossed here by the first bridge ever made of cast iron, giving the town its name. The difficulties of the town site have been met by carrying the roadways nearly parallel to the river, roughly along contours, and connecting them by stairways ; the houses are often one storey high at the back and two or three in front. There are lime, clay, and coal industries but they are not so important as they once were. Owing to the narrowness of the Gorge the houses along the " Wharfage " are at times flooded, but this has happened less frequently since the construction of the Liverpool reservoir at Lake Vyrnwy.

Market Drayton ; see Drayton.

Minsterley ; (D. Menestrelie) 747 (160) (H), once a part of Westbury but separated in 1690 when the church was built. Its chief feature is a number of " maiden garlands " suspended at the western end. The village is on the Rea 10 miles from Shrewsbury with which it is connected by a branch railway. Its importance has dwindled as the lead mining of the Shelve area has decayed, but it still grinds and sells barytes.

Morville ; (D. Membrefeld ? referring to Morfe Forest) 377 (64) (P), 3 miles from Bridgnorth, has a church with a fine chancel arch and much other Norman work dating to 1118. There are curious oak chests one of which is hollowed out of a solid log. The church was once collegiate and later was a cell of Shrewsbury Abbey. The Hall now occupies the site of the Priory. Aldenham Hall, formerly the seat of Lord Acton, is in the parish. Upton Cressett has also a church with a fine Norman chancel arch, and a Hall, dated 1580, with a beautiful gate-house in which Prince Rupert is said to have slept.

Much Wenlock ; (D. Wenlock=gwen Hoc either a pleasant hollow or a white hill) 2148 (134) (H.P.B.), is a borough and market town 12 miles from Shrewsbury and S from Bridgnorth, situated in a hollow near the north end of Wenlock Edge and accessible only over steep hills from every side. It probably owes its origin to the fact that the direct road from Bridgnorth to Shrewsbury crossed Wenlock Edge at this point. It is first heard of as the site of St. Milburga's nunnery in the 7th century. The convent was destroyed by the Danes in the 8th century, restored by Lady Godiva, wife of Earl Leofric, as a college for priests, and again restored as a Cluniac Priory by Roger de Montgomery in 1080. Of the Priory church the west end with its beautiful triforium and clerestory, the southern and part of the northern transepts survive, and there is also left the very fine chapter house and infirmary. The 15th century Prior's Lodge has been converted into a dwelling. The

town received charters from Henry III and Richard I and was made a borough by Edward IV, a privilege confirmed by Henry VIII and Charles I. The parish church shows all styles from its Norman tower and chancel arch to its Perpendicular windows. The Guildhall has fine oak panelling and an inscription of the date 1589 : Hie locus odit, amat, punit, custodit, honorat, nequitiam, pacem, crimina, jura, probos. Here are also the stocks and remains of the whipping post. There are many interesting houses in the town and neighbourhood, several half-timbered, and one inn traces its license for 3 centuries. The borough originally returned two members to Parliament but in 1885 its representation was merged into that of the county. The " Audience Meadow " in front of Tickwood Hall is said to have been the meeting place of Charles I and the Shropshire landowners. Tilting at the ring is practised at the Olympic games originated by Dr. Brookes. A hospital was founded in 1903 in memory of the third Lord Forester. Barrow, in the borough of Wenlock has a church with early Norman and Saxon work.

Munslow ; (D. Estune ?) 485 (106) (P), one of the most important Corve Dale villages giving its name to the hundred and containing the old Hundred House now the " Crown " inn. It is 7 miles from Craven Arms. The church is mainly Early English though there is some Norman and some Decorated work, the latter including the tower and a beautiful porch. The public elementary school is endowed and is situated in the old manor house of the Lyttletons. A moated half-timbered house exists at Thonglands.

Myddle ; (D. Mulleht) 744 (106) (N), a village situated on a group of sandstone hills 8 miles from Shrewsbury. The church, originally Norman, was mainly rebuilt in 1746 and once possessed chained books. Of the castle but few relics are left, a turret, a portion of an outer wall, and the moat.

Newport ; (E. Newborough) 3250 (2707) (N.E.B.), a market and union town formerly giving its name to a parliamentary division of the county, 17 miles from Shrewsbury and 8 from Wellington. It was founded by Henry I, received charters from Henry II and Edward I and was incorporated until 1885. The original church was founded before 1138 but the present is a handsome structure which was practically rebuilt late in the 8th century. The tower, however, is 15th century. The town is situated in a fertile country and has an important market for corn and cattle, while its prosperity is in part due to the neighbourhood of the Coalfield. The Grammar School was founded by W. Adams of the Haberdashers' Company in 1656, and shortly after this date the town was burnt down. The Tibberton paper mills are now closed.

Oakengates ; 11744 (3200) (B), a town the urban district of which comprises Prior's Lee, St. George's, Wombridge, and Wrockwardine Wood. It includes the junction of the Watling Street with the Holyhead Road, and the town is 3 miles from Wellington. It is probably Uxacona, and a Roman hypocaust was found here in 1797. Leland states that " coles be digged hard by Ombridge [Wombridge] where the priory was " giving evidence of coal working in the 16th century. The Priory belonged to the Austin Canons and was founded by Fitz Alan of dun, The Prior's ownership has given its name to Prior's Lee. Malins Lee chapel is a Norman building now in ruins. In the parish there are some of the

mines of coal, iron, and fireclay, the iron and steel works, rolling mills, and brick works of the Lilleshall Company.

Oswestry ; (D. Meresberie=Maesbury=open plain) 999 1 (339 2) (H), a borough and market town on the northern part of the Welsh border of the county, 18 miles from Shrewsbury, is a railway centre and well situated with regard to the valleys proceeding from the Berwyn Mountains. It is just off the main Holyhead road, a loop passing through the town. Its situation with reference to the Marches made it a centre of strife, and it was twice burnt by the Welsh leaders and once by King John. Its name, Oswald's Tree, or Oswald's Cross, commemorates a battle at " Maserfeld " between Oswald, King of Northumbria, and Penda, the ruler of Mercia, in which the former was slain. The heavily fortified encampment of " Old Oswestry " gives evidence of earlier struggles and it has been suggested by Wright that it might be the site of the Roman Mediolanum between Rutunium and Bovium on the way to Deva (Chester). Offa's Dyke and Wat s Dyke are both well marked near the town. The Castle was more than once the headquarters of attacks on Wales, and Richard II adjourned a Parliament from Shrewsbury to Oswestry : It was taken by the Roundheads in 1644 and demolished by them, so that little now remains. The church also suffered, but parts of its tower and nave are Decorated and a part Perpendicular. The first charter was granted by Richard II Some traces of the walls remain but the gates were demolished in 1873. The Grammar School is the oldest free school in the county but its present buildings date from the 18th and 19th centuries. There is a Science and Art School, and a museum in the Guildhall. Cattle and horse markets are important, and the chief industries are iron and brass founding, agricultural implement making, malting, brewing, and wool stapling. The Cambrian Railway has its headquarters in the town and builds engines and carriages here. Close by the town are the filter beds of the Lake Vyrnwy water works of the Liverpool Corporation.

Pontesbury ; (A.S. Posentes byrig=Posent's burh) 2690 (160) (H), a large parish commanding the Rea valley, 7 miles S.W. of Shrewsbury, now mainly agricultural but once associated with the mineral industry of Shelve and with lead smelting works. It includes Pontesford Hill with its large camp, and extends into the plain to the north. Here was fought in 661 a battle between the Kings of Wessex and Mercia. The church with the exception of the Decorated chancel was rebuilt in 1829, and was originally collegiate, the resi- dence of the chief of the three rectors being still known as the Deanery. At the Lea a Roman pavement was dis- covered and there is a moat at the half-timbered Moat Hall.

Prees ; (D. Pres=a thicket) 1866 (118) (N), a village situated upon the great outlier of Lias of N.E. Shropshire and close to the small patch of Middle Lias Marlstone. It is 5 miles from Whitchurch and 14 from Shrewsbury.

Quatford ; (Coed) 165 (213) (E), a prettily situated village on the Severn 2 miles from Bridgnorth on the Kidderminster Road. Roger de Montgomery endowed a collegiate church here on the spot where he met his second wife on her way from France, but the establish- ment was removed to St. Mary's, Bridgnorth. The church contains some Norman work but there was much later rebuilding. A Danish camp and " Danesford " are

relics of a temporary settlement of Danes at " Quadrage." Certain land in the parish is held by the Corporation of London on condition of paying to the King yearly a hatchet and billhook of approved quality.

Ratlinghope ; (D. Rotelingshope) 198 (23) (H), called Ratchup, is a secluded village, very difficult of access, in a recess in the heart of the Longmynd just off the Bishop's Castle road, 12 miles from Shrewsbury and 4 from Church Stretton. No trace remains of the priory of Austin Canons once situated here, for the Church bears date 1625. Several camps exist in the neighbourhood one of them being Castle Ring.

Rushbury ; (D. Riseberie) 576 (64) (H), a village 4! miles east of Church Stretton and just under Wenlock Edge competes with Leintwardine for recognition as the Roman Bravinium. Wall is included in the parish, and a road up Wenlock Edge is known as Roman Bank ; along its course are other places with names suggesting a Roman origin, such as Hungerford and Upper Stanway. The church contains Norman and Perpendicular work, with very good carved oak. A small piece of Roman masonry is inserted in a wall of the nave in which there is a Saxon doorway. Lutwyche Hall is an Elizabethan house somewhat modernised. The Ditches on Moggp Forest is a circular camp.

Ruyton-of-the-Eleven-Towns ; (D. Ruitone = ? rhiw a hill slope) 934 (130) (N), a considerable village, the most important on the River Perry, is 9 miles from Oswestry and 10 from Shrewsbury, where the river cuts a gorge through the prolongation of Nesscliffe. It is so called from the eleven townships which formed the manor, five of which are now in West Felton. It was a borough from 1309 till 1886. Part of the church is Norman and the rest, including a massive tower, Perpendicular, but of the castle little remains. It claims to be the Roman Rutunium, a claim disputed by Rowton near Alberbury.

Selattyn ; 997 (118) (H), 3 miles from Oswestry on the fringe of the western hills and the Northern Plain. Dr. Sacheverell was rector of the parish early in the 18th century. A tumulus at Gorsedd Wen is said to be the tomb of one of the sons of Llywarch Hen. Castell Brogyntyn is a circular earthwork, and Brogyntyn House is the seat of Lord Harlech.

Sheriff Hales ; (D. Halas=slopes) 744 (91) (E), a village 3 miles from Shifnal, formerly partly in Staffordshire but assigned to Shropshire in 1895. Part of the church was built of stone brought from Lilleshall Abbey. The half-timbered manor house near the church was the site of Woodhouse's Academy or provincial University from 1675 to 1696.

Shifnal ; (D. Iteshall) 3436 (185) (E.B), originally called Idsall or Idesall, an union town with a cattle market and annual cattle fair, 10 miles from Bridgnorth and 8 from Wellington. At one time an important coaching station on the Holyhead road, it declined in importance with the advance of the railway. The church has a striking Early English central tower supported on fine arches, and the chancel arch is late Norman. There is also Decorated and Perpendicular work, and a parvise exists over the south porch and part of the aisle. There are several interesting tombs. A fine moated mound occurs south

of the vicarage. There are several good timbered houses in the town in one of which Percy is said to have found the manuscript on which he founded his "Reliques." The surrounding red sandstone country is fertile and celebrated for barley.

Shrewsbury ; (D. Sciropesberie) 29389 (5312) (N). The county town is centrally situated and strongly posted on a narrow-necked peninsula within a crook of the Severn towards which it slopes steeply. A larger northern crook once existed but it has been abandoned by the river. The Castle was built on the isthmus and the railway station is placed close to it. The watershed map shows a marked convergence of river basins upon the town, followed by roads and railways. The town was founded by the Angles on the site of the British Pengwern and soon became one of the most important in England. At the time of Edward the Confessor it contained 252 houses and it was recognised by Roger de Montgomery as the key to his vast district. Mr. Forrest has come to the conclusion that in the Norman period the houses were in two groups, one near the castle and within the bar formed by it and Roger de Belesme's wall, the other round the Monastery across the river. In the Plantagenet period the second town wall was built by Henry III at the foot of the river slope (1220-1252) and numerous houses, mainly of stone were built within and up to it. During the Tudor period half-timbered houses were built within the walls but they also extended along the chief exits from the town to the north, north-west, and east, and along Coleham to the S.E. Many curious street names give evidence of the history of the town. Abbey and Castle Foregates, Wyle Cop (Hill Top), Dogpole (Duck pool), Roushill, Shoplatch, and Mardol (Dairy fold), and, without the walls, Murivance and Frank well ; while the " English Bridge " (originally the Stone Bridge) on the E. and the " Welsh Bridge " on the W. record the importance of the town to the Marches. The two principal churches and the ruins of a third (St. Chad) are very fine but the rest show the work of the Renaissance builder and the restorer. The Abbey Church (Holy Cross) is mainly Norman and Decorated with a modern chancel built in Early English style. The tracery in the windows is often Perpendicular and that placed to convert the triforium openings into windows is Decorated. The very fine west window is Transitional between Decorated and Perpendicular styles. In St. Mary's Church the transepts, part of the chancel and the lower part of the tower are Norman. The nave and rest of the church are Early English, and the south chancel aisle Decorated. The upper part of the tower, and the spire which attains 222 feet, are Perpendicular. Of the old St. Chad's only the Lady Chapel and crypt remain but a round church was built near the Quarry in 1790 to take its place. Of St. Alkmund's and St. Julian's the spire and towers are the only parts of the original buildings left. The numerous half-timbered and stone mansions testify to the wealth brought to the town by its connexion with the cloth trade, and the same is shown by the town Guilds and the Drapers' Hall. At the Council House was transacted much of the business of the Council of the Marches, and before fast coaches and railways had brought London within easy approach the town was a real social and administrative capital where the county gentry had their " town houses." Nowadays most of the industries have shifted to the Coalfield or elsewhere, and the " middleman " cloth trade has declined, but the town is still an important shopping centre, and it has maltings, breweries, agricultural implement works, a tannery, and an iron foundry. There are markets for store and fat cattle, and for dairy produce, and a monthly horse fair. It has

always been famous for brawn and for cakes and ale. The houses and churches, the beauty of the town itself, its situation and surroundings, form a great attraction to visitors from Britain and abroad. The School, formerly situated in Castle Gates but moved in 1882 to the right bank of the river, occupies an exceptionally good position, has a fine range of buildings, and retains its reputation as one of the first schools in the country, not only in learning but in sports both on land and water. The town is a borough with a Mayor and Corporation and has received no less than 32 charters of which the earliest extant dates from Richard I. Though now merged into one of the County Divisions it returned two members to Parliament until 1885, and one till 1918. The assizes for the county and the quarter and petty sessions are held here. Among other buildings there are barracks, the Royal Salop Infirmary, the Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital, several almshouses and schools, and the county prison. The old School is now converted into a Free Library and Museum ; and there is a Municipal Technical School in Abbey Foregate, a County Secondary School at the Priory, and an excellent Girls' High School on the Town Walls. The Clive statue is placed in the Square, the Darwin statue in front of the Free Library, and that of Lord Hill on a conspicuous column at the top of Abbey Foregate. A beautiful public park called the " Quarry " has fine avenues of lime trees and extends round the western part of the river bend. Here is held the annual flower show, all that is left of the great trade show held annually at Kingsland from 1595 to 1878, but abolished when the School obtained the Kingsland site.

Stanton Lacy ; (D. Stantone) 673 (80) (P), on the Corve 3 miles from Ludlow is chiefly important for the Saxon work in its church, consisting of rubble masonry, "long and short " buttresses, and a round-headed doorway with a cross carved over it.

Stokesay ; (D. Stocke stockade of the Says) 1142 (180) (H), a village at a bridge on the trench of the Onny, 7 miles from Ludlow and 1 from Craven Arms. The church was rebuilt in the iyth century but there is a Norman doorway and a large and interesting canopied pew. The fortified manor house called Stokesay Castle was strengthened and " crenellated " in 1291 by Lawrence de Ludlow and though " slighted " in 1647 it is still in excellent preservation. There is a fine timbered gatehouse, a banqueting hall, and the panelled Solar or withdrawing room. Norton Camp, on the escarpment overlooking Stokesay is a very fine Roman earthwork, Craven Arms, owing to its situation, is growing in importance as a traffic and market town.

Stottesden ; (D. Stodesdone) 1006 (68) (P), a village 10 miles S.W. of Bridgnorth on the eastern shelf of the plateau, has a most interesting church with a Saxon doorway and a beautiful Decorated chancel. The font is said to be the most beautiful Norman example in England.

Tong ; (D. Tuang, A.S. set Twongan=a tongue of land) 480 (91) (E), one of the most striking villages in the county, is situated 4 miles east of Shifnal on the road from Wolverhampton to Newport. Its church is Perpendicular and has an octagonal tower and a " Golden Chapel," with beautiful fan vaulting once gilt, built in 1515 in memory of Arthur Vernon. From the profusion and beauty of its monuments the church has been

called a miniature Westminster Abbey. The church was originally collegiate and possesses a beautiful and valuable chalice. The village is said by Dickens to have suggested much of the local colour in "The Old Curiosity Shop." The castle erected in the 16th century was altered in the 18th with additions in Moorish style. Hubbal Grange is connected with the Penderels who saved Charles II at Boscobel. Tong forge was celebrated for its iron in the 17th century.

Uffington ; (D. Ofitone) 306 (64) (N), 3 miles from Shrewsbury, is a parish containing Haughmond Hill and the Abbey of the same name, founded for the Austin Canons by Fitz Alan about 1135. Of this wealthy establishment extensive ruins remain.

Wellington ; (D. Walitone=town of the Wellings) 7820 (7104) (B.N), an important and rapidly growing manufacturing and market town n miles from Shrewsbury, close under the Wrekin, and at the edge of the Northern Plain where it abuts upon the Coalfield. It manufactures agricultural implements and wood ware, has the most important fat stock market in the county, being the outlet of the rich farm land to the W. and N.W., and it is in the Wrekin parliamentary division. All Saints' Church was rebuilt in 1790 and Christ Church in 1838. The Wrekin is easily reached from Wellington along its northern ridge. At the summit there are extensive earthworks. Though the hill is covered with trees the summit is rocky. A rock-fissure on one of the summit-rocks, much worn by tourists, is known as the "Needle's Eye," and there is a hollow on another known as the "Raven's Bowl." The rocks at the north end of the hill are quarried for gravel and road metal, and to the east there are limestone quarries and coal pits.

Wem ; (D. Weme) 2273 (3200) (N), a market and union town on the R. Roden, 10 miles from Shrewsbury and 9 from Whitchurch. The charter dates from Henry III, but the town was destroyed by fire in the 15th century. The church with the exception of its 14th century tower is modern, and there is only a relic of the important fortress which was the Parliamentary centre in the county. The Grammar School, founded in the 15th century by Sir Thomas Adams, has two Careswell Exhibitions. The Ditches is an old house of 1611 and Sulton Hall dates from the 16th century. The small church of Edstaston has 3 doorways and 2 windows of exquisite Norman work.

Wenlock ; see Much Wenlock.

Westbury ; (D. Wesberie) 1115 (80) (H), is a village lying under the Long Mountain at the mouth of the Rea Valley, 12 miles from Welshpool and 8 from Shrewsbury. The church is of little interest, but on the N.E. flank of the Long Mountain was situated Caus Castle a border stronghold built by Roger Fitz Corbet of which nothing but very extensive earthworks now remain. It surrendered to the Parliament in the Civil War. There are brick works near the village.

Whitchurch ; (D. Westune, 12th cent. Blancminster) 5757 (768) (N), is the most northerly town in the county, 18 miles from Shrewsbury. It has markets for corn, butter, cheese, and cattle, and its chief industries are malting, brewing, and cheesemaking. The Castle

has entirely disappeared and the old church which fell in 1711 was replaced by a classical structure in which there is some good glass. John Talbot the great Earl of Shrewsbury is buried there, and his tomb has been recently restored. The Grammar School founded by Sir John Talbot, the rector in 1550, is now a secondary school under the Board of Education. There is a High School for girls. Whitchurch was famous for its turret clocks and many of those in the churches of the county were made here.

Whittington ; (D. Wititone = White town, E. Tre-Wen) 2354 (160) (N), a village on the main Holyhead Road 2.½ miles from Oswestry and 17 from Shrewsbury. Of the castle little remains except the two towers of the 13th century gatehouse, but much of the stonework was removed for road-making. It was defended by moats and a marsh. In Halston Park is a small half-timbered chapel of the 16th century, where Jack Mytton the hare-brained sportsman, was buried. Park Hall, one of the finest half-timbered mansions in the kingdom was destroyed by fire in 1918.

Whixall ; (D. Witchala) 1113 (213) (N), 6 miles from Whitchurch, situated near a marsh and moss from which peat for burning and litter is obtained. The Shropshire Union Canal passes through the parish.

Wistanstow ; (D. Wistaneston=Wistan's place) 907 (130) (H). 6 miles from Church Stretton on the (Caerleon) Watling Street. The Saxon church built over the remains of Wystan, grandson of a King of Mercia has disappeared, but there are 12th and 13th century work and many beautiful architectural details in the present church. There is a fortified manor house at Cheney Longville and a camp on Wart Hill Knoll.

Worfield ; (D. Wrfield from hwerf=winding river) (Wolverfield) 1544 (91) (E), a village on the Worf 4 miles N.E. of Bridgnorth. The church is mainly Decorated with some Early English work and a Perpendicular tower and graceful spire together 200 feet high. In the village are half-timbered houses and picturesque cottages At Chesterton the " Walls " is a very fine square Roman encampment covering 20 acres, protected by the steep natural banks of streams on three sides, and strongly fortified on the fourth. This was the chief Roman station on the Eastern Plain and seems to have been connected with the Watling Street by a road.

Wrockwardine ; (D. Recordin, probably connected with Wrekin) 1070 (145) (N.B.), on a hill near the Watling Street is 2 miles west of Wellington. It has an Early English and late Norman church with a Decorated tower. At Admaston is a spa with sulphurous and chalybeate water.

Wroxeter ; (D. Rochecestre) 600 (64) (H), 6 miles from Shrewsbury and on the site of the Roman Uriconium. The church shows Saxon work constructed of Roman materials, much Norman and Transition work, and a late Perpendicular tower. The font is the hollowed out base of a Roman pillar. At Eyton-on-Severn Lord Herbert of Cherbury was born. There is an ancient endowed School at Donnington, where Richard Baxter was educated.