

# VCH SHROPSHIRE

## Wem Rural

### Tilley

*by* Judith Everard and Wendy Horton

This is a draft text prepared by Dr Judith Everard and Wendy Horton for VCH Shropshire

Following on the completion of the Wem short (2019), we took the decision to work on the townships of Wem Rural especially those which fell within the manor of Wem. Now, in August 2021, we are publishing as drafts the text prepared by Dr Everard and Ms Horton.

This text will be further amended in a number of respects. It will be expanded to include more material on landholding. Subsequent versions will include maps and other illustrations. At a later stage there will also be a section on agriculture.

We welcome suggestions, corrections and additional references.

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## TILLEY

Tilley was a large township comprising most of the manor of Wem lying south of the Roden. In the Middle Ages most of the territory was wooded, with settlement and cultivation confined between the lord's woods and the river. The township's fortunes were transformed during the 16th and 17th centuries, when enclosure of the woodlands and of Wem Pool opened up large new areas of agricultural land. This period saw the (re)building of substantial farmhouses in Tilley village. The village was later bypassed by the turnpike roads and the township cut in two by the railway line. Tilley remains an agricultural community, lack of development in the modern era accounting for the survival of its extraordinary assemblage of timber-framed houses.

## LANDSCAPE, SETTLEMENT, AND BUILDINGS

### Boundaries and Township Origins

Tilley was probably included in the four-hide estate of *Weme* in Domesday Book. *Tyleweleg*' was part of the manor of Wem by 1221.<sup>1</sup> The second element of the place-name has been interpreted as Old English *lēah*, 'clearing'; however, a later usage of *lēah* as meadow/pasture typically on marshy ground would also be apt. The first element, *tylwe/tilewe*, is obscure. It resembles dialect 'tiller', 'tillow' (sapling).<sup>2</sup> The township was also known as 'Tilley and Trench' in the 19th century.<sup>3</sup> 'Trench' is Old French/Middle English 'trenche', a road through woodland where the verges were cleared for the safety of travellers,<sup>4</sup> probably referring to the Shrewsbury road (the present B5476).<sup>5</sup> Modern Trench is generally the higher ground east of the Shrewsbury road, but the medieval place-name suggests that the road ran through the *trenche*, and land on the west side of the road, even small riverside meadows on

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<sup>1</sup> [\*The Cartulary of Shrewsbury Abbey\*, ed. U. Rees. 2 vols \(Aberystwyth, 1975\), no. 400; \*The Cartulary of Shrewsbury Abbey in English Translation\*, trans. A.M. Wilson \(Marbury, 2008\), no. 400](#)[Shrewsbury Abbey cartulary: NLW, MS 7851](#).

<sup>2</sup> Gelling, *PN Salop.*, V, 253–4. For *lēah* see *ibid.*, xi–xii, 71, and see 'Wolverley'. For 'tiller', see e.g., SA, 3607/IV/A/49.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. SA, 322/2/377/61 (1809); SA, P295/B/2/ (19th-century church rate books).

<sup>4</sup> Gelling, *PN Shropshire*, V, 66, 255.

<sup>5</sup> 'Trench Lane' in 1631: Arundel map.

the far side of Tilley Park, did still pertain to the Trench estate in the 17th century.<sup>6</sup> During the 19th century, however, development of the turnpike road and the railway effectively divided Trench from the rest of Tilley.

### *Boundary*

The south west boundary followed a stream, named Billwall Brook in 1561, that rose at Upper Trench, flowed down a small wooded gully (dingle or ‘drumble’), crossed the Shrewsbury road and continued as the boundary between Tilley and Sleaf as far as its confluence with Sleaf Brook. The boundary crossed Sleaf Brook and ran around Ruewood as far as the Roden which formed the northern boundary, past Wem mill, as far as Coteman’s weir. The eastern boundary, dividing Tilley from Aston, ran south from Coteman’s weir to Palms Hill. At Wain House the boundary turned south west and followed the field boundaries of Teakins and then Upper Trench to the head of the drumble.

Ruewood is referred to, in a charter of Hugh Pantulf dated 1221, as all his woodland between Sleaf and Tilley, along the road known as ‘Rodweie’, which he gave to Shrewsbury Abbey in compensation for building a fish pond that flooded the abbey’s land in Noneley.<sup>7</sup> The inference is that ‘Rodweie wood’ lay between the two settlements and was not incorporated in either. Hugh’s successor Ralph le Botiler enclosed Tilley Park, including Ruewood, apparently leaving the monks just a parcel of land on the northern edge of Ruewood, later several closes named ‘Black Abbey’.<sup>8</sup> Land was added to Ruewood, north of the road, by the drainage of Wem Pool.<sup>9</sup>

The township comprised 1636 a. 3 r. 36 p. at the tithe apportionment.<sup>10</sup> In 1873 the portion of Tilley from Pankeymoor Villa (formerly ‘the Cross’ or ‘Big Cross’) near the railway viaduct north to Wem mill, and from the Roden in the west to farmland east of the railway, was incorporated in Wem Special Drainage District, which in 1900 became Wem Urban District.<sup>11</sup> In 1935 Wem Urban District was extended south of the 1900 boundary to take in

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<sup>6</sup> *Survey, 1561*, 54–5; Arundel map: ‘Trench Gibbons Britch’, ‘Trench Horse Hay’ and ‘Trench Billow Meadow’, and, e.g., ‘20. Trench Great Park Mead[ow]’.

<sup>7</sup> *Cartulary of Shrewsbury Abbey*, no. 400; *Cartulary of Shrewsbury Abbey in English Translation*, no. 400.

<sup>8</sup> Arundel map: ‘Black Abbie Croft’ beside the road leading into Tilley village; Tithe apportionment, lots 798, 844, 847.

<sup>9</sup> Tithe apportionment map, lots 791–7, compared with the Arundel map.

<sup>10</sup> Bagshaw, 336.

<sup>11</sup> *VCH Wem*, 140.

as much of Tilley again, including mainly farmland but also ‘Tilley Cottage’ and ‘The Larches’.<sup>12</sup>

## **Landscape and Geology**

The north and west of Tilley is of low relief, occupying the alluvial plain of Sleaf Brook and the Roden. In the south east the ground rises to Palms Hill (105–110 m. ASL) and Trench (113 m. ASL). These are the remains of the north-facing scarp of the Wem fault, which runs north east–south west through Aston and Tilley.<sup>13</sup>

The area is almost entirely covered with superficial deposits of sand, gravel, boulder clay and alluvium formed over the last two million years by glaciation, latterly the Devensian glaciation which ended about 12,000 years ago. The bedrocks are clay, marl, mudstone and siltstone of the Lias group, the lower division of the Jurassic era. Bedrock is generally not exposed in the area, hence the topography is dictated by the glacial deposits and alluvium. The soil, containing gley and alluvium,<sup>14</sup> was described in the 18th century as: gravelly between Tilley village and Wem, sandy towards Ruewood, and elsewhere ‘has a great mixture of clay’, suiting both arable and dairy farming. Clay deposits around Tilley Green were used for brickmaking.<sup>15</sup>

## **Communications**

### *Roads*

Several roads traversing the township formerly converged at Tilley village into a single road, known as ‘Goo Lane’ in the 18th century,<sup>16</sup> that led north to Wem bridge. From the east was

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<sup>12</sup> From 1873, the constitution of Wem Rural civil parish meant that the acreage of townships was no longer recorded.

<sup>13</sup> See Introduction.

<sup>14</sup> *Soils of the Wem District*, 56.

<sup>15</sup> Garbet, 338, 347. For 19th-century brickworks to the south west of Tilley Green, see below, ‘Economic History’.

<sup>16</sup> Garbet, 347.

a route from Aston ('Aston Lane' and 'Woodhouse Lane'<sup>17</sup>); a route from the south east, 'Preston Lane' in 1631, crossed Palms Hill and joined Aston Lane near Woodhouses.<sup>18</sup>

In the west, a road from Sleaf followed the north west boundary of Tilley through Ruewood. Named 'Rodweie' in 1221, it was a medieval route from Shrewsbury to Wem, via Balderton (Myddle) and Sleaf. Bypassed by the present Shrewsbury road by 1700 (see below), this road came to be used only by local traffic but it was still sufficiently important for improvements in 1809–10 to be charged to the townships of Tilley and Noneley.<sup>19</sup>

There appears to have been one route that bypassed Tilley village; the 1631 map depicts a lane connecting Aston Lane and Goo Lane. The single house on the lane (John Downton's 'Pickle End') may be identified with the present Pankeymoor cottage. Its course would have been superseded by the turnpike roads, and the part remaining in the 19th century, west of Pankeymoor, was finally cut off by the railway embankment.

The main road south to Shrewsbury appears to have existed in the Middle Ages. It was 'Trench Lane' in 1631, joining Aston Lane at Tilley Green. South beyond Tilley, by 1700 the Shrewsbury road followed its present course on the high ground.<sup>20</sup> The Wem to Harmer Hill section was turnpiked in 1756<sup>21</sup> and Preston Lane (Wem–Shawbury) was turnpiked in 1769.<sup>22</sup> The toll gate for the former was at its junction with Goo Lane, a little south of the present Tilley Lodge. The toll gate for the latter was a short distance east of Aston Lane, its original terminus.<sup>23</sup> If the Wem–Harmer Hill turnpike also initially terminated at Aston Lane, with traffic proceeding into Tilley village, it was soon realigned to approach Wem bridge more directly, passing between Tilley Green and the village. Its junction with Goo Lane was named 'Big Cross' by 1769, later 'The Cross'.<sup>24</sup> With the construction of the railway in the 1850s it was realigned to the east to join the Wem–Shawbury turnpike at the railway viaduct. This remains the junction of the B5476 and B5063 roads today.

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<sup>17</sup> Garbet, 348. See, for the rest of this paragraph, 1631 map and Garbet 347–8.

<sup>18</sup> Garbet, 348: 'Paunton Lane' for the section from Palms Hill to Aston Lane.

<sup>19</sup> Salop Quarter Sessions, Orders: III, 155, 163.

<sup>20</sup> Richard Gough, *History of Myddle* (1875), 37–8.

<sup>21</sup> Acts of 25 Geo. II, c.22; 29 Geo II, c.93.

<sup>22</sup> Acts of 8 and 9 Geo III, c.55; 51 Geo III, c.44.

<sup>23</sup> Tithe apportionment, lots 726a, 897; Reid, *Tilley*, 130–1.

<sup>24</sup> SA, 5154/2–13: deeds for 'Big Cross', Tilley; 1805 Survey, 74–5; Tithe apportionment, lots 729–32; 1881 Census, 'Tilley Cross'.

The roads were disturnpiked in 1870.<sup>25</sup> From 1878 former turnpikes were chosen to become 'main roads'. Shropshire Constabulary in 1881 judged the Wem–Shrewsbury road through Tilley as only fair.<sup>26</sup> In 1888 SCC took over the responsibility for main roads and Wem Rural District Council became responsible for other highways under the Local Government Act 1894. At the crossroads of the Shrewsbury road and Aston Lane a memorial tree was planted, with a circular bench, to commemorate the coronation of Edward VII in 1902.<sup>27</sup> Aston Lane was truncated at the Tilley end when the railway level-crossing was closed to vehicular traffic in the late 20th century.<sup>28</sup>

*Milestones:* Mid-19th-century milestones are found on the Wem to Shrewsbury and Wem to Shawbury former turnpike roads. Of painted cast iron, they have a common design with triangular cross-section and chamfered top, and writing in relief on the left and right faces. Near the junction of the two roads, on the B5476 road to Shrewsbury, is a good example reading SALOP on the top, and WHITCHURCH/9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>/MILES and SHREWSBURY/10/MILES on the faces. Adjacent to the milestone on the 1842 Tithe map is a clearly marked tollgate, but no remains survive. A mile south, close to the former New Inn, is a second example reading WEM/1/MILE and SALOP/9/MILES. A third milestone has been recorded at Palms Hill on Shawbury Road. The design is similar to those on the B5476, but the writing style is different. This example is half-buried, but an angled superscription reads WELLINGTON. A tollgate house is shown on the 1842 tithe map but no longer survives.<sup>29</sup>

### *Bridges*

Tilley bridge, at the north west end of Tilley village, crosses Sleaf Brook. It is depicted on the Arundel map of 1631. In 1870 the bridge became the responsibility of the Wem Highways Board with the county contributing to its maintenance.<sup>30</sup> The old sandstone bridge

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<sup>25</sup> SA, QA4/4/1/1; SA, P295/C/1/2, Oct. 1870.

<sup>26</sup> SA, QA/4/5/1/6.

<sup>27</sup> Reid, *Tilley*, 169, 273–5.

<sup>28</sup> Reid, *Tilley*, 152–5, describes how the closure occurred in stages from 1969 to 2001.

<sup>29</sup> Historic England, List Entry No. 1236503, including Images of England; Shropshire HER: ESA6999: Shropshire Milestone Society surveys; Wem Tithe map, 1842 (Tilley & Trench township); Reid, *Tilley*, 130.

<sup>30</sup> SA, QA3, pp. 113, 114, 121.

was removed in 1972 and replaced by a concrete bridge, positioned a little to the south in order to reduce the angle of the bend.<sup>31</sup>

Nearby, another bridge crosses the Roden at its confluence with Sleaf Brook. The double-arched bridge has stone piers and brick arches, the parapets were of brick capped with sandstone blocks. A bridge of similar design existed a short distance upstream at Honeysuckle Lane.<sup>32</sup> Only possible or needed after the reclamation of Wem Pool, these bridges were probably built by the landowners for access to the extensive farmland of the former marsh.

### *Railway*

The Shrewsbury–Crewe railway line runs northwards through the township. William Egerton Jeffreys sold much of the required land to the London and North Western Railway Company in 1857.<sup>33</sup> A viaduct was constructed for the turnpike roads to pass through the railway embankment and a bridge was constructed over the Roden.<sup>34</sup> A level crossing was installed on Aston Lane in Tilley village, where trains would stop for passengers on request. The halt/level crossing was permanently manned, with a crossing-keeper's cottage, signal box and gates. The signal box was situated in the south west side of the level crossing. The two-storey gabled structure was of brick to the ground floor and weatherboarded above, following a common style. There were two small windows under segmental heads to the ground floor and a window band above providing good visibility. It was accessed via an open timber staircase into the gable end.<sup>35</sup> The last crossing keeper retired in 1969 and the signal box was removed in 1972. Since 2001 the crossing has been accessible only to pedestrians.<sup>36</sup>

### **Population**

Tilley was assessed for the 1327 lay subsidy with just four households having property worth more than 10s.<sup>37</sup> In 1381, 14 people were assessed for the poll tax: six married couples and

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<sup>31</sup> Reid, *Tilley*, 133 (photograph of previous, stone bridge), 284.

<sup>32</sup> Reid, *Tilley*, 138, 284 (painting of the bridge in 1964, with parapets).

<sup>33</sup> SA, D3651/B/30/2/4/3.

<sup>34</sup> Reid, *Tilley*, 150.

<sup>35</sup> SA, PH/W/8/9/9.

<sup>36</sup> Reid, *Tilley*, 149–55.

<sup>37</sup> *Shropshire Lay Subsidy Roll 1327*, 144.

two single adults, representing up to eight households.<sup>38</sup> Like that of 1327, the 1525 lay subsidy taxed the well-to-do. The low number of relatively wealthy households in Tilley had hardly changed from 200 years before. Just five households in Tilley qualified, and all were assessed for goods valued at 40s. or 60s., whereas elsewhere in the manor eight households were assessed at 80s., three at 100s. and one at 200s.<sup>39</sup> The threshold for liability to the 1543 lay subsidy assessment was lower than in 1525; in Tilley township, 12 households were now liable.<sup>40</sup>

The population appears to have increased markedly during the 16th and 17th centuries. A survey of the manor in 1561 reported 17 dwellings (13 ‘messuages’ and four cottages) in Tilley, and another survey in 1589 reported up to 22 dwellings.<sup>41</sup> In 1672, 29 households were liable for hearth tax.<sup>42</sup> Additionally, around 32 per cent of households may have been exempt from hearth tax due to poverty; hence the total number of households in Tilley can be estimated at 42–43. With a multiplier of 4.5, the population can be estimated at 189–194.<sup>43</sup>

A census taken by the curate of Wem in 1800 recorded a population of 294 in Tilley township.<sup>44</sup> The population then increased rapidly to 348 in 1821, but by 1841 it had declined to 333.<sup>45</sup> In the second half of the 19th century the population slowly increased, to 351 in 1871. In 1881 the population had decreased to 232, but this was after part of the township had been incorporated, for administrative purposes, in Wem town. By the 1891 census, Tilley had lost its distinct identity for administrative purposes, becoming part of Wem Rural Parish, so comparative figures are unavailable. Whereas much of the ‘Wem Urban’ portion has become built up with residential housing since 1881, a process continuing apace in the 21st century, there has been little additional housing provision to increase the population in rural Tilley.

## Settlement

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<sup>38</sup> *Poll Taxes ... 1381*, 392.

<sup>39</sup> *Shropshire Taxes*, Table II and nos. 449–57, 465.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 31 and nos. 939, 957, 959–65, 986–88.

<sup>41</sup> *Survey 1561*, 148–59. The 1589 survey reported just four ‘messuages’ and 10 ‘cottages’, but also eight ‘tenements’ which may also represent dwellings: TNA, LR 2/225.

<sup>42</sup> *Shropshire Hearth Tax Roll of 1672*, 47–52.

<sup>43</sup> Based on the average for parishes in North Bradford hundred: *Shropshire Hearth Tax Exemptions*, Table 3. See ‘Introduction’.

<sup>44</sup> *Wem Parish Registers*, 778–9.

<sup>45</sup> National census data and analysis kindly provided by Penny Ward.



### *Prehistoric to Anglo-Saxon*

A rectangular earthwork at Trench Farm may be the remains of a Roman camp.<sup>46</sup> The earthwork is situated on a ridge above Tilley Green, overlooking the Roden valley. The site was named ‘the Castellstedes Close’ in 1561.<sup>47</sup> In the mid 18th century ‘the rampart and trench’ was still apparent on all sides – such that Garbet proposed that Trench Farm took its name from ‘the Roman Vallum’.<sup>48</sup> The earthwork has since been almost entirely destroyed by ploughing; in 1991 the remaining bank was 0.9 m. at the west corner, with faint traces of a ditch. The earthwork measured 106 m. by 54 m. The corners were rounded and the west corner had a radius of about 10 m. The 1631 map shows a house at the north-west edge of ‘Castlesteade’ close. The house has disappeared but this may account for a scatter of post-medieval brick, tile and pottery on the site. There was no earlier material and no indications of buildings within the earthwork.<sup>49</sup>

### *Medieval and Early Modern*

Settlement in medieval Tilley seems to have been limited to the surroundings of the present ‘village’, situated towards the north of the territory and slightly elevated above river level, with arable land in a limited area to the north east. The remainder of the territory was woodland or marshland. The south west comprised enclosed woodland, probably including the ‘*haia*’ of Wem mentioned in Domesday Book, later known as ‘the old park’ or Tilley Park. East of the park, Trench was also used for woodland pasture.<sup>50</sup> At the south east limits of Tilley (and the adjacent part of Aston) there is place-name evidence for late clearing and cultivation of ground that was wooded and/or boggy, and hence late definition of the township/manor/parish boundary at this point. Drepewood in Clive may be ‘disputed wood’.<sup>51</sup> The manor boundary as delineated in 1561, from the Moat House (Aston), followed a hedge ‘unto the Cliffwood’ (Clive wood) before picking up the hedge of Trench Farm.<sup>52</sup> In 1561, there were pastures here called ‘the pools’ which were the lord’s demesne in 1631,

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<sup>46</sup> Shropshire HER 01136, Trench Hall Banks; Reid, *Tilley*, 3–6.

<sup>47</sup> *Survey 1561*, 54–5; Arundel map.

<sup>48</sup> Garbet, 339.

<sup>49</sup> Site visit, 28 Jan. 1991, cited in Shropshire HER 01136.

<sup>50</sup> See above; TNA, E 149/1; *Cal. Inq.*, ii, 470 no. 774 (1290); *Cal. Inq. PM*, xxiv, 348, no. 495 (1436).

<sup>51</sup> M. Gelling, *Place-Names of Shropshire*, IV (Nottingham, 2004), 122.

<sup>52</sup> Bounds of manor and lordship of Wem surveyed in 1561, inscribed on Arundel map (1631).

indicating the former waste. By 1648, still the lord's demesne, it had been constituted into a farm called 'the Great Pooles', although part of 'the Pooles leasow' still needed improvement 'by ridding and clensing' and there were still trees to fell.<sup>53</sup> This may have been the origin of Teakins Farm, the name derived from 'the Taking'/'takings'.<sup>54</sup>

The principal settlement is Tilley village, situated at the junction of lanes from Sleaf, Aston and Wem – prior to turnpike roads, these were the principal routes between Shrewsbury and Wem. The present village is mostly west of the junction but it extended further east before construction of the railway. Although differing somewhat in size, the plots are laid out along the village street in a way that suggests deliberate planning. There were six messuages held by customary tenants by 1436, and structural timbers dated to the second half of the 15th century have been identified in two buildings.<sup>55</sup> The 1561 survey records 12 dwelling houses (messuages) of which eight were probably in the village. The 1631 map depicts 10 houses in the village, all lining the east–west street: six on the south side and four on the north side (interrupted by the road leading north to Wem).

Tilley Green, formerly also known as Trench Green, was a common 'about three quarters of a mile in compass', at the junction of Aston Lane, the Shrewsbury road ('Trench Lane' in 1631)<sup>56</sup> and the lane to Trench Farm. It was the lord's waste, where inhabitants of Tilley had the right of common grazing and the copyholders had the right to extract clay for brickmaking. William Hayward's 'Trench House' overlooked the green by 1523, and 'Green House' by 1555.<sup>57</sup> The 1631 map depicts Green House and a neighbour on Aston Lane, facing the north side of the common, while John Hayward's house in Wall Meadow<sup>58</sup> and the house at 'Trench Castlesteade' overlooked the green from the south east. By the mid 17th century, cottages were encroaching on the lord's waste at Tilley Green. In 1654, two or three of them were sold to their occupants, including a cottage and croft of 2 a. on the south side of Tilley Green sold to Thomas Yeomans, blacksmith.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> *Survey 1561*, 138–9; 'Pooes' on the Arundel map; ACA, MS 508, fo. 8r. See also Garbet, 340 on 'The Pools'.

<sup>54</sup> *Survey 1561*, 156–7; Arundel map; ACA, MS MD 59, p. 39. See below, Trench Estate.

<sup>55</sup> Reid and Nash, *Tilley Timber Project*, 54–6, 66–9.

<sup>56</sup> Garbet, 347.

<sup>57</sup> *Survey 1561*, 148–51; John Heward of Trench: TNA, LR 2/225.

<sup>58</sup> Named from the spring ('well') in the meadow which is, unusually, depicted on the Arundel map.

<sup>59</sup> ACA, MS MD 59, pp. 53 (Yeomans), 56 (Richard Worrell; Mary Greene, spinster).

There was also settlement on the Tilley side of Wem bridge. A cottage called ‘the Tan House’ is mentioned in the 1561 survey. By 1631 this seems to have been replaced by the tannery, long run by the Forgham family at the Well House, across the river in Wem.<sup>60</sup> The Mill House was built in 1659; beside the mill pool was another 17th-century house, later Tilley House.<sup>61</sup>

Individual farmsteads were distributed about the township from at least the early 16th century, including: the park house within Tilley Park, Green House, Woodhouses, Wain House (from ‘one [= isolated] house’), Trench House and Pankeymoor cottage.

Pankeymoor cottage, or its predecessor, is depicted on the 1631 map as a small house on a lane that has largely disappeared. It is probably named after the Pankeman family who lived in Tilley from at least 1660. In 1672, Arthur Pankeman paid hearth tax for a house with one hearth. The last of the family name, Thomas Pankeman of Sleaf, died in 1744.<sup>62</sup> Not themselves in the ranks of copyholders, it is possible that Pankeymoor cottage was built by one of the Pankeman family, and the unusual name remained attached to the house. The elderly tenant in 1891, Arthur Kynaston, gave his address as ‘Penkymans’, but Pankeymoor was already current by 1875.<sup>63</sup> It then became fixed by the widespread publicity of large outdoor events held at Pankeymoor from the 1880s to the 1920s.<sup>64</sup> Likewise, The Cross house was renamed Pankeymoor Villa c.1890.

#### *Settlement from 18th to 21st century*

At Tilley Green, there remained almost 13 a. of ‘waste’ in 1805, but encroachments on the common resulted in five houses, and a ‘clod hut’, with gardens and crofts, held at will of the lord of the manor.<sup>65</sup> At least one of these was sold to its occupant, Thomas Higgins, by the earl of Darlington in 1814.<sup>66</sup> The common, then consisting of 6 a. 3r. 26 p., was enclosed in 1824 by agreement between the earl of Darlington and the 12 remaining commoners.<sup>67</sup> In the

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<sup>60</sup> *VCH Wem*, 67.

<sup>61</sup> *Survey 1561*, 156; Garbet, 345–6.

<sup>62</sup> *Shropshire Hearth Tax Roll*, 49; *Wem Parish Registers*, 261, 289, 359, 377, 384, 436, 472, 479, 504.

<sup>63</sup> SA, SC/25/6, p. 11; *Kelly’s Dir.* 1891, 465; *Wellington Jnl*, 3 Sept. 1881, 1; Census 1881, 1891.

<sup>64</sup> See below, Social History.

<sup>65</sup> 1805 Survey, 77–8.

<sup>66</sup> SA, 5360/19, fos. 46–53; SA, 6000/12498.

<sup>67</sup> SA, 5360/20.

1841 census about 12 households are listed under 'Tilley Green', each headed by a 'labourer', increasing to 16 in 1861. Few of these dwellings remain, but Tilley Green is still a distinct hamlet at the junction of Aston Lane and the B5476.

Individual gentlemen's residences appeared along the Shrewsbury turnpike: Tilley House, Tilley Lodge and Oaklands, as well as roadside public houses: the Summer House and the New Inn.<sup>68</sup> A red-brick and slate farm house known as The Cross, later Pankeymoor Villa, was newly built c.1818 at the junction of the Shrewsbury turnpike and 'Goo Lane'.<sup>69</sup> A terrace of six houses with gardens was built on Hough Lane, near the tollgate house, by 1840.<sup>70</sup> In 1857–8, construction of the railway embankment displaced the junction so that the Shrewsbury turnpike road had to be re-routed, now passing very close to The Cross house itself.<sup>71</sup> Narrowly missed by the railway embankment, 'Hough Cottages' were refurbished as five 'model cottages' between 1887 and 1891.<sup>72</sup>

After being incorporated in Wem Urban District in 1900, suburban residential development took place along the road south from Wem bridge to the railway viaduct. In the second half of the 20th century this suburb expanded from the main road west to the Roden and east to the railway embankment. The first stage was Roden Grove, built over the grounds of the (demolished) Tilley House, in the 1970s.<sup>73</sup> On the railway side, in the 1980s Eckford Park was developed around the old timber-framed Mill House.

Tilley village has retained its early modern character remarkably unaltered, with some infilling by 19th- and 20th-century residential properties. At its eastern end, the village was truncated, with one of the farmhouses and farm buildings demolished, by the construction of the railway line in 1858. The bypassing of the village by all main roads and the final closure of the level crossing to vehicles c.2000 left the village a quiet residential and farming community.

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<sup>68</sup> Reid, *Tilley*, 268–70; Woodward, 60.

<sup>69</sup> Deeds for 'Big Cross', Tilley, 1769–1863: SA, 5154/2–13; SA, 1848 box 160. Part of the Trench estate, 1863–75: SA, SC/25/6, lot 5. Renamed 'Pankeymoor Villa' between 1881 and 1891: *Cassey's Dir.*, 1871, 378; Census 1881 (Tilley Cross); OS, 25", Shropshire Sheet XXI.3, 1900 and 1924.

<sup>70</sup> Possibly by George Kynaston: Tithe apportionment, lot 714; SA, D3651/B/151/22.

<sup>71</sup> See 'Social History'.

<sup>72</sup> *Wellington Jnl*, 12 Mar. 1887, 1; 19 Mar. 1887, 8; 29 Aug. 1891, 1.

<sup>73</sup> SA, PH/W/8/6/21, /22, /39.

## **The Built Character**

Tilley hamlet is only a short distance south of Wem, on the opposite side of the River Roden, but its character is very different to Wem. Timber-framed houses, many with features reflecting the high status of their owners, were spread out in large irregular plots with farm ranges. The only exception is on the north side of the road, between the former Raven Inn and Yew Tree Cottage, where four narrow plots appear to be laid out within an enclosure, to the rear of which is a field named Green Yard on the 1842 tithe map. Most of the extant historic houses are sub-medieval (16th–17th century), but during a tree ring-dating project in Tilley, a substantial number of medieval timbers were discovered, mainly re-used in agricultural buildings, suggesting a significant medieval settlement.

The 1631 map of Wem clearly shows a north west to south east axis leading from Tilley hamlet to Trench camp, an oblong earthwork thought to be of Roman origin. At the south east end, the route appears to terminate at the camp, the ground rising beyond with fields which replaced woodland, previously known as the Great and Little Pollys [Pools], which extended south towards Clive.

Trench camp may be the oldest built feature. It was Samuel Garbet's view, writing in the early 18th century, that the Saxon Lord would have located his house at the camp, making use of the existing fortified position, platform and building stone. In 1561, the demesne of Trench Farm included the so-called 12 a. Castlesteads Close. Trench farmhouse is not shown on the 1631 map and is located immediately south of the camp. For a settlement the size of Tilley and Trench, a church might be expected but none has been found, though a Saxon lord may have endowed a chantry chapel at or close to his home. Between Tilley and Trench is Tilley Green, referred to as common or waste by Garbet, who noted that the inhabitants had rights of pasture and clay-digging for brick. Ponds and marshy areas still remain. One cottage was built on open ground, Pankeymoor Cottage, whilst others were built around the triangular common which is shown on the 1631 map. By the time of the 1842 Tithe map, there were more than 15 cottages encroaching onto the green, considerably more than those remaining, which are mainly of brick and 19th-century in character. Beyond Tilley to the north west, the lane continues towards Loppington, with a branch leading south towards Tilley Park which was forested until the 17th century. There are isolated farmsteads and

cottages in the township, including on Palms Hill, on the main route between Wem and Shawbury.<sup>74</sup>

*Trench Camp*: is a large oblong earthwork of c.0.6 ha. defined by a rampart consisting of a bank and ditch, which is sited on a terrace on a slight promontory overlooking the Roden valley. It has been ascribed a Roman date given its uniform shape, though there are no known Roman roads in the near vicinity. Plough damage over the centuries has reduced the site, though Garbet noted in the 1750s that despite many years of ploughing, the bank and ditch were very distinct. Deep ploughing in the 20th century has resulted in further levelling and by 1979 the site consisted of scarps and only faint traces of a ditch, the entrance probably to the southwest. Lidar data reveals ditches on the short, north west and south east, sides of the camp.

The 1631 map of Wem marks one large and two smaller buildings immediately north of the camp, in a field named 'Trench Castlesteade'. These buildings no longer survive but may explain the post-medieval finds thrown up by the plough, including pottery, brick and tile fragments. Trench farmhouse is located south of the camp, suggesting a post-1631 date, making it hard to explain a tree-ring date of c.1584 (see below). On the tithe map of 1842, the field containing the camp is named 'The Banks' and a pit at the north end is roughly on the site of the buildings shown on the 1631 map.<sup>75</sup>

*Trench Farmhouse*: The timber-frame of this house sits on an unusually high plinth of Grinshill stone, with three rows of box panelling with painted brick infill, jowled posts and diagonal braces, though some of the framing is missing, particularly to the front. Of two storeys with an attic under a tiled roof, it has two brick ridge stacks towards the centre, probably replacing an earlier single stack, and two later eaves stacks. The west end is of queen-strut construction, but the house was extended to the east in the 19th century under the same roof-line with imitation painted framing, beyond which was a lower dairy range. There

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<sup>74</sup> Garbet, 337–40, 347; *Survey 1561*, 55, 147; Arundel map; Wem Tithe map, 1842 (Tilley & Trench township); OS 25" Shropshire Sheet XXI.7, 1881: see depiction of camp; A. Reid and G. Nash, *The Tilley Timber Project* (Shrewsbury, 2019), this extensive study includes tree-ring dating of properties and analysis of carpenters' marks.

<sup>75</sup> Garbet, 339; Arundel map; OS 25" Shropshire Sheet XXI.7, 1881 and 1902; Wem Tithe map, 1842 (Tilley & Trench township); Shropshire HER 01136: Field observations. Also see APs 2002, 2010; SA, 6001/297: E. Andrews Downman, *Ancient Earthworks of Shropshire, Trench Camp* (1906); Lidar data, see eg. maps.nls.uk, for Lidar DTM background mapping.

is a 19th-century lean-to porch which protects an original nail-studded planked door. Inside, the ceilings have deeply chamfered beams with stepped stops to the ground floor and lamb's tongue stops to the first floor. The sandstone plinth of the sub-medieval house continues around the interior and is also chamfered. In the attic is an infilled window to the south gable and tie-beam trusses with collars. A tree-ring-date of 1584 has been produced, slightly earlier than the style would suggest, and for reasons that are unclear, the house is not marked on the 1631 map. It is of relatively utilitarian appearance, with none of the decorative panelling, close-studding or gabled wings which were given to houses of high status, but had some of the most complex carpenters' marks found in Tilley. A possibility is that the timber-frame was moved here from elsewhere and heightened by means of the unusually high plinth.<sup>76</sup>

*Trench Hall:* Trench Hall was built between 1875 and 1881 and was part of the same complex as Trench Farm. It is shown in 1881 surrounded by woodland and approached by a short driveway.<sup>77</sup> (see 'Trench estate', below.) The two-storey, square-plan house consists of two parallel gable-fronted ranges and is constructed of red brick with prominent sandstone dressings under slate roofs. Detail includes sandstone bands, large-pane sash windows and wide boarded eaves which wrap around the front as gable pediments. The front is symmetrical with a central sandstone portico flanked by wide tripartite windows, above which are smaller windows. There are single-storey flat-roofed projections along the sides. In 1899, Wem RDC agreed to supply water to Trench Hall at the request of the then owner, Nathaniel Farrington Eckersley. It was only later that the house derived significant historical importance, when in 1940 it was transformed into a boarding school for 100 Jewish refugee children. They had come on the kinder-transport to Bunce Court School in Kent, run by Anna Essinger. When that building was requisitioned, the whole school moved to Trench Hall, then owned by the Goodbeeyear brothers of Stockport, who were friends of Anna Essinger. After the war, the Jewish school returned to Bunce Court, and Trench Hall was acquired by SCC and converted into a specialist boarding school for boys. A number of alterations and conversions were undertaken by the county schools' architect, A.G. Chant. From 1990 it

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<sup>76</sup> Garbet, 338–9; Historic England, List Entry No. 1264580; Reid and Nash, *Tilley Timber Project*, 76–7; Vernacular Architecture Group (VAG), Vol. 49, 2018, p. 128: Tree-ring dates 2018.

<sup>77</sup> OS, 25", Shropshire Sheet XXI.7, 1881.

became a day school, and in 2003 it was renamed The Woodlands Centre, providing specialist education and outreach programmes for boys and girls.<sup>78</sup>

*Tilley Hall*: formed part of an estate belonging to the Thurlewynds from the time of Henry VIII, and was the copyhold of Richard Thurlewind from 1541. The house is marked on the 1631 map when it belonged to Peter Bosier. He sold it to Roger Spendlove who, according to Garbet, built the current house in 1665. His son, Thomas, also made additions to the estate.

Tilley Hall is a fine, highly decorative timber-framed house constructed in several phases. The original house was of two storeys with an attic, with four rows of close-studding infilled with wattle and daub between sandstone plinth and wall-plate. There were stone end stacks, incorporated into the roof structure, but of some interest in the roof-space were re-positioned smoke-blackened timbers dated 1504, likely to have come from an earlier open-hall. The roof was reconstructed later, possibly when the hall was ceiled. The central entrance contains a 17th-century nail-studded door, over which is an inscribed date of 1613, its authenticity unclear given the 19th-century-style lettering, but appropriate for the style of the house. Inside and to the left is an enclosed staircase surrounded by wood panelling, whilst there is a moulded stone inglenook fireplace to the right. The ceiling cross-beams are deeply chamfered with cut-stops.

The east gable-fronted wing includes a short range at right-angles to the rear, which abuts the east end of the hall. The wing is close-studded on a sandstone plinth which steps up towards the rear, and there is a lateral stack on the east side of the front bay. A considerable amount of decoration has been afforded to the visible parts, including bands of diamonds, crosses and quatrefoils in lozenges at first floor level. The bressumers to both floors are decorated and supported on carved brackets, that to the first floor with a strapwork motif, that to the gable including pairs of intertwined serpents. Both the north and east gables have square panels with circle quadrants. The interior front room is panelled throughout so may have been the parlour, whilst the rear room has a fireplace of white sandstone with ornately carved panels. The ceiling has chamfered cross-beams with cut stops. Five samples from the east wing were dated c.1658, suggesting this wing was the work of Roger Spendlove.

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<sup>78</sup> OS 25", Shropshire Sheet XXI.7, 1881; Wem Tithe map, 1842 (Tilley & Trench township); SA 172/10; SA DA27/154/1; britainfromabove.org.uk: EPW047608, 1935; SA MI7628/2 & 5 (photos); *Shropshire Star*, 1 Dec. 2018, Article by Nathan Rowden, including photograph; SA, SCC1/G/1320-30: Conversion plans by A.G. Chant, schools architect; woodlandscentre.org



The three-bay west wing is also gable-fronted but the floors are set lower due to a half-cellar of sandstone ashlar, which appears externally as a high plinth with infilled windows. It is surmounted by close-studding and there are no windows at first floor level. The front gable has more consistent decoration than the east wing, with rows of small panels containing quatrefoils. Inside is an infilled inglenook fireplace, but generally less decoration, suggesting this was a service wing with possibly a dairy in the cellar. A tree-ring date of 1671 showed this was the latest part of the house, perhaps built by Thomas Spendlove. This date is consistent with a substantial expansion in dairy farming in this part of North Shropshire.<sup>79</sup>

To the west is an L-shaped farm building of brick under corrugated roofs, inscribed 'J. Mottershead 1897', but found to have much earlier timbers. The north–south range was a large six-bay barn with mainly queen-strut trusses and a small fragment of box-panelling, dated c.1616 so roughly contemporary with the house. The four-bay range at right-angles has trusses resting on brick piers incorporating a pair of truncated cruck blades. An early 20th-century photograph shows the northeast corner of this range when it was box panelled with brick nogging.<sup>80</sup>

*Tilley Manor:* The longstanding owners of Tilley Manor were the Lovekin family. In the survey of 1561, William Lovekin was a copyhold tenant, and the house was in the family's ownership in the 1750s. Tilley Manor started as a large three-unit lobby-entrance house of one-and-a-half storeys, recently dated c.1568. Two large gable-fronted wings were added to the left and right of centre later, but the original entrance was retained. The left wing has been dated c.1607, whilst the date of the right wing is less clear but with a range of 1601–30. The house is timber-framed, though partly covered in roughcast, on a sandstone plinth under tiled roofs, but the framing is not consistent in style. The right-hand wing is box-panelled beneath the moulded gable bressumer, but there are angled struts flanking the window in the gable. In contrast, the gable of the left-hand wing has herring-bone decoration between tie-beam and collar, the former supported on decorative carved brackets. In around 1620, a large box-panelled gabled dormer was added to the central range, its moulded bressumer supported on carved consoles. The original lobby-entrance beneath the large brick ridge stack contains a

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<sup>79</sup> Newman and Pevsner, 677; Garbet, 343–4; Historic England, List Entry No. 1237088, including Images of England: this house is listed grade II\* due to its architectural importance; *Survey 1561*, 155; Reid and Nash, *Tilley Timber Project*, 47–51; SA, 972/7/1/49; see Mercer, *English Arch. to 1900*, 153.

<sup>80</sup> Reid and Nash, *Tilley Timber Project*, 52–4; SA, PH/T/6/8.

19th-century panelled door, whilst the wings each have narrow lateral stacks. Some of the windows have 19th-century bracketed hoods, but are mainly replacements.

Inside, the main range retains back-to-back fireplaces in the left and central units. This includes a sandstone inglenook fireplace under a moulded wooden lintel, with the name 'Lovekin' inscribed on the masonry. This has been dated *c.*1620 and correlates with the 1631 map, where the property is shown belonging to John Lufkin. The ceiling has two continuous chamfered spine beams with ogee stops, whilst in the roof-space a crown-strut roof was recorded, a style relatively rare in the area. The front room of the left wing has 17th-century oak panelling with a fluted frieze at the top, the cross-beams to the ceiling with ogee stops. Such rich decoration suggests this room was the parlour, whilst the left wing contained a kitchen and service areas. The addition of these large and decorative wings in the 17th century would have been symbols of high status.

In front of the house is a sandstone boundary wall with saddleback coping, which at the west end joins an L-shaped farm range of 19th-century brickwork. An investigation revealed a door frame on the east side, consisting of two posts and part of the wall-plate, dated 1504–34 and possibly the earliest part of the farm. The later queen-strut roof was dated 1564–91.<sup>81</sup>

*Oak Cottage*: This early 17th-century timber-framed dwelling consists of a two-storey two-unit range under a tiled roof with central brick ridge stack. There is a carved bressumer to the front with close-studding beneath, whilst above is decorative panelling consisting of paired diagonal braces in square panels forming large conspicuous lozenges. The two upper windows, though replaced, have sills supported on the original decorative brackets. A 20th-century door is in place of a former window right of centre, but the original plan is unclear as the house was converted into a pair of cottages before reverting to one property. The gable ends have been wholly or partly rebuilt in brick, but an early photograph shows a gable with queen-strut and collar, whilst another shows a doorway in the west end. A date of *c.*1616 has confirmed the date of the house, which is shown on the 1631 map as belonging to George Jebb. It was later sold to Thomas Spendlove.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Newman and Pevsner, 677; Historic England, List Entry No. 1236849, including Images of England; SA 972/7/1/49; Reid and Nash, *Tilley Timber Project*, 40–6; Garbet, 344; hallsgb.com: SY4/3933.

<sup>82</sup> Newman and Pevsner, Nikolaus, *ibid.*, 2006, p. 677; Historic England, List Entry No. 1264411, including Images of England; Reid and Nash, *Tilley Timber Project*, 59–60; SA 972/7/1/49; SA PH/W/8/6/43 & PH/T/6/11; Garbet, 343.

*Tilley Farmhouse:* This house belonged to the Hayward family from at least the reign of Henry VIII and is marked on the 1631 map of Wem. It was sold to Thomas Spendlove in 1687 and was owned by his son John in the 1750s. According to Garbet, there was a notable mineral spring in the grounds where people came for its healing properties. Externally, this is one of the few Georgian houses in Tilley, though with late 19th-century alterations. The tall symmetrical range is of two storeys with an attic, constructed of brick on a tall sandstone ashlar plinth, which appears earlier, under a tiled roof with external brick end stacks. Georgian detail includes a first floor plat band, a dentilled brick eaves cornice, carved stone kneelers and brick arched heads over the windows, which would have been sashes. Nineteenth-century additions include gabled attic dormers, a gabled porch which cuts through the sill band, and replacement windows. The rear wing was either added or remodelled at this time.

An investigation of the interior revealed a sub-medieval timber-framed house of three irregular bays. The two internal trusses were well-made with a sequence of assembly marks, and consisted of small box panels and dropped tie-beams, which would have allowed for a full attic storey. Towards the centre is a fine Jacobean full-height well-staircase with splat balusters and tall newel posts with finials. A contemporary fireplace was found at one end of the house, its chamfered lintel with lamb's tongue stops, whilst similar stops were found on the chamfered ceiling beams. A tree-ring date of c.1618 is appropriate for the style of the staircase, but some re-used timbers were of c.1481. Although the plan-form of the sub-medieval house is not clear, other contemporary houses with full attic storeys often had a T-plan, such as the former Well House in Wem. An unusual feature is the sandstone plinth rising up to first floor level to the rear, as in the east wing of Tilley Hall, which could relate to dairying.<sup>83</sup>

Two farm buildings at Tilley Farm have also been dated. A four-bay range, converted to accommodation, was originally box-panelled but was rebuilt in brick. It has been dated c.1618 so is contemporary with the house. To the west is a five-bay lofted range formerly containing stables, of brick with weather-boarding to the loft, decorated with sandstone

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<sup>83</sup> Historic England, List Entry No. 1237106, inc. Images of England; Reid and Nash, *Tilley Timber Project*, 60-2; SA 972/7/1/49; Garbet, 342-3; see Mercer, *English Arch. to 1900*, 153-6.

kneelers at the north end and with a king-strut roof. It has been dated *c.*1699, but there are re-used timbers of *c.*1500.<sup>84</sup>

Immediately west of Tilley Farm was a small end-chimney cottage of one-storey-with-an-attic, with only two rows of box panels between sill and wall plate. Though demolished in the second half of the 20th century, it has been recorded in a photograph. It is labelled Smithy on the 1842 tithe map.<sup>85</sup>

*Ferndale (formerly Tilley Lodge)*: A classic three-unit lobby-entrance house of one-and-a-half storeys dated *c.*1618. The timber-frame has been obscured by render which has been painted black and white in imitation, whilst the sandstone plinth is also rendered. On top of the tiled roof is a chimney stack of Grinshill stone, heightened in brick. The entrance is positioned just left of centre beneath the stack, and contains a 17th-century planked door with decorative strap hinges under a gabled porch. This is flanked by late 19th-century windows and gabled dormers. Inside, there is timber-framing around the stairwell.

Behind the property is a five-bay farm building of painted brick under a corrugated roof. Three of the tie-beams are re-used cruck blades with evidence of smoke-blackening. These crucks were ascribed a date of *c.*1458 and probably relate to an earlier open-hall on the site. Historically, this house and property on the opposite side of the road had belonged to the Donne family. In 1561, the estate passed to the Higginsons, including Lawrence Higginson who held it in 1631.<sup>86</sup>

*Brook Cottage* is at the west end of Tilley, adjacent to Tilley Manor. This box-panelled cottage of two storeys with an attic had three framed bays and a contemporary rear wing, though part of the west end has been lost. There are four rows of box panels with rendered infill between sill and wall-plate, though some areas are roughcast with imitation painted framing, under a slate roof with modern brick end stack. The house was previously converted into two cottages, entailing some alterations, but is now one. The current entrance is right of centre and the wooden casement windows respect the framing pattern. Inside, the partition east of the stairs has some panels with wattle and daub infill. There was a central chimney

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<sup>84</sup> Reid and Nash, *Tilley Timber Project*, 62–4; Vernacular Architecture Group (VAG), Vol. 49, 2018, p. 127, Tree-ring dates 2018.

<sup>85</sup> SA, PH/T/6/2: photograph from *Shropshire Magazine*; Ordnance Survey SJ52NW, Published 1965; Wem Tithe map, 1842.

<sup>86</sup> Historic England, List Entry No. 1236852, including Images of England; Reid and Nash, *Tilley Timber Project*, 66–9; SA 972/7/1/49; Garbet, 341–2.

constructed of 17th-century brickwork, the fireplace lintel in the rear range with a carefully applied flame mark, designed to ward off witchcraft. Some of the first floor bedrooms had chamfered ceiling beams with lamb's tongue stops. The main range and rear wing have both been dated *c.*1617, suggesting a T-plan house, whilst some alterations were carried out in *c.*1665. In the 17th century, the property belonged to Lewis Bevan (d.1687).<sup>87</sup>

*Brook Farmhouse*: is opposite Brook Cottage. An early date is suggested as the gable-end fronts the road, confirmed by a tree-ring date of *c.*1580. The house is shown on the 1631 map and by the 1750s, it belonged to Sir Rowland Hill. The range is single-storey with an attic, and has three rows of box panels between sandstone plinth and wall-plate, under a tiled roof. A pair of roughly central brick ridge stacks replaced a former single stack. The original plan-form is not clear, but there was possibly a further bay to the north. The prominent gable-end fronting the road is decorated, with unusual curved braces below the tie-beam and diagonal struts forming a V-pattern above. At a later date, the eaves were raised to form two full storeys, but on the east side only, where there are now two doors possibly relating to two cottages. Inside, part of a spiral staircase with an octagonal newel post has been recorded, whilst chamfered ceiling beams had decorative stops.<sup>88</sup>

*Raven Inn*: Originally a dwelling which in *c.*1717 was occupied by John and Elizabeth Tagg. The symmetrical two-storey, three-window range is of painted brick under a slate roof, with brick end stacks and a dentilled brick eaves cornice, a style suggesting remodelling in the early-19th century. In 1868, Mary Jones acquired a licence to sell beer and the building became an inn. It is shown in an early 20th-century photograph with a planked door under a flat canopy, but later in the century, an additional window was inserted left of the door. Major repairs and alterations were undertaken in 2007 and a large extension added to the rear. The Raven ceased trading in 2018.<sup>89</sup>

Immediately adjacent to The Raven is *The Smithy*. The property has been raised and extended, but the south gable-end fronting the road is a clue to its antiquity. Internally, some box-panelling was found to the west which was of two phases, whilst the central truss contained part of a planked screen. A fireplace at the south end was of early brick and was

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<sup>87</sup> Historic England, List Entry No. 1237078, including Images of England; Reid and Nash, *Tilley Timber Project*, 37–8; SA 972/7/1/49; Garbet, 344–5.

<sup>88</sup> Historic England, List Entry No. 1236847, including Images of England; Reid and Nash, *Tilley Timber Project*, 39–40; SA 972/7/1/49; Garbet, 345.

<sup>89</sup> Reid and Nash, *Tilley Timber Project*, 46; SA PH/T/6/4 &11.

flanked by coursed sandstone. The earliest phase has a date range of 1459–89, suggesting an open-hall with screens passage. The second date was of c.1580, when the fireplace was probably inserted and the floor ceiled. A building is marked in this location on the 1631 map of Wem.<sup>90</sup>

3 *Tilley* is part of a U-shaped terrace of four brick properties of 19th-century character, which was found to contain the remains of two raised cruck-frames dated c.1504. No. 3 contained part of the larger frame which had signs of smoke-blackening, suggesting it was once an open-hall. It was then probably converted to a barn associated with a sub-medieval farmhouse shown on the map of 1631 belonging to Lawrence Higginson, which was subsequently destroyed by the railway line.<sup>91</sup>

*The Old Mill House*: was built by Andrew Parsons, the puritan rector of Wem, in 1656. Originally facing south, the front is close-studded with plaster infill under a slate roof with a large brick ridge stack. Probably of three units originally, the house is of two storeys with attics. Garbet noted that the front bore the date and initials of Andrew Parsons and his wife, though it is not known if these survive. Decorative carved brackets were found supporting the first-floor jetty, similar to those at *Tilley Hall*, such decorative work a symbol of high status. In the 1750s, the property was owned by William Jeffreys, then in 1793 a rear wing was added in a similar style, the date inscribed on one of the roof purlins, and a new entrance made in the west side leading into a stair-hall. A pointed-arched gothic-style porch was added later, along with a single-storey addition terminating in a turret. Mill House was purchased by Susanna Elkes of *The Ditches*, following her husband's death in 1895.<sup>92</sup>

*Pankeymoor Cottage*: Possibly an encroachment on open waste as the name suggests. This is a two-unit box-panelled house of one-and-a-half storeys, with stone plinth, slate roof and brick end stacks. The box panels have rendered infill and are quite irregular, and there are straight wind-braces to the right-hand unit. The left gable end has long braces, a tie-beam and collar with V-struts. A tree-ring date of c.1653 is earlier than expected given the lightness of the timbers. Internally, the ceiling had chamfered beams supported on jowled posts with carpenter's marks. A short bay was added to the right in the late 19th century, along with

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<sup>90</sup> Reid and Nash, *Tilley Timber Project*, 54–6; Arundel map.

<sup>91</sup> Arundel map; Reid and Nash, *Tilley Timber Project*, 65–6; Wem Tithe map, 1842 (*Tilley & Trench* township).

<sup>92</sup> Garbet, 345; Historic England, List Entry No. 1366782; Reid and Nash, *Tilley Timber Project*, 69–70; OS, 25", Shropshire Sheet XXI.3, 1902; SA PH/W/8/5/4–10, 12; Moran, *Whitchurch*, 223–4.

another chimney shaft, possibly when it was converted into two cottages, as shown on the 1901 Ordnance Survey. It subsequently reverted to one property.<sup>93</sup>

*Palms Hill Cottage:* A two-unit timber-framed cottage with end-chimney plan-form, which has been dated c.1617. The cottage is single-storey-with-an-attic, the front with three rows of box panels with brick infill and straight tension braces. To the left, the narrow brick end stack has been rebuilt, the roof is of queen-strut construction but the coverings replaced with concrete tiles. A roughly central glazed door, the windows and a large rear range are of 20th-century date. Both gable ends have raking struts above the collar, the left end otherwise of large rectangular panels with jowled posts, the right end rebuilt in brick below the gable. Inside, the left-hand room has a rebuilt inglenook fireplace, the ceiling with two chamfered spine beams with lamb's tongue stops. In 1673, the property belonged to Rowland Dickin, grandfather of John Dickin of Aston Hall.<sup>94</sup>

*Palms Hill House:* Built in the 1880s with a combination of red brick, timber-framing and tile-hanging, this was a popular, somewhat nostalgic style at the time with hints of the Elizabethan revival. This large house of two storeys with attics under red tiled roofs with tall brick stacks may have replaced the much smaller Palms Hill Cottage next door. It was built for J.A. Clegg of Loppington from plans drawn up by Alexander Macpherson of Derby (1847–1935), an architect who undertook municipal and private commissions. A competitive tender was let for the construction work which was awarded to Messrs. Ford and Co. of Derby at a cost of £2,775. The highly asymmetrical house is characterised by advanced gabled bays. Moulded stone dressings are used at ground floor level, including for door surrounds, mullioned and transomed windows and bay windows. Decorative timber-framing, including panels with quatrefoils, and fish-scale tile-hanging are used for the more

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<sup>93</sup> Historic England, List Entry No. 1264547; Reid and Nash, *Tilley Timber Project*, 70–1; OS 25", Shropshire Sheet XXI.3, 1902.

<sup>94</sup> Garbet, 347; Historic England, List Entry No. 1264418 including Images of England; Reid and Nash, *Tilley Timber Project*, 73–4; [https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/vag\\_dendro/full\\_record.cfm?id=4022](https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/vag_dendro/full_record.cfm?id=4022); Vernacular Architecture Group (VAG), Vol. 49, 2018, p. 127, Tree-ring dates 2018.

conspicuous upper storeys. In the early 21st century, the house became a venue for weddings and events.<sup>95</sup>

*Woodhouse Farm:* This copyhold tenement was held by William Adams from 1520; in 1561 the house was said to be two messuages made into one. It is marked on the 1631 map. According to Garbet, 'The Wood-houses' remained in the Adams family until 1661, when it passed by marriage with the daughter of John Adams to Thomas Hayward of Tilley. In the mid-18th century it was sold to Messrs. Henshaw and Walford, attorneys of Wem.<sup>96</sup>

The house consists of a hall range and taller cross-wing at the south end, all under tiled roofs. The three-storey cross-wing is roughcast over a timber-frame which consists of close-studding three panels high between sill and wall plate and jowled posts. It has been dated c.1655 so the house may have been remodelled by John Adams for his daughter and son-in-law. Inside the cross-wing, one bay was found to have a stone undercroft, possibly related to dairying, whilst there were two carved chimney pieces on the first and second floors. The hall is built of red brick on a rendered plinth with a large brick ridge stack. It has a low form of one-and-a-half storeys, whilst the rear elevation has a 17th-century planked door beneath the stack forming the original lobby-entrance. The exact date of this range and its relationship with the cross-wing is unclear, but it was remodelled in brick in the 18th century with a plat band and dentilled eaves cornice. The current front has a gabled porch and half-dormers of 19th-century date, the windows later. Inside, the hall is said to retain chamfered ceiling beams and timber-framed partitions.<sup>97</sup>

*Preston Springs (formerly Wain House):* In the early 1950s the timber-frame of this house was obscured by roughcast, but a gabled porch had a carved bressumer with an inscribed date of 1651 and the initials M.W.E. There were also grotesque carved figures on either side of the front door. The house, located on the eastern edge of the parish, has earlier origins as it is marked on the 1631 map of Wem. On the Ordnance Survey of 1881, it is labelled Wain

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<sup>95</sup> Mercer, *English Arch. to 1900*, 259; *Eddowes's Jnl*, 24 Oct. 1888; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander\\_MacPherson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_MacPherson); Google Street View, April 2009; [www.yell.com/biz/palms-hill-weddings-and-events-shrewsbury](http://www.yell.com/biz/palms-hill-weddings-and-events-shrewsbury)

<sup>96</sup> *Survey 1561*, 148–9; Arundel map; Garbet, 346.

<sup>97</sup> Garbet, 346; Arundel map; Historic England, List Entry No. 1264581; Reid and Nash, *Tilley Timber Project*, 72–3; Google Street View, April 2009.



House, the name now given to the adjacent farmhouse in Moreton Corbet and Lee Brockhurst parish. Garbet noted that the One (Wain) House in Tilley township had previously belonged to the Masseys, but was purchased by Richard Corbet of Moreton Corbet as a gift for his youngest son, George. The extant farmhouse is a two-storey building of red brick under tiled roofs with a large brick stack, the front facing east and with a long and lower rear wing.<sup>98</sup>

*Ruewood Farmhouse:* Close to the boundary with Loppington and facing the River Roden, this house was originally part of Tilley Park. In 1561, the park was held by John Allinson, but around the middle of the 17th century, the wood was felled and the land sold off in five parts by the lord of the manor. The house was sold to Mr Griffiths and finally passed to Hon. Richard Hill and his descendants. The 17th-century farmhouse consists of a two-unit hall and cross-wing, of one storey with an attic, under an old tiled roof. The timber-frame is partly clad in brick or rendered, but the rear, road-facing gable end of the cross-wing is box-panelled with brick infill, the gable with collar and V-struts. There is a large brick ridge stack between the two hall units, under which is thought to have been a lobby-entrance on the south front. A cat-slide outshut was added to the rear elevation later. Inside, an inglenook fireplace was recorded inside the hall, along with a deeply chamfered ceiling spine beam. In the late 19th-century, a two-storey three-window block was added onto the east end, forming a new front.<sup>99</sup>

## LANDOWNERSHIP

### **Demesne**

In the Middle Ages, most of the township consisted of woodland or waste, held as the lord's demesne, which will be discussed in two parts: Tilley Park and Trench Farm. Outside the lord's demesne, in 1561, there was just one freehold tenement, the remainder of the township land was copyhold.

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<sup>98</sup> Shropshire HER PRN 12405: The farmhouse was listed grade III in 1951–3. Grade III referred to buildings of local interest, but is no longer a formal designation; Arundel map; OS, 25", Shropshire Sheet XXI.8, 1881; Garbet, 346.

<sup>99</sup> Historic England, List Entry No. 1236794; Garbet, 341.

### *The Trench/Trench Farm*

‘The Trench’ was a large area of woodland pasture within the medieval manor. In 1290, ‘le Trench’ was accounted jointly with Tilley Park as rendering herbage and pasture worth 20s. per annum to the lord.<sup>100</sup> It had been enclosed and brought into cultivation by 1532 when William, Lord Dacre, let ‘the farm called the Trench’, ~~about 234 a.,~~ to Robert Richardson for 90 years for £10 per annum.<sup>101</sup>

Richardson mortgaged the property to Lord Dacre on terms that Richardson paid half the annual rent, while the lord took possession of half the land. The half possessed by Richardson, 117 a. including the farm house or messuage (‘the fferme place’), corresponds to Upper Trench Farm. The lord’s half, 119 a., corresponds to the future Trench Farm, but in 1561 it was let by the year to various tenants in numerous parcels.<sup>102</sup> In 1589 Charles Richardson and his son Thomas held ‘Trench farm’ (the whole estate) with two cottages and 200 a. of meadow and pasture for £20 18s. 4d. per annum.<sup>103</sup> In 1631 the Upper Trench farm house was apparently in the same location as in 1561.<sup>104</sup> There was now also a farm house for (Lower) Trench Farm, in the close known as ‘Castlesteade’, with a large barn nearby.<sup>105</sup> After the expiry of the lease, Thomas Howard, earl of Arundel, gave Trench Farm to his son, William Howard, Viscount Stafford, who was the owner in 1642. When Daniel Wycherley of Clive purchased the lordship of the manor of Wem in 1665, ‘Trench Farm’ was named individually as part of the estate transferred.<sup>106</sup> Wycherley also acquired ‘the Great Pools’ farm, by then freehold, and joined it to the estate.<sup>107</sup> The Trench estate did not follow the descent of the manor, however, as Wycherley retained it when he sold the lordship in 1685 (see below).

### *Tilley Park*

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<sup>100</sup> TNA, E149/1; *Cal. Inq. p.m.* ii, 470 no. 774. See also *Cal. Inq. p.m.*, xxiv, 348, no. 495 (1436).

<sup>101</sup> *Survey 1561*, 54–5. ‘Trench farm’ named in will of William Dun of Tilley, 2 Jan. 1532/3: ‘Wem Wills’, ed. Watts.

<sup>102</sup> *Survey 1561*, 54–7.

<sup>103</sup> TNA, LR 2/225; will of Charles Richardson of Trench Farm, 25 Sept. 1599: ‘Wem Wills’, ed. Watts.

<sup>104</sup> *Survey 1561*, 54–5; Arundel map.

<sup>105</sup> Arundel map. For the earthworks in ‘Castlesteade’, see above.

<sup>106</sup> ACA, MS MD 59, no. 72: 19 June ~~17 Charles II~~ 1665; SRO, D641/2/A/3/5, 31 July 1667; Garbet, 338–9.

<sup>107</sup> See above, Settlement; Garbet, 340.

The enclosed woodland (*haia*) pertaining to *Weme* in Domesday Book almost certainly refers to the later Tilley Park. Hugh Pantulf's charter of 1221 refers to all of Ruewood as demesne woodland, and awards it to Shrewsbury Abbey, a typically short-lived disposition.<sup>108</sup> Tenants in Tilley had communal grazing rights in the woodland. When Ralph le Botiler (lord of the manor, c.1242–81) decided to enclose '*la haye de Tilewelg*' within a park, Robert de Beslow agreed to surrender his right of free grazing in the *haye*, and his possession of a small meadow adjacent to it, in exchange for the right of free pannage for 20 pigs in the lord's woods anywhere else within the manor of Wem.<sup>109</sup> When Ralph le Botiler died in 1281, his manor of Wem included an enclosed park stocked with as many as 10 wild beasts and with herbage worth 4s. per annum.<sup>110</sup> Tilley Park was termed 'the old park' by 1290, in contrast to the 'new park' at Edstaston.<sup>111</sup> The park was still stocked with wild beasts and rendered valuable herbage in the late 14th century.<sup>112</sup>

In 1561, John Allenson, who held at farm a large portion of the lord's demesne elsewhere in the manor, rendered 11s. 6d. per annum for the herbage of 'le olde parke', but revenue from pannage there was reserved to the lord. A park keeper's house was located centrally within the park.<sup>113</sup> The 1631 Arundel map shows 'Tilly Parke as now it is'. The map depicts the park pale and shows that about one-third of the enclosed area – the part nearer the village and up to the Shrewsbury road ('Trench Lane') – was largely clear of trees, but the remainder was still thickly wooded. The 1631 map also shows that the park had been reduced in size by several substantial enclosures, again on the village side, including 'Baylif's peece'. Philip Griffith's tenement included 'a howse to work timber' – there were still timber trees standing on these closes. Their regular shape and arrangements for rents paid to the lord of the manor suggests planned enclosure. The park pale was evidently rebuilt along the new, straight boundary.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> *Cartulary of Shrewsbury Abbey*, no. 400; *Cartulary of Shrewsbury Abbey in English Translation*, no. 400. The former extent of the park, including Ruewood, is indicated by the names of closes adjacent to the then remaining park on the Arundel map.

<sup>109</sup> SA, 3607/IV/A/49.

<sup>110</sup> *Cal. Inq. p.m.*, xii, 324.

<sup>111</sup> 'le Holdeparke': *Cal. Inq. PM*, ii, no.773.

<sup>112</sup> *Cal. Inq. PM*, xv, no. 349.

<sup>113</sup> Not shown on the Arundel map but cf. Garbet, 340; Woodward, 164.

<sup>114</sup> Arundel map; ACA, MS 508, nos. 27, 28, 30, 38.

By 1648 Thomas Lovekin farmed the herbage and leased the land, including the park plus 'Baylies peece' and another close, totalling 74 a. In 1648 Tilley Park measured 250 a. and contained 4,140 timber trees, with the timber valued at £7,659.<sup>115</sup> The earl of Arundel's trustees evidently sold off the timber before 1657, when 'Tilley Park' containing 324 a. was sold to Leonard Ward and his wife Joanna for £1,200.<sup>116</sup> The park land was divided into four tenements (plus Ruewood) and sold. Two were purchased by the Revd. Andrew Parsons, rector of Wem, who built a house on each but sold both after being ejected from the living in 1662.<sup>117</sup> By 1805 the former park was divided into many small fields.<sup>118</sup> Subsequently ownership became concentrated once more, within the Jeffreys' Tilley estate. Two farms both named 'Tilley Park' (95 a. and approx. 100 a., respectively) were purchased by Thomas Jeffreys of Wem (from Walter Mansell) and by his brother William (from Philip Hales) before 1799.<sup>119</sup> When the Jeffreys estate was sold off in 1913, Tilley Park dairy farm (197 a.) was purchased by the tenant, Richard Jones, whose descendants were still the owners in 2018.<sup>120</sup>

### Freehold

A tenement of half a knight's fee in Beslow (Wroxeter) of the barony of Wem in the 13th century included some land in Tilley. The bounds of Robert de Beslow's land in Tilley as confirmed c.1242 × 1281 were (obscurely) 'from ?*Huudesoc* as far as the ?hedge (*heesam*) of *est hale* and from the ?hedge (*heesa*) along by the ditch as far as the park pale'.<sup>121</sup> By 1561 the tenement had descended to Thomas Poyner, lord of Beslow.<sup>122</sup> At that time, the Beslow estate was the only freehold tenement in the township. That changed during the 17th century, however, with the alienation of Trench Farm and Tilley Park and enfranchisement of copyholdings. By the mid 18th century, the largest tenements were freehold.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> ACA, MS 508, no. 38 (f. 18v), f. 39r.

<sup>116</sup> ACA, MS MD 59, p. 60.

<sup>117</sup> Garbet, 340–1. Garbet counted Ruewood as a fifth portion of Tilley Park.

<sup>118</sup> SA, 167/47, and cf. tithe map.

<sup>119</sup> SA, 279/381.

<sup>120</sup> SA, D3651/B/30/2/4/1; SA, xxx, Tilley Estate sale catalogue, 1913; *Whitchurch Herald*, 12 Jul. 1913; Reid, *Tilley*, 188, 298–9.

<sup>121</sup> SA, 3607/IV/A/49.

<sup>122</sup> Eyton, viii, 40–1; *Survey 1561*, 146–7.

<sup>123</sup> Garbet, 338.

*The Trench estate*

When Daniel Wycherley sold the lordship of the manor in 1685, he retained the freehold of the Trench estate. At that time, it was valued at more than double the next largest estate in Tilley.<sup>124</sup> In 1696 Wycherley mortgaged the property for £1,000, secured on two ‘messuages’; ‘the largest with the ancient message’ (i.e., Upper Trench) was held, from c.1700, by Roger Ireland.<sup>125</sup> Daniel Wycherley’s heir was his son, the playwright William Wycherley, who succeeded to his Shropshire estates in 1697 and visited, he told Alexander Pope, ‘only to “rob the Country” and run away as fast as possible’.<sup>126</sup> The inheritance was limited by the provisions of Daniel Wycherley’s will, which allowed William only a life interest with the reversion (of the Trench estate, at least) to the heirs of Thomas Wycherley of Latham.<sup>127</sup> The will also authorised a jointure to any wife William should marry, to the value of any amount she should bring to the marriage. Towards the end of his life, William Wycherley is said to have commissioned a maternal relative, Captain Thomas Shrimpton, to find a bride willing to marry him on these terms, both to pay his creditors and to spite his Shropshire kin. Shrimpton introduced Elizabeth Jackson, whom Wycherley married in London in 1715, days before his death. Soon afterwards Elizabeth married Shrimpton, who was also the executor of Wycherley’s will. Thomas Wycherley’s son, William Wycherley of Whitchurch, promptly sued them in Chancery, claiming that Elizabeth had been Shrimpton’s mistress, and that the pair had conspired to coerce and defraud the aged and infirm Wycherley into marrying her, but he lost the case.<sup>128</sup> Elizabeth Shrimpton enjoyed possession of her jointure for her life. She is said to have visited Trench several times, staying with the tenant, Thomas Ireland, and to have made a protegé of his young son.<sup>129</sup> Mrs Shrimpton died

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<sup>124</sup> Churchwardens’ accounts for church rates, 1684–1713: in 1684, Trench Farm was assessed for rates of 16s. 8d., the Spendlove estate for 7s. 9d.: SA, P295/B/3/11.

<sup>125</sup> SA, 172/1–2; Garbet, 339; *Wem Parish Registers*, 381, 385, 368.

<sup>126</sup> ODNB, Wycherley, William (bap. 1641, d. 1716): <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/30120>. See also J.B. Blakeway (ed. W.G.D. Fletcher), ‘History of Shrewsbury Hundred or Liberties. Broughton and Clive’, *TSHAS*, ser. 2, ii (1890), 319–58 at 347.

<sup>127</sup> *Wycherley v. Wycherley* (1763), in *Reports of Cases in the High Court of Chancery, from 1757 to 1766, From the Original Manuscripts of Lord Chancellor Northington*, 2 vols., 2nd edn (London, 1827), ii, 174–81 at 175.

<sup>128</sup> TNA, C 11/24/32; TNA, PROB 11/550/67; ODNB, Wycherley, William; [Oldys], *Memoirs of Mrs Anne Oldfield* (London 1741), 65–71; Garbet, 338–9; Blakeway, ‘History of Shrewsbury Hundred’, 347–8.

<sup>129</sup> ODNB, Ireland, John (c. 1742–1808); Blakeway, ‘History of Shrewsbury Hundred’, 348–9: letter of Mrs Egerton Jeffreys, Shrewsbury, 25 Sept. 1804.

in 1757, when the Trench estate finally vested in Thomas Wycherley's grandson, Thomas Wycherley of Dodington (Whitchurch), 'then an old man and probably before both obscure and indigent',<sup>130</sup> who settled the estate on his only son, Daniel, no doubt so named in expectation of his illustrious inheritance.<sup>131</sup> Daniel Wycherley married, in 1758, Beatrice, a daughter of the Wem attorney John Henshaw, who inherited the former castle site in Wem with the houses on its High Street frontage, where the couple resided.<sup>132</sup> In 1764, 'Trench Farm' comprised: two farms ('messuages') in the occupation of Thomas Ireland and of John Ebrey, respectively; another where the dwelling house and buildings had recently been taken down and the lands let to Ireland and Ebrey; and a fourth farm ('message'), The Poods or The Pools, later Teakins. 'Wycherley's meadow' in Tilley was held separately from Trench Farm.<sup>133</sup> The estate remained subject to the 1696 mortgage, which in 1763 was assigned to Jane Brookes of Lee Brockhurst.<sup>134</sup>

Daniel Wycherley died in 1764,<sup>135</sup> leaving two young daughters, Mary and Beatrice, as co-heiresses of undivided half shares in the Trench estate, charged with the jointure of their mother, Beatrice.<sup>136</sup> Mary married John Brookes, surgeon, of Whitchurch in 1780, and the mortgage was then assigned to John's widowed mother, Anne Brookes.<sup>137</sup> Beatrice married Richard Smith of Whitchurch in 1785, and died in 1788.<sup>138</sup> The estate was formally partitioned in 1789: (Lower) Trench Farm was assigned to the late Beatrice Smith's representatives and Upper Trench Farm to John and Mary Brookes; the Pools (by then also known as Teakins) farm was apportioned between them.<sup>139</sup>

#### *Trench Farm estate, later Trench Hall*

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<sup>130</sup> *Wycherley v. Wycherley* (1763), 175, 178. Mrs Shrimpton was still alive when Garbet wrote his account of Tilley 'in 1753': Garbet, 339, 341. Thomas Wycherley was in possession by 1757: SA, 239/10–11.

<sup>131</sup> SA, 239/2 (1759), 239/3–4 (1760), and see SA, 239/4–5, 239/13–18; SA, 731/2/3255.

<sup>132</sup> SA, 239/12; SA, 731/2/3255–6, 731/2/3261; *Wem Parish Registers*, 715; *VCH Wem*, 49.

<sup>133</sup> SA, 731/2/3255; SA, 172/3. The Pools was probably the farm leased from the lord's demesne in 1648, already well established with parts still being reclaimed: ACA, MS 508, fos. 7r, 8r (Thomas Povall, 'the Great Pooles', 57 a. 3r.)

<sup>134</sup> SA, 172/4.

<sup>135</sup> Buried 2 Jan. 1765: *Wem Parish Registers*, 662.

<sup>136</sup> SA, 172/3–4; SA, 731/2/3264–7; SA, 5360/19, fols 1–7; SA, 6000/11764.

<sup>137</sup> SA, 172/8; SA, 239/8, 9, 19–24; SA, 5360/19, fos. 27–9, 32–7; SA, 6000/11764.

<sup>138</sup> SA, 239/27–9; SA, 5360/19, fols 7–17.

<sup>139</sup> SA, 172/5; SA, 239/28–9; SA, 5360/19, fols 15–20, 25.

Richard Smith augmented his share of the Trench estate by purchasing the house and croft on the east side of the lane to (Lower) Trench Farm from Frederick Rhoden in 1791.<sup>140</sup> Smith was bankrupt in 1795–6,<sup>141</sup> and may have died before 1805 when this estate was held by ‘Mrs Wycherley’, presumably Beatrice, the widow of Daniel Wycherley, as a farm of 254 a. 3 r. 18 p. in the occupation of John Wright (Trench Farm); Wycherley meadow, and another farm of 119 a.<sup>142</sup> Beatrice Wycherley died in 1808,<sup>143</sup> soon after the estate vested in her daughter Beatrice Smith’s eldest son, Richard Wycherley Smith, who came of age c.1807.<sup>144</sup> Smith married well in Wem society, to Catherine, the daughter of the Revd George Dickin, rector of Moreton Corbet, and Catherine née Walford.<sup>145</sup> Smith resided at Belle Vue, near Wem, in 1828, and later at Tilley House;<sup>146</sup> he had no surviving issue. In 1839 he conveyed Trench Farm to Thomas Edward Ward of The Lodge, Chirk (Denbs.), ‘coal master’, for £5,600. One of the trustees was Smith’s cousin, William Wycherley Brookes.<sup>147</sup> At the tithe apportionment, Smith owned a farm of nearly 253 a., in the occupation of Thomas Ebrey (Trench Farm), and Wycherley meadow (in hand). Richard Wycherley Smith died in 1846 and William Wycherley Brookes in 1847.<sup>148</sup> The estate was then advertised for sale as a farm of 218 a. 2 r. 36 p., with about 40 a. of land fronting the Shrewsbury turnpike available separately in three lots.<sup>149</sup> The property then vested in Thomas Edward Ward, who made further purchases to augment the estate, including The Summer House public house, and a large part of the future Pankeymoor Farm from the Jeffreys estate.<sup>150</sup> Catherine, the widow of Richard Wycherley Smith, retained a rent-charge over Trench Farm until her death at Wem in 1851.<sup>151</sup> In 1855 the estate was inherited by Ward’s son-in-law, John Dickin,<sup>152</sup> whom Ward

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<sup>140</sup> SA, 5360/19, fo. 26. See also *ibid.*, fos. 54–59.

<sup>141</sup> SA, 5360/19, fos. 27–9.

<sup>142</sup> SA, 731/2/3255–70; 1805 Survey, 68–71, 76–9. On John Wright, see *Chester Chron.*, 24 Apr 1801, 3; 10 Jan. 1806, 1.

<sup>143</sup> *Wem Parish Registers*, 828.

<sup>144</sup> SA, 5360/19, fos. 30–7.

<sup>145</sup> *Wem Parish Registers*, 737, 595, 597.

<sup>146</sup> Belle Vue: SA, 1186/124. Tilley House: SA, 4727/57; 1841 Census; Tithe apportionment, Tilley and Trench, 46; *Eddowes’s Jnl*, 1 July 1846, 3.

<sup>147</sup> SA, 5360/19, fos. 60–4.

<sup>148</sup> SA, 5360/19, fos. 60–4; *Eddowes’s Jnl*, 23 Sept. 1846, 2.

<sup>149</sup> *Eddowes’s Jnl*, 21 April 1847, 3.

<sup>150</sup> SA, 5360/19, fos. 65–78; SA, SC/25/6, p. 11; NLW, MS MAPS Vol. 99 028/7/6: Maps of an estate belonging to T.E. Ward Esq., 1854. For the Summer House, see below, Economic History, Public houses.

<sup>151</sup> Discharged in 1852 by her brother, George Dickin: SA, 5360/19, fos. 60–4.

had named as his heir.<sup>153</sup> Dickin, who also succeeded to Ward's Chirk colliery business,<sup>154</sup> retained Trench Farm in hand<sup>155</sup> and planned to build a country house there; he laid out the pleasure grounds and planned a gravel drive direct from the Shrewsbury turnpike.<sup>156</sup> Instead, however, Dickin built 'Tyndwfr' at Llangollen and resided there from 1863.<sup>157</sup> Dickin advertised the Trench estate for sale in 1875, in six lots, not all of which were sold.<sup>158</sup> The principal portion of the estate was Trench Farm (270 a. 3 r. 22 p.), including a park of 77 a., advertised as 'a charming site for a mansion'.<sup>159</sup> The purchaser was John Stott Milne and Co. of Stockport (Lancs.), to whom Dickin also sold the Chirk colliery business.<sup>160</sup> John Stott Milne duly built Trench Hall. His wife died there in 1881 and he then advertised the property for sale, but retained it as a residence until 1897.<sup>161</sup> 'The Trench Hall estate' was finally sold in 1898, as a mansion with pleasure grounds and a wooded park of 72 a. plus Trench Farm (284 a.), to another Lancashire industrialist, Nathaniel Farrington Eckersley, who resided there from 1903<sup>162</sup> until his death without issue in 1935, when the estate was auctioned in

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<sup>152</sup> Dickin married Sarah Jane Ward at Chirk in 1842: extract of marriage register, at *The Genealogist* website.

<sup>153</sup> TNA, PROB 11/2221; SA, 5360/19, fo. 98. Dickin was a surgeon at Salop Infirmary, 1835–55: *Salopian Jnl*, 23 Sept. 1835, 2; *Eddowes's Jnl*, 3 January 1855, 3. He was the youngest son of John Dickin of New Hall, Chirk, and probably the nephew of Ward's wife, Sarah: John Dickin of Chirk married Jane Edwards, 1769: *Whittington Parish Registers*, 583; their son John was born in 1775 and daughter Sarah in 1777: ms. parish register of Chirk, 'Christnings 1775', 'Christnings 1777'. Thomas Edward Ward and Sarah Dickin, both of Chirk parish, were married in 1813: extract of marriage register, Chirk, Denbs. (extracts from *The Genealogist* website). See also *Walford's County Families of the United Kingdom*, 34th edition (London 1894), 291. Both the Dickin families of Chirk and of Wem/Loppington thus had interests in Trench Farm, but no connection between them has been identified.

<sup>154</sup> E.g. *Eddowes's Jnl*, 16 July 1856, 1; 1861 Census, John Dickin recorded as 'coal owner' at The Lodge, Chirk.

<sup>155</sup> SA, 5360/19–24; *Eddowes's Jnl*, 18 Nov. 1874, 1. See also Trench Farm accounts (1867–74): SA, 5360/25–31.

<sup>156</sup> SA, SC/25/6, pp. 3, 5.

<sup>157</sup> *Eddowes's Jnl*, 11 Feb. 1863, 1; *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 5 June 1863, 4; 1 Jan. 1864, 9; *Oswestry Advertiser*, 12 March 1890, 8. For Tyndwfr, now Tyn-Dwr, see Cadw, Full Report for Listed Buildings, no. 1258.

<sup>158</sup> See below on Pankeymoor Farm.

<sup>159</sup> SA, SC/25/6; *Eddowes's Jnl*, 30 June 1875, 1.

<sup>160</sup> SA, 5360/32–45; *Wrexham Guardian*, 21 July 1877, 6.

<sup>161</sup> *Wellington Jnl*, 22 Jan. 1881, 5; Trench Hall estate, with mansion, was advertised for sale from 1882, e.g., *The Field*, 10 June 1882, 11; 2 Aug. 1884, 5.

<sup>162</sup> *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 18 Dec. 1903, 2; Reid, *Tilley*, 185–7, 197–9.



lots.<sup>163</sup> The purchaser, at least of Trench Hall, is said to have been ‘the Goodbeeyear brothers from Stockport’.<sup>164</sup>

Trench Hall remained vacant until 1940 when the hall with its grounds was let to a school evacuated from Kent. As soon as the school vacated the premises in 1945/6, SCC took possession of the hall and grounds, on a 99-year lease,<sup>165</sup> for a residential school. Trench Hall has been an educational institution ever since (see Education, below).

Trench Farm was advertised for sale in 1970.<sup>166</sup>

### *Upper Trench Farm and Teakins Farm*

In 1805, by right of his wife Mary (née Wycherley), John Brookes was the owner of a farm comprising 200 a. 1 r. 19 p. in the occupation of John Hale (Upper Trench), and another of 92 a. 2 r. 5 p. (Teakins) in the occupation of a Mr Wilson.<sup>167</sup> Brookes died c.1810, when his eldest son, William Wycherley Brookes, made a new settlement of the ‘Higher Trench Farm’ and the Teakins.<sup>168</sup> At the tithe apportionment, William Wycherley Brookes owned two farms: 190 a. in the occupation of Philip Ratcliffe (Upper Trench) and 109 a. in the occupation of James Hales (Teakins).<sup>169</sup> He died in 1847, leaving all his estate in Tilley and Trench to his second son, John Henry Brookes, and infant youngest son, Matthew Henry Brookes.<sup>170</sup> Matthew Henry died later in 1847, and the estate passed intact to the Revd John Henry Brookes (d. 1896).<sup>171</sup> It was probably inherited by his son, the Revd Charles Cunliffe Brookes,<sup>172</sup> who appears to have sold it to Nathaniel Farrington Eckersley, the owner of

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<sup>163</sup> *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 4 Mar. 1935, 5; 16 Mar. 1935, 17; Reid, *Tilley*, 199, 300, referring to a sale catalogue.

<sup>164</sup> T. Simon, *Rolling through the Isles* (London, 2012), ch. 8 [no page number]: memoir of a former pupil of Bunce Court/Trench Hall school.

<sup>165</sup>

<sup>166</sup> SA, SC/43/93.

<sup>167</sup> 1805 Survey, 68–71, 76–9.

<sup>168</sup> SA, 172/7–9.

<sup>169</sup> SA, 239/30–38; Tithe apportionment, Tilley and Trench, 42–3.

<sup>170</sup> SA, 172/10; TNA, PROB 11/2055/327.

<sup>171</sup> *Eddowes’s Jnl*, 15 Dec. 1847, 2; *Banbury Advertiser*, 28 May 1896, 7; plan of the Trench Estate showing neighbouring landowners, 1875: SA, SC/25/6.

<sup>172</sup> *St Peter’s College, Radley, Register, 1847–1923* (Oxford, 1923), 132. The Revd C.C. Brookes’s death in 1941 was widely reported in the press, apparently because he and his wife, although wealthy, had lived very frugally while giving away large sums for the care of animals: e.g., *Liverpool Evening Express*, 31 March 1941, 1.

Trench Hall and Trench Farm. Upper Trench Farm and Teakins Farm were thus reunited with Trench Farm from c.1916 until 1935 when the whole estate was sold off.<sup>173</sup>

Herbert H. Jones was the tenant of Upper Trench Farm by 1922.<sup>174</sup> He produced award-winning cheeses there in the 1930s,<sup>175</sup> and eventually purchased the farm. It was sold by Jones's executor in 1963 as a working dairy farm of 212½ a.<sup>176</sup>

Teakins Farm (126 a.) was sold in 1960.<sup>177</sup> It was then owned and farmed by F.P. and M.A. Roberts who sold it in 1985 on their retirement.<sup>178</sup>

### Copyhold

In 1436, customary tenants held six messuages and 30 nooks of arable land (approximately 270 a.) in Tilley, for which the total rents paid to the lord of the manor were 12s. and 40s. per annum, respectively.<sup>179</sup> In 1561, 10 copyhold tenants held messuages and land both enclosed and in the open fields, and there were about 12 copyholders in 1589.<sup>180</sup> When the earl of Arundel's trustees offered to enfranchise copyhold tenements in the mid 17th century, only two Tilley tenants took up the offer. Thomas Lovekin enfranchised his tenement with a messuage, a cottage at Broad Meadow and 50 a. The messuage and 5 a. of William Lovekin, deceased, was also enfranchised, by Samuel Furnison. John Downton enfranchised his tenement with a messuage and 42 a.<sup>181</sup> Meanwhile, new freeholdings were created from the sale of Tilley Park.<sup>182</sup>

By 1752, when Garbet wrote his account of the principal estates in Tilley, the largest copyhold estate was that of Thomas Vernon, MP, whose father, Bowater Vernon of Hanbury (Worcs.), had acquired the houses at the east end of the village (formerly Higginson) and

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<sup>173</sup> Reid, *Tilley*, 185–6, 300, referring to a sale catalogue.

<sup>174</sup> *Kelly's Dir., Shrops.*, 1922, 285.

<sup>175</sup> *Yorkshire Post*, 13 July 1932, 10; *Crewe Chronicle*, 27 May 1939, 7; *Kelly's Dir., Shrops.*, 1941, 290.

<sup>176</sup> SA, SC/46/50.

<sup>177</sup> *Birmingham Daily Post*, 22 Sept. 1960, 2.

<sup>178</sup> SA, SC/47/10–11.

<sup>179</sup> TNA, C 139/76/34; *Cal. Inq. PM*, xxiv, 348, no. 495.

<sup>180</sup> *Survey 1561*, 148–61; TNA, LR 2/225.

<sup>181</sup> ACA, MS MD 59, pp. 39–40, 76. Lovekin: Garbet, 344; SA, 5154/2/1 (1732–1769).

<sup>182</sup> Garbet, 340–1.

their lands,<sup>183</sup> the Spendlove estate, including Tilley Hall, and one-fifth of the old park. Sir Rowland Hill of Hawkstone held the former Whitfield estate in Tilley (Brook Farm).<sup>184</sup>

In 1805 the largest tenements were held by the successors to the two parts of the Trench: John Brookes's holding of (Upper) Trench was nearly 293 a. in two farms, while 'Mrs Wycherley' (presumably Beatrice, the widow of Daniel Wycherley) held a total of 386 a. in Tilley and Trench. Brownlow Cecil, 2nd Marquess of Exeter, held nearly 233 a., having inherited the Vernon estate, which was, however, sold off at auction in 1819.<sup>185</sup> William Jeffreys held 141 a. and his brother Thomas 120 a. Sir Richard Hill of Hawkstone, heir to Sir Rowland, held nearly 83 a. Corbet Howard held 67½ a., as heir to the Hayward estate.<sup>186</sup>

The pattern of mixed copyhold and freehold landholding continued into the 19th century. The principal consolidation was the dominance of the Jeffreys estate.

#### *Jeffreys Tilley estate*<sup>187</sup>

William Jeffreys was the miller at Wem mill and owned the Mill House in the 1750s.<sup>188</sup> His sons, Thomas Jeffreys of Tilley and William Jeffreys of Wem, each purchased farms of about 100 a. on the former Tilley Park, and in 1799 settled them upon Thomas's son, William Egerton Jeffreys.<sup>189</sup> W.E. Jeffreys succeeded to this large estate after 1805 and was succeeded in 1847 by his son of the same name – both were Shrewsbury solicitors.<sup>190</sup> In 1853 the estate comprised 435½ a.<sup>191</sup> W.E. Jeffreys the younger died in 1857 when his heir was his daughter Sarah. Sarah died without issue in 1891 and the estate passed to her niece, Mary Emma Smith.<sup>192</sup> In 1911 the estate passed to Lucy Alice Beatty who in 1913 sold it off in 16

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<sup>183</sup> Garbet, 342; SA, 6000/303 (1703), 6000/314–15.

<sup>184</sup> Garbet, 342–5.

<sup>185</sup> Abstract of title of Thomas Davies of dwellinghouse etc. to be sold to Thomas Edward Ward, 1853: SA, 1848 box 160.

<sup>186</sup> 1805 Survey, 64–79. Corbet Hayward: Garbet, 341–2; 'The Haywards or Howards of Tilley, Shropshire' (typescript), SA, MI 3527/1.

<sup>187</sup> See Jeffreys family papers, 1710–1894: SA, D3651/B/30; SA, 1709 boxes 193–8.

<sup>188</sup> SA, D3651/B/151/5/4–5; Garbet, 345.

<sup>189</sup> Baptised at Wem, 1774: *Wem Parish Registers*, 587; SA, 279/381; SA, 322/2/347/36: will of Thomas Jeffreys, 24 May 1816.

<sup>190</sup> SA, D3651/B/30/2/4/1; Sun (London), 8 Jan. 1847, 10.

<sup>191</sup> Sale particulars: SA, D3651/B/30/3; Reid, *Tilley*, 184–5.

<sup>192</sup> SA, D3651/B/30/1/7/9; *Wellington Jnl*, 28 Apr. 1894, 1.

lots. At that time, the estate comprised 581 a., with five dairy farms, 13 separate enclosures, one smallholding and eight cottages with gardens. The farms were: Brook Farm (purchased since 1851 from the Hill of Hawkstone estate), Tilley Farm, Tilley Hall, Rue Wood and Tilley Park.<sup>193</sup>

## ECONOMIC HISTORY

### Agriculture

Tilley had three open fields. Brockley field lay south of the village, between the crofts and the bounds of Tilley Park. The other two lay in the north east of the township, detached from the village. Tilley field lay north of Aston Lane near Woodhouses. Burley field extended from Hough Lane east as far as the township boundary at Malins Oaks.<sup>194</sup> The open field system was still in operation in 1561 but the fields had been completely enclosed by 1589.<sup>195</sup>

### Horticulture

In 1885 Henry Eckford moved to Wem and commenced a seed growing business, specialising in breeding sweet pea varieties, and pioneering sales internationally by mail order. Eckford's residence, warehouse and shop were on Market Street in Wem with a nursery on Soulton Road. As seed production expanded, Eckford rented land from C.H. Kynaston, near the Tilley level crossing. Henry Eckford died in 1905 and his son, John Stainer Eckford, succeeded to the business. In 1906, J.S. Eckford moved his growing family to 'Ferndale', the timber-framed farm house in Tilley nearest to the flower fields, with 5½ a., also rented from Kynaston.<sup>196</sup> In 1913 he purchased 13 a. near the Shrewsbury road from the sale of the Jeffreys estate.<sup>197</sup> The flower fields on Soulton Road and Tilley provided seasonal employment and were a visitor attraction when in bloom.<sup>198</sup> The shop and warehouse remained on Market Street, where Henry Eckford's widow still resided, in 1924, but the

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<sup>193</sup> Sale particulars: SA, 1848 box 191; *Whitchurch Herald*, 12 July 1913; Reid, *Tilley*, 187.

<sup>194</sup> *Survey 1561*: 'Brockley', 'Brockeley filde' (148, 154), 'Burleyfilde' (154), 'Tilleley filde' (148); Arundel map; Garbet, 347; Reid, *Tilley*, 54–5. Field-names derived from Tilley field became 'Sillaley' by 1631, then 'Celery' (1840s).

<sup>195</sup> *Survey 1561*, 146–59; TNA, LR 2/225.

<sup>196</sup> *Wellington Jnl*, 13 Jan. 1906, 6; Census 1901 (Wem), 1911 (Tilley).

<sup>197</sup> *Whitchurch Herald*, 12 July 1913, printed in Reid, *Tilley*, 188.

<sup>198</sup> H. Merchant, *Wem, History and Guide* (Wem, 1907) [quoted in Reid, *Tilley*, 235].

business appears to have moved to Ferndale by 1934, when the address of ‘Henry Eckford FRHS, seed merchant’ was ‘Shrewsbury Road, Wem’.<sup>199</sup> J.S. Eckford with two of his daughters, ‘Queenie’ Eckford and Agnes Boscombe Caslaw, continued the seed business until his death in 1944. Agnes purchased Ferndale from the Kynaston estate in 1945, but eventually wound up the seed business before her death in 1976.<sup>200</sup>

## **Crafts and Industry**

### *Blacksmith*

There was a probably a blacksmith in Tilley by 1599 and Joseph Ball was a blacksmith in Tilley in 1731. The smithy was located centrally, on the south side of the main junction in the village, until the 1870s, when the blacksmith moved to the premises now known as The Smithy, next to The Raven public house. The blacksmith’s shop continued to operate there until the retirement of the last smith, Tom Weston, in 1962.<sup>201</sup>

In the 1850s, apparently the high point of such local activity, Tilley supported the blacksmith’s shop, a farrier, two wheelwrights, and a brickmaker.<sup>202</sup> In 1871, John and George Woollan, building contractors, were also based in Tilley.<sup>203</sup>

### *Brickmaking*

According to Garbet, the tenants of Tilley had a common right of making bricks at Tilley Green, where there was suitable clay.<sup>204</sup> Unlike Barker’s Green (Aston), no commercial brickworks developed there. A brickyard was established, however, by the Jeffreys estate, a

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<sup>199</sup> *Strong’s Wem Almanack*, 1925, 30, 34; *Kelly’s Dir.*, 1934; 1941, 290; *London Gaz.*, 1 Mar. 1935, 1534. Emily, the widow of Henry Eckford, died in Whitchurch district in 1942, aged 98.

<sup>200</sup> *ODNB*, Eckford, Henry (1823–1905); Reid, *Tilley*, 235–8; ‘Memories of Noble Street in the 1920s. Interview with Mrs Grindall by Linda Etherington in 1996’, <http://www.wemlocal.org.uk/wempast/memories/grindall.htm>. Agnes, née Eckford, *Sunderland Daily Echo and Shipping Gaz.*, 8 July 1932, 1.

<sup>201</sup> Reid, *Tilley*, 165–73, based on: ‘Wem Probate Inventories’; *Wem Parish Registers*; Census 1841–; account books of William Weston and sons, 1902, 1918–29, 1942–59 (in private possession?). The Smithy: Reid and Nash, *Tilley Timber Project*, 54–6.

<sup>202</sup> Reid, *Tilley*, 167; *Harrods Dir.*, 1861, 728.

<sup>203</sup> *Cassey & Co. Dir.*, 1871, 379.

<sup>204</sup> Garbet, 347.

short distance south west of Tilley Green, on a parcel of land beside the lane to Tilley Park farm that was bounded by the railway and the turnpike road. The brickyard may have been established initially to supply bricks for the construction of the railway, as surplus bricks ‘lying on the ... line’ at various locations, sold off in 1858–9, included bricks at ‘Tilley Park’.<sup>205</sup> By 1861 the brickyard, with sheds, a ‘house’ and kiln, was let to Samuel Phillips, but in 1864 Phillips gave up the business, selling off a large stock of bricks and clay pipes, and the lease was advertised with four years unexpired. The brickyard was still in operation in 1868, when at least two men were employed there.<sup>206</sup> The brickyard had ceased production by 1883, when the tenant of the New Inn, Thomas Tomlins, leased the ‘old brickyard’ on terms that he would level the ground.<sup>207</sup>

## Services

### *Public houses*

The earliest public houses were situated at the junctions of rural lanes with the Wem–Shrewsbury turnpike to attract both local and passing trade. The Cross, later Pankeymoor Villa, may at some time have been a public house known as the Cross Keys.<sup>208</sup> The Summer House, at the junction of Tilley Green and the Shrewsbury turnpike, was an inn in the first half of the 19th century. Thomas Davies, innkeeper of Wem, purchased from the Vernon estate sale in 1819 a close of what was then arable land known as Green Croft. Davies built the dwelling house with outbuildings and gave his occupation as ‘innkeeper’ in 1824 and in the 1841 census, where ‘Sum House’ (*sic*) was noted as the name of the premises.<sup>209</sup> Davies apparently retired c.1850 and sold the property to Thomas Edward Ward, then owner of (Lower) Trench Farm, retaining a life tenancy of the property.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>205</sup> *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 14 Jan. 1859, 1.

<sup>206</sup> *Harrods Dir.*, 1861, 728; *Eddowes’s Jnl*, 27 Jan. 1864, 1; *Wellington Jnl*, 4 July 1868, 5.

<sup>207</sup> Reid, *Tilley*, 268–9.

<sup>208</sup> Woodward, 60.

<sup>209</sup> SA, 5360/20 (1824); Tithe apportionment, lot 865; Census 1841; Reid, *Tilley*, 271; Woodward, 60.

<sup>210</sup> Abstract of title, 1717–1854: SA, 5360/19, fos. 65–74; SA, 1868 box 160; Census 1851, Thomas Davies, aged 67, ‘annuitant’. Lease, Thomas Edward Ward of Chirk to Thomas Davies of Tilley, 8 Feb. 1854: SA, 1868 box 160; Advertised for sale as part of the Trench estate in 1875: SA, SC/25/6, lot 3.

About 500 m. south along the turnpike, at the junction of the lane to Tilley Park Farm, the New Inn was a roadside beer house. At the tithe apportionment, there were two adjoining houses and gardens on the site, owned by George Bowers.<sup>211</sup> By the 1841 census, the premises had become the New Inn, occupied by Thomas Wall, publican. By 1879, it had been extended or rebuilt.<sup>212</sup> In 1891 it was said that the New Inn had been a public house for more than 50 years. At that date, the owner was George Evans of Hockleton (Flints.), and the inn had 10 rooms, stabling for four horses, and mainly 'roadside and agricultural' trade. By 1896 it was a tied house to Shrewsbury & Wem Brewery Co. Ltd. In 1910 the licence was revoked for redundancy and compensation paid to the brewery company. The premises were then converted to a private residence named 'Newlynn'.<sup>213</sup>

The Raven public house was established in the centre of Tilley village in 1868. The existing farmhouse of Thomas Jones was converted for the purpose. Jones's daughter, Mary Ann, was the licensee, holding a beerhouse licence and operating as a free house for about 50 years. The property was sold in 1920,<sup>214</sup> possibly to Shrewsbury & Wem Brewery Co. Ltd, and it became a tied house to that brewery, with a succession of licensees throughout the 20th century, at times operating also as a grocery shop and coal supplier. After a brief closure from 1984, during which time Wem Brewery was closed down by its parent company, the Raven reopened as a Marston's tied house and again, under new management, as a free house in 1988. The Raven then continued to operate until 2018. In 2020 it was acquired and reopened by the Craft & Jam chain of Shropshire pub/restaurants.<sup>215</sup>

## SOCIAL HISTORY

### Communal Life

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<sup>211</sup> Tithe apportionment, lots 988–92, 1030; OS, 25" XXI.7 (1879).

<sup>212</sup> OS, 25" Shropshire Sheet XXI.7, 1881; SRO, D1375/1/3/7/1: lease of the New Inn, 1877.

<sup>213</sup> SA, QA/9/3/1, Return of Licensed Houses, 1891; SA, QA/9/5/2, Apr. 1910.; *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 13 May 1910, 6; Reid, *Tilley*, 267–71.

<sup>214</sup> SA, SC/1/15; SA, 4756/4/10.

<sup>215</sup> SA, PH/T/6/4, PH/T/6/11; Reid, *Tilley*, 262–6; *Shropshire Star*, 1 Dec. 2020; Craft & Jam, The Tilley Raven: <https://thetilleyraven.co.uk/>.

In the absence of communal or municipal facilities, the village public house, The Raven, played an important role in Tilley's communal life from its establishment in 1868.<sup>216</sup> The premises were used for coroner's inquests,<sup>217</sup> and provided catering for village gatherings.<sup>218</sup>

Starting with Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897, an annual fete and sports day was held in Tilley village.<sup>219</sup>

Pankeymoor Farm was a popular venue for large-scale outdoor events in the later 19th and early 20th centuries.<sup>220</sup> The property was only about a kilometre from Wem town hall, and easily accessible from the railway and the main Shrewsbury–Wem road (now the B5476). Both the tenant in the 1880s, Josiah Franklin, and later the owner, Charles Henry Kynaston, were highly prominent in Wem commercial and civic life.<sup>221</sup>

In the first half of the 18th century, Samuel Garbet reported that Wem did not hold parish wakes, referring to the feast day of St Peter (and St Paul), 29 June.<sup>222</sup> 'Wakes' were held in the early 19th century, however, when the September fair was known as 'the Wem wakes fair',<sup>223</sup> and was customarily celebrated with a race meeting. It was probably the demise of Wem racecourse, south of Tilley, c.1840, that ended this tradition.<sup>224</sup> It seems to have been revived by 1881, however, when the 'euphemistically titled' 'Wem wakes' was held at Pankeymoor in late September. In that year, there was pigeon shooting and athletic sports, with dancing in the evening.<sup>225</sup>

In 1885 Pankeymoor hosted the 2nd Shropshire Rifle Volunteers Corps's annual eight-day camp, with over 600 men present – a source of entertainment and good business for the

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<sup>216</sup> Reid, *Tilley*, 234, 262–6.

<sup>217</sup> *Eddowes's Jnl*, 21 Dec. 1881, 8; *Wellington Jnl*, 20 Sept. 1902, 10.

<sup>218</sup> *Wellington Jnl*, 25 June 1898, 7; Reid, *Tilley*, 262–4.

<sup>219</sup> *Wellington Jnl*, 5 July 1902, 11; 8 Jun. 1907, 12; *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 16 June 1905, 8; Reid, *Tilley*, 200, 264.

<sup>220</sup> The farm was apparently consolidated from various tenements by John Dickin (owner of the Trench estate) in the 1850s–60s: 5360/19, fos. 75–8; SA, SC/25/6, pp. 7, 11.

<sup>221</sup> Franklin: *Wellington Jnl*, 22 Mar. 1884, 5; Kynaston: *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 26 July 1907, 9 (illustrated feature article).

<sup>222</sup> Garbet, 230.

<sup>223</sup> *Wellington Jnl*, 22 Mar. 1884, 5.

<sup>224</sup> *VCH Wem*, 88.

<sup>225</sup> *Wellington Jnl*, 3 Sept. 1881, 1; 1 Oct. 1887, 8; 29 Sept. 1888, 6.



whole town.<sup>226</sup> In 1886 the Shropshire Agricultural Society annual show was held at Pankeymoor Farm, a coup for Josiah Franklin and a prestigious event for Wem.<sup>227</sup>

For Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887, racing was reintroduced to the Wem wakes and the event was renamed 'Wem Pony Races and Athletic Sports', with a fairground and refreshments. The pony races were held under the Pony and Galloway Racing Rules and the athletics under Amateur Athletics Association rules. Entrants travelled from around Shropshire, from Wales and Manchester and Liverpool. Special fares were offered for visitors arriving by train. Six-a-side football was added in 1889.<sup>228</sup> In that year, it was reported of Pankeymoor that 'the place is admirably adapted' for pony racing,<sup>229</sup> however the event was apparently not repeated.

After both Josiah Franklin and the landowner, John Dickin of Llangollen, died in 1888–90, Charles Henry Kynaston acquired Pankeymoor Farm and by 1901 had built 'The Oaklands' there as his family residence.<sup>230</sup> As a founder member of Wem and District Agricultural Association, Kynaston offered the use of Pankeymoor as a showground. From 1902, the Association held highly successful annual shows there in late July/early August. Visitors arrived in Wem by train. Horses, cattle, dogs, poultry and pigeons and cheeses were shown, as well as a 'grand horticultural exhibition'; there was a fairground, bands and dancing in the evening.<sup>231</sup> In 1910 Pankeymoor was praised as 'a site for an agricultural show which it would be hard to surpass'.<sup>232</sup> Interrupted by the First World War, the agricultural show continued to be held at Pankeymoor until 1926, but thereafter it was held at Creamore and other locations in Wem Rural Parish.<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>226</sup> *Wellington Jnl*, 25 July 1885, 6; 8 Aug. 1885, 8.

<sup>227</sup> *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 30 July 1886, 11 ('Banky Farm'); *Eddowes's Jnl*, 11 Aug. 1886, 8.

<sup>228</sup> *Wellington Jnl*, 1 Oct. 1887, 8; 15 Sept. 1888, 1; 29 Sept. 1888, 6; 21 Sept. 1889, 1.

<sup>229</sup> *Oswestry Advertiser*, 25 Sept. 1889, 8.

<sup>230</sup> *Wellington Jnl*, 1 Oct. 1887, 8; 4 Aug. 1888, 5; *Oswestry Advertiser*, 12 Mar. 1890, 8; Census 1891, 1901; OS XXI.3 (1902).

<sup>231</sup> *Birmingham Daily Gaz.*, 20 July 1907, 4; 9 Aug. 1913, 5; *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 29 July 1905, 10; 26 July 1907, 9; 16 July 1909, 1; 12 Aug. 1910, 5; *Wellington Jnl*, 2 Aug. 1902, 12; 23 July 1904, 6; 13 July 1907, 6.

<sup>232</sup> *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 12 Aug. 1910, 5.

<sup>233</sup> Woodward, 102–3; Reid, *Tilley*, 204, 278; Wem and District Agricultural Association annual show catalogues, 1926, 1931, 1954, in possession of Tom Edwards. C.H. Kynaston died in 1921 and his widow in November 1925, although their son continued to reside at The Oaklands: M. Davies, 'Henry Kynaston (brewer & landowner) b 1848. An account of his life', <http://www.wemlocal.org.uk/wempast/memories/kynaston.htm>

## Education

Formal education for most children from Tilley, in general, has been the same as for Wem.

The convenient yet still rural edge-of-town location attracted private schools to Tilley in the 19th and 20th centuries. Tilley House Classical Academy operated in the 1820s at Tilley House, a gentleman's residence in large grounds on the south bank of the Roden near Wem bridge, but when the school moved to Flintshire in 1830 the house reverted to a private residence.<sup>234</sup>

Tilley Lodge, next to the railway viaduct, was for 30 years a small private school.<sup>235</sup> Dr William Whiston, a schoolmaster of long experience in neighbouring counties, and already at least 60 years of age, moved into Tilley Lodge in 1896 and opened a school there, advertising for a limited number of boarders.<sup>236</sup> The school was variously advertised as a 'collegiate school' for boys under Dr Whiston and a school for girls under Miss Mason.<sup>237</sup> Later Whiston's daughter, Mary Anne, joined him at Tilley Lodge as 'art teacher', and she continued the school in her own name at least until 1925.<sup>238</sup>

A private school first established in Wem by Patrick James O'Dea, a former master of Wem grammar school, moved to Tilley House in 1918. Admitting boys and girls, day pupils and boarders, Tilley House School advertised its extensive playing fields, and offered commercial courses in secretarial skills and horticulture.<sup>239</sup> By the time O'Dea retired in 1938, local demand for such post-elementary vocational education was met by the county senior school in Wem, which opened in 1931, and the private school closed. The vacancy created at Tilley House was promptly filled by The Grove High School for Girls, which had outgrown its original site in Wem. The Grove School continued at Tilley House until the retirement of the

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<sup>234</sup> *VCH Wem*, 98.

<sup>235</sup> Reid, *Tilley*, 189–91.

<sup>236</sup> *Wellington Jnl*, 8 Aug. 1896, 4; Woodward, 105.

<sup>237</sup> *Wellington Jnl*, 14 Oct. 1899, 5; 27 Jan. 1900, 5. In the 1901 census, Eliza Mason's occupation was 'housekeeper', and there were no boarders.

<sup>238</sup> *Wellington Jnl*, 9 Jan. 1904, 5; 1911 census; *Kelly's Dir. Shropshire, 1913*, 291; *Strong's Wem Almanack 1925*, 32.

<sup>239</sup> *Strong's Wem Almanack 1925*, 100; Reid, *Tilley*, 190–2.

long-serving headmistress, Nora A. Freeman, in 1962. Tilley House was then demolished and the grounds redeveloped as the Roden Grove housing estate.<sup>240</sup>

Trench Hall, unoccupied since the death of ~~Lt. Col.~~ Nathaniel ffarrington Eckersley in 1935, was let in 1940 to a German school teacher and educational pioneer, Anna Essinger.<sup>241</sup> Essinger had established at Bunce Court, near Otterden (Kent), in 1933 a school for Jewish children sent to England to escape Nazi persecution, along with refugee Jewish intellectuals who were nominally employed as school staff. When the school was ordered to evacuate from Kent at short notice in 1940, Essinger hastily found Trench Hall and relocated the school there. Pupils from elsewhere in England were also admitted as boarders, but the school was not attended by children from the local community, and returned to Bunce Court in 1946.<sup>242</sup>

After the war, SCC planned the conversion of Trench Hall into a residential school for ‘maladjusted children’. A.G. Chant, county architect, had prepared plans for the conversion by December 1945 and SCC took possession of the hall and grounds in 1946.<sup>243</sup> In 2002, Trench Hall School had 35 places for boys and girls aged 11 to 16 years with statements of special educational need because of their emotional and behavioural difficulties, but had just 25 boys on the roll. Pupils attended daily from both Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin. To address difficulties with leadership and staff retention, Shropshire Council arranged for Trench Hall School to link with a centre for outreach support services.<sup>244</sup> In 2003 it was renamed The Woodlands Centre, combining the school and an outreach service for children with special social, emotional and mental health needs.<sup>245</sup> In 2021 Woodlands School joined the Marches Academy Trust.<sup>246</sup>

## Social Welfare

### *Charities for the poor*

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<sup>240</sup> Reid, *Tilley*, 191, 194; *VCH Wem*, 95, 98.

<sup>241</sup> ‘Essinger, Anna (1879–1960), educationist’, *ODNB*.

<sup>242</sup> SA, MI7628/5; Reid, *Tilley*, 246–8; H. Jackson, ‘Anna’s children’, *The Guardian*, 18 July 2003; ‘Kindertransport: The Shropshire school with a remarkable history’, *Shropshire Star*, 1 Dec. 2018.

<sup>243</sup> SA, SCC1/G/1320–30; Woodward, 165.

<sup>244</sup> Ofsted report, Inspection no. 196838, 2002.

<sup>245</sup> Woodlands School: [www.woodlands.school/page/?title=Woodlands+Wem&pid=20](http://www.woodlands.school/page/?title=Woodlands+Wem&pid=20)

<sup>246</sup> ‘Woodlands School...’, 2 Mar. 2021: <https://www.marchesacademytrust.co.uk/>

Tilley residents were able to benefit from the various charities established for the poor of Wem parish,<sup>247</sup> but certain charities were established specifically for the poor of Tilley.

*Higginson's charity:* In 1727, John Dean, innkeeper of Wem, and his wife Sarah and Sarah Higginson of Tilley, widow, charged Townsend Leasowe (in Wem township) with an annuity of 28s. to be paid to a trustee for the use of the poor of Tilley.<sup>248</sup> By c.1830 the land, then known as Dog Kennel Field, was owned by Major Thomas Dickin, who paid 28s. per annum to the curate of Wem, who distributed it among the poor of Tilley in sums of 6d. to 2s.<sup>249</sup> The charity was registered with the Charity Commission in 1961, was still in existence in 1975, but by 1991 had ceased to operate independently.<sup>250</sup>

*Minshull's charity:* At an unknown date, a Mr Minshull of Tilley left in his will the sum of £40 for charitable purposes, out of which the interest on £5 was to be distributed to the poor of Tilley and Trench.<sup>251</sup> The capital sum was in the hands of Thomas Wilkinson of Wolverley, c.1830, who usually paid 5s. per annum to Thomas Ireland to distribute to the poor of Tilley and Trench. The charity commissioners recommended that the capital sum should be invested 'on some good security' and the interest more regularly applied.<sup>252</sup>

## RELIGIOUS HISTORY

The history of organised religion for Tilley residents, in general, has been the same as for Wem.

Primitive Methodist meetings were held in Tilley in 1850–1. Meetings were held in a private house, with 45 sittings, under the authority of the Wem chapel.<sup>253</sup> A Primitive Methodist

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<sup>247</sup> *VCH Wem*, 99–100.

<sup>248</sup> SA, 6000/8608. On John Dean: Garbet, 237. Cf. *Charities Commission Report*, 336.

<sup>249</sup> *Charities Commission Report*, 336.

<sup>250</sup> Charity Commission, registered charity no. 241844; SA, 4693/192: 'Report of the Review of Local Charities in Shropshire 1975'.

<sup>251</sup> Perhaps Thomas Minshull of Tilley Park (fl. 1775): SA, D3651/B/4/2/208.

<sup>252</sup> *Charities Commission Report*, 334.

<sup>253</sup> *Church and Chapel*, 108.

chapel was established at Noneley in 1872.<sup>254</sup> In 1919 it was replaced by a chapel at Rue Wood, on the Wem-Loppington parish boundary, where T. Bowden offered a plot of 150 square yards at a nominal cost and bricks from the old chapel were re-used.<sup>255</sup> There was a Sunday School in the 1950s. The Rue Wood chapel closed and was sold in 1980–1.<sup>256</sup>

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<sup>254</sup> Prees Green Circuit Minute Book: SA, 2775/3, 11 Mar. 1861, 5 Sept. 1870, 4 Sept. 1871, 4 Dec. 1871, 4 Mar. 1872, 3 June 1872; *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 17 Apr. 1872.

<sup>255</sup> Wem Circuit Minute Book: SA, 2775/16: 8 May 1919, 25 Feb. 1920; *Wellington Jnl*, 17 May 1919; 24 Jan. 1953; OS 25" XXI.3 (1924); pers. comm. Tom Edwards.

<sup>256</sup> SA, NM4627/5/G1–G4.