

The Official Guide

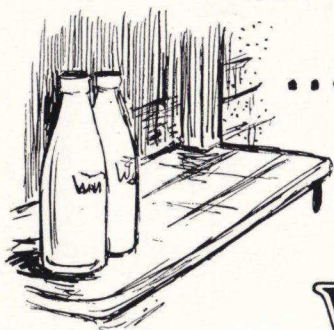
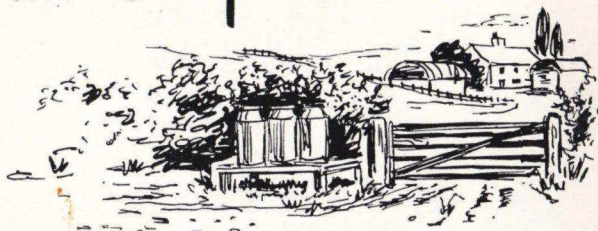
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Official Guide

WITH MAP
AND SEVEN ILLUSTRATIONS

Issued by Authority of the
HAGLEY PARISH COUNCIL

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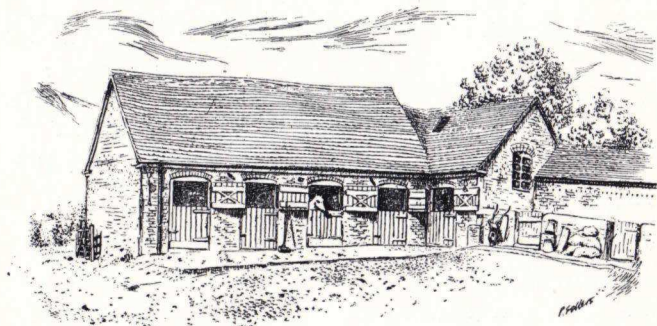
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HAGLEY

Situation : Situated in the North of the county of Worcester the parish of Hagley is easily accessible from London (124½ miles), Birmingham (12 miles), Stourbridge (3 miles), Kidderminster (6 miles) and Bromsgrove (7½ miles) by a service of trains on the Western Region of British Railways or by buses from all the above places. 1,800 buses weekly serve this village.

In addition, Associated Motorways of Cheltenham operate Regular Express Coach Services daily to and from West Hagley, Cheltenham, Bristol, Weston super Mare, Exeter, Bournemouth, Southampton, Portsmouth, Oxford, Uxbridge, Reading, London, Newport, Cardiff, Swansea, Monmouth, Treherbert and all parts of South Wales and the South Coast.

During the Summer additional services operate to all parts of Devon and Cornwall, and the South-east Coast.

Local Authority : Hagley is a parish of 1,931 acres within the Bromsgrove Rural District Council. It is administered by the Parish Council—Clerk : Mr. F. D. S. Lodge, Elmwood, 135 Worcester Road, West Hagley. Telephone : Hagley 3176.

Population : 2,700.

Shops : There are a number of shops catering for most domestic needs. Early closing days vary in the parish, some shops on Tuesday, others on Wednesdays or Thursday, all at 1.0 p.m.

HAGLEY WAR MEMORIAL





LYTTELTON ARMS HOTEL

Hotels : Lyttelton Arms Hotel. Hagley Court Hotel. Gypsy's Tent Hotel.

Inns : Cross Keys. Station Inn. Prince of Wales. Spencers Arms

Teas and Refreshments : Robin Hood Road House, Worcester Road, West Hagley. Jill's Cafe, Bromsgrove Road, Hagley.

Banks : Barclay's, Lloyd's, Midland. All in Worcester Road, West Hagley, and all open from 10.15 a.m. to 12.15 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Police : There are two Police Stations—one in Hagley, near War Memorial, and the other in Worcester Road, West Hagley.

Post Offices : Two—In Hagley near the Lyttelton Arms Hotel. At West Hagley in Worcester Road.

Schools : In Park Road is the County Primary School for 300 scholars.

Churches : St. John the Baptist, Hagley, Anglican, St. Saviour's, West Hagley, Anglican. Free Church, West Hagley.

Recreation : In 1937 five acres of land in the centre of West Hagley were purchased for Playing Fields. Since then through the good offices of Lord Cobham, a further three acres have been added free of all cost to the inhabitants, the whole 8 acres levelled and laid down to grass, upon which cricket, football and hockey are regularly played. A portion of the land has been reserved for a children's playground, containing swings, rocking horse, giant stride, joy wheel, plank swing and 40ft. slide.

Hagley is the recognised centre of the Albrighton Woodland Fox Hunt, and the two main meets, the Opening and Boxing Day, are held at the Lyttelton Arms Hotel.

Allotments : By the generosity of a local lady, two acres of land adjoining the Playing Fields have been purchased and presented to the village.

Cattle Market : At Hagley every Monday.

Garages : Forge Garage (Hagley). Central Garage (Worcester Road). Cross Keys Garage (Worcester Road). Smiths' Garage, (Worcester Road.)

THE PLAYING FIELDS, WEST HAGLEY



HAGLEY

*With acknowledgements to J. Homery Folkes, Esq., F.R.I.B.A.,
Stourbridge*

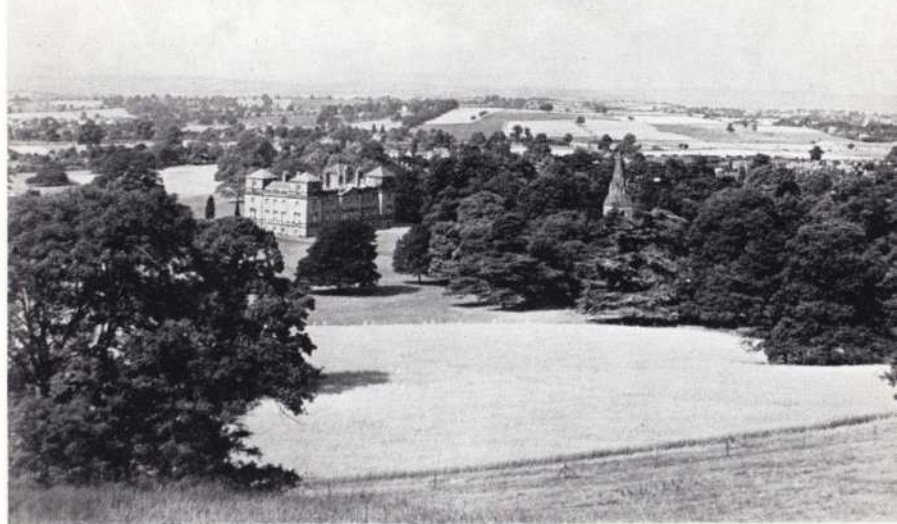
Apart from the activities described in acquiring the Playing Fields and allotments, parishioners have given to the village 120 trees to celebrate the 1951 Festival of Britain. Ten roadside seats are also provided in carefully chosen parts of the parish.

The oldest part of Hagley is the nucleus built on the main Srou-bridge-Bromsgrove road, not far from Hagley Hall and the old church. West Hagley is a later development which came after the railway was built in 1852 and old maps shew little evidence of habitation until the latter half of the last century. One old map shews the cross roads where St. Saviour's Church now stands, as Clap Gate, which suggests some form of toll bar there.

The name Hagley is written in Domesday Book as *Hagelia*, from the Saxon Haga, *domus*, and Leag or Lega, *locus*. According to the historian, Dr. Treadway Nash, this probably indicated the "chief residence of a great Saxon lord, and styled by way of eminence the manor-place." Before the Conquest Hagley was held by Godric, a thegn of King Edward the Confessor. The manor, and other lands, belonged from 1187 to various members of the de Hageley family in succession until 1412. After various other ownerships it was purchased from Sir John St. Leger in 1564 by Sir John Lyttelton, Knt., who died in 1590. The history of the parish is thus bound up with that of the Lytteltons, who built the present Hall and which is still the seat of the head of the family, Viscount Cobham.

This family has played its part in English history. Judge Lyttelton, who died in 1481, was author of an important work, *The Tenures*. Edward Lyttelton was keeper of the Great Seal in the 17th Century. John Lyttelton, a grandson of the first owner of Hagley, was concerned in the Earl of Essex's plot to overthrow the Government of Elizabeth I. He was condemned to death for treason but died in prison in 1601. His lands were forfeited to the Crown but his widow, Meriel Lyttelton, succeeded in having them restored to her by James I in 1603. In 1605 members of the family were involved in the Gunpowder Plot, when Humphrey Lyttelton, taking advantage of Mrs. Lyttelton's absence from home, gave refuge to his cousin, Stephen Lyttelton and Robert Wintour, two of the fleeing conspirators after the plot was discovered. In the course of the pursuit they came from Stephen's house at 'Holbeach to Hagley, where they lay hidden until betrayed by a cook, or as some believe by the "warrener" or game keeper. They fled again only to be taken at Prestwood. Both Lytteltons were hanged for their part in the plot. In the Civil War Sir Thomas Lyttelton—he had received a baronetcy in 1618—supported the Royalists. His house at Frankley was burned down by Prince Rupert to prevent it falling into the hands of the Roundheads, leaving Hagley as the principal home of the family in Worcestershire.

Sir George Lyttelton succeeded to Hagley on the death of his father in 1751 and he it was who built the present Hall. His career in politics earned him a Barony in 1756 after he had relinquished the



IN HAGLEY PARK, A VIEW FROM MILTON'S SEAT

office of Chancellor of the Exchequer. As a man of letters he wrote a great many books in prose and verse, including a *History of Henry II*; *Dialogues of the Dead*; and *Letters from a Persian in England*. He was a patron of literature and helped James Thomson, the poet, who was a frequent visitor to Hagley, which he commemorated in his poem *The Seasons*, although his words for the song *Rule Britannia* are better known.

Among distinguished visitors to Hagley were Alexander Pope, the poet and satirist; William Shenstone and Sanderson Miller. Dr. Samuel Johnson came in his youth in 1731 and again paid an admiring visit in September 1774.

HAGLEY HALL

The present house was built by the first Lord Lyttelton, and designed by Sanderson Miller of Radway, Warwicks., to replace the old Hagley Hall, which is reputed to have stood on the site of the cricket pitch near it. The former house was half-timbered, with picturesque overhanging gables, and had a brick wing added by Sir Charles Lyttelton in the reign of William III. By the middle of the century it was considered out of date and in 1754 a new house of stone, in the Palladian style, was started and was not completed until 1760. The old Hall was demolished, the only relic

preserved being a fine Jacobean chimney piece, which was transferred to the new house and put in the Housekeeper's room. Later it was moved to Lord Cobham's study, where it still is.

The cost of the building amounted to the considerable sum, even for these days, of £25,823 0s. 0d. By the time the furnishing was completed £34,000 had been spent. Some of the money went on rebuilding the chancel and repairing the nearby church, though the precise amount is not known.

The house has some fine rooms, notable for the excellence of their decorative plaster work, tapestries, sculptures and pictures. On Christmas Eve, 1925, a disastrous fire occurred which raged for 64 hours and destroyed about two thirds of the building. Fortunately the greater part of the treasures were saved. The father of the present Lord Cobham undertook the restoration of the house, which now stands to-day in a perfection equal to that of its first building in the seventeen fifties.

Lord Cobham has been appointed Governor-General of New Zealand, and takes up this appointment in August, 1957 for five years.

HAGLEY PARK

The Park was notable in the 18th century, and for long afterwards, as an example of the large-scale landscaping which was undertaken by those who indulged a taste and knowledge of the arts and architecture and desired a romantic setting for their homes. The 18th century love for the embellishment of a landscape with temples, obelisks, urns and imitation ruins can be seen at Hagley. On the nearby hill is an obelisk erected by Admiral Smith and a little below it a Greek Doric temple, dedicated to Theseus, distinguished as the first work of its order in England by the architect, James Stuart.

On an incline above the cricket ground is a tall column bearing a figure which was erected to commemorate Frederick, Prince of Wales, who died in 1751 and was once a friend of the first Lord Lyttelton.

Taking the path past the church and going always upwards the visitor will reach, and pause, at the seat dedicated to the memory of the poet Milton, and from there will have a splendid view westwards over Hagley Hall to the hills and mountains of Wales. Proceeding on, the path leads up to an unusually fine example of an imitation ruined castle, built in 1748, to the designs of Sanderson Miller, who used stones and tracery removed from Halesowen Abbey with which to give the requisite air of antiquity. Passing the splendid cedars of Lebanon on the right a gate takes the visitor to Clent Hills and the Four Stones—another 18th century fancy to imitate the monoliths of Stonehenge.

THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

Standing in the park near Hagley Hall is the parish church. The first known mention of a place of worship here was recorded in the Domesday Survey in 1086. The church was rebuilt in the 13th century and remained unchanged until the time of the building of the present Hagley Hall when the chancel was rebuilt in 1754 from the designs of Sanderson Miller. At that time the floor was paved,



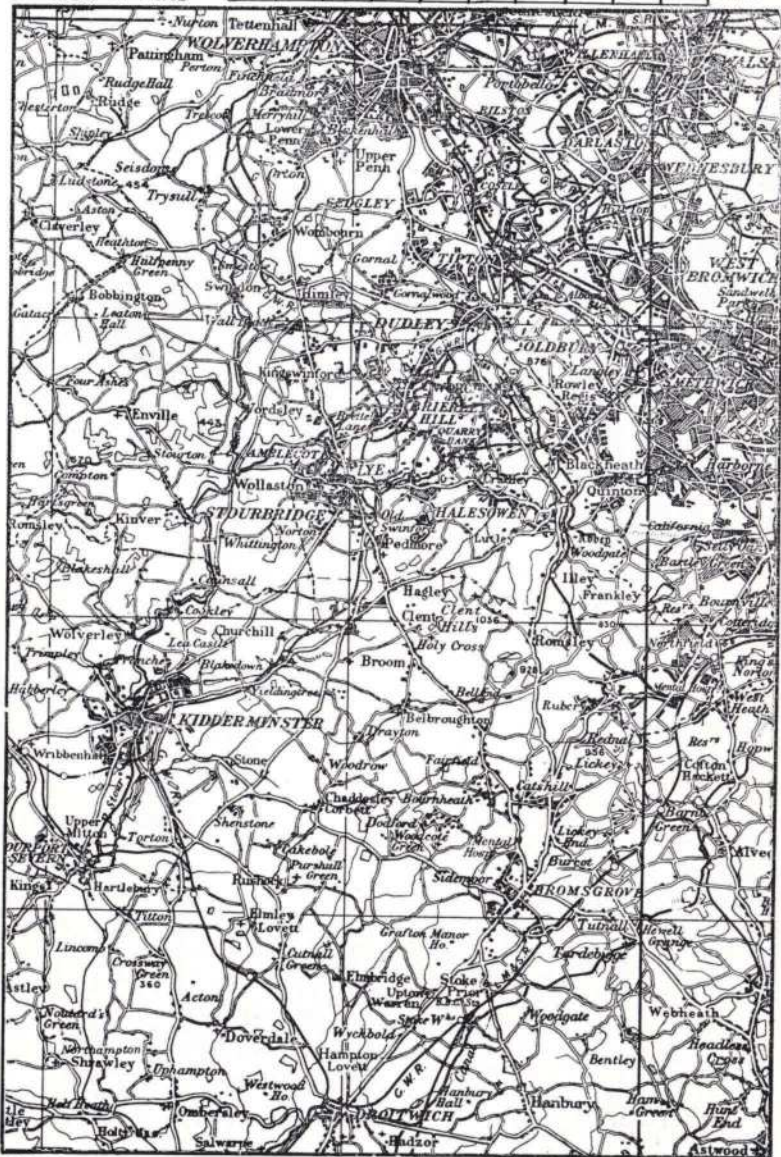
RUINS IN
HAGLEY PARK

new seats, galleries and windows provided and paid for by George, Lord Lyttelton.

In 1826 the North aisle and arcade were added from the design of Thomas Rickman. This is practically all that remains after the rebuilding which took place in 1856. George Edmund Street, R.A., was the architect and employed Decorated Gothic style for the new church. It is worth recording that the County wished to recognise the public work which had been done by George William, 4th Lord Lyttelton. When asked what form the gift should take he asked for the restoration of Hagley Church. The tower and broach spire were added, also designed by G. E. Street, in 1865, being made possible by a gift of £400 from Lord Dudley, who thus provided a third of the sum required to meet the cost. The stone came from a quarry in the park. The tower has a peal of eight bells cast by Mears and Stainbank, London, in 1885, and are a memorial to Canon Lyttelton, rector at the time of the rebuilding.

Inside the church, within an arch in the North aisle, is a nameless tomb with a cross emerging from the head of a dragon carved upon it. It was moved to its present position from the original north wall when the new aisle was built in 1826. The east end of the South aisle and three arches are all that remain of the 13th century church, with the piscina in the south wall. Note on the East wall

Scale of Miles 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 MILES



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outside what are thought to be consecration crosses. The chapel in the South aisle was restored by the late Viscountess Cobham in memory of her husband, and was dedicated October 27th, 1924.

The chancel screen of wrought iron was the design of Sir Thomas Jackson, R.A., and erected to the memory of Capt. Lionel Townsend, who was killed in the first world war in 1915.

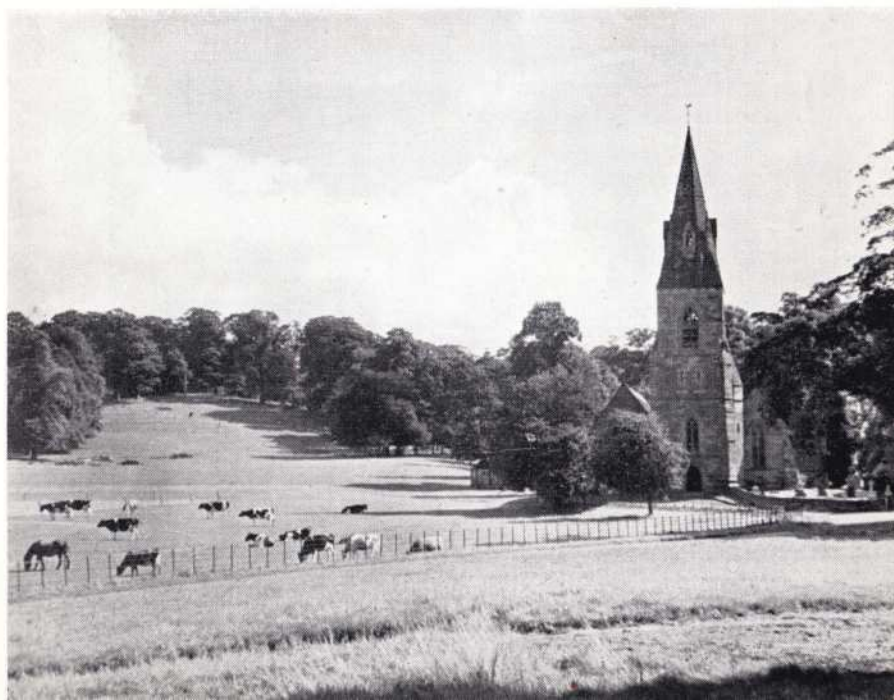
The altar has a carved oak front, the work in 1886 of Mr. John Grazebrook, a gifted amateur carver.

The organ, built by Nicholson and Land, Worcester, was erected in 1852 at the expense of Mrs. Anne Eyre. It remained unfinished until 1892, when it was overhauled and completed. At the same time the choir vestry was added to the church, designed by T. Grazebrook.

All the windows in the church (with four exceptions) are filled with stained glass and are 19th and 20th century memorials. Under the tower is an oval font having the Lyttelton coat of arms upon it. It dates from the first half of the 18th century and was returned to the church in 1923 after being found in a garden in Wordsley, possibly being cast out of the church during one of its restorations.

Following extensive damage to the porch and South side of the Church caused by the falling of a beech tree during a storm in 1947, considerable restoration work was carried out at a cost of over £6,500, including the rebuilding of the organ, and the re-hanging of the bells.

HAGLEY CHURCH



The church plate includes a large silver-gilt cup, salver, paten and almsplate, all said to have been given to the church in 1746 by Sir Thomas Lyttelton. The cup disappeared until 1883, when it was purchased at the sale of Prince Demidoff's effects at Florence by a London silversmith, who sold it back to the church. The church registers, though not complete, date from 1538.

The Lych Gate, which was designed by G. E. Street, was erected in 1876 in memory of George William, 4th Lord Lyttelton.

ST. SAVIOURS CHURCH, WEST HAGLEY

Erected in 1907/8 from the design of Tom Grazebrook, this is a Gothic church built in Hasbury stone at a cost of £3,950. Of this sum £1,802 was provided by a legacy under the will of Miss Hazelhurst, of Hagley. In 1909 the organ, built by Lindsay and Garrard Ltd., of Lechlade, was installed at a cost of just over £728.

Whilst every care has been taken in compiling this guide, and the statements contained herein are believed to be correct, the Publishers and the Promoters of this publication will not hold themselves responsible for any inaccuracies.

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