

Key historical evidence that Albrighton is a designated Town.

I would like to add to the historical information given on Monday since it seems the historical evidence for the concept of Albrighton town was missing from that section.

This evidence is drawn from the 'History of Albrighton' by The Rev. J Blakeway, he was writing about Albrighton in 1799 to 1801. The history is held by the Bodleian Library and was later placed into book form by Shropshire Archaeological and Natural History Society in the 1890s.

The extracts attached show that Albrighton had a formal charter for fairs and markets dating from 1232 (Henry III). In 1303 (Edward 1st) the town was given borough status via another Royal Charter. In 1664 Charles II gave a new charter which put all other documents together into one, underlining the position of Borough status, with a constitution, an elected political structure, JPs and courts and noting that Albrighton was a Town.

While commenting about these charters Blakeway is clear that Albrighton is a town and continually refers to it as such

The Borough status was revoked by Victorian reforms in 1836/8. This was a change to the political structure of Albrighton not the designation of township.

Local people might colloquially refer to Albrighton as a Village, this is more to do with a general feeling that people have of the concept of village against town perhaps some social status is involved, maybe a feeling of it is better for house prices . The population size of Albrighton now certainly places it in the town bracket at circa 7,000. The feelings of locals does not change the fact that historically Albrighton was and is a town.

Also of note is the fact that Markets for cattle and sheep continued into the first quarter of the 20th century, the last sale of sheep was in 1919. It remained a retail, banking and legal services centre for the 20th century and for some of the 21st century and retains the retail aspect of township. The 19th century saw the expansion of malt production for beer culminating in a shift to an industrial scale of production. A similar pattern was followed by milk production for chocolate. Both of these products continued well into the 20th century. Industry is now represented by engineering at H.L Smiths, RAF Cosford and global scale horticulture at David Austen Roses.

Please see the extracts from Blakeway.

John Stretton

Chairman Albrighton & District Historical Society

Albrighton Parish ~~Shropshire~~

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HISTORY OF ALBRIGHTON,
NEAR SHIFNAL.

BY THE LATE REV. J. B. BLAKEWAY, M.A., F.S.A.,
Author of the *Sheriffs of Shropshire, History of Shrewsbury, &c.*

(From Blakeway MSS. 10, in the Bodleian Library.)

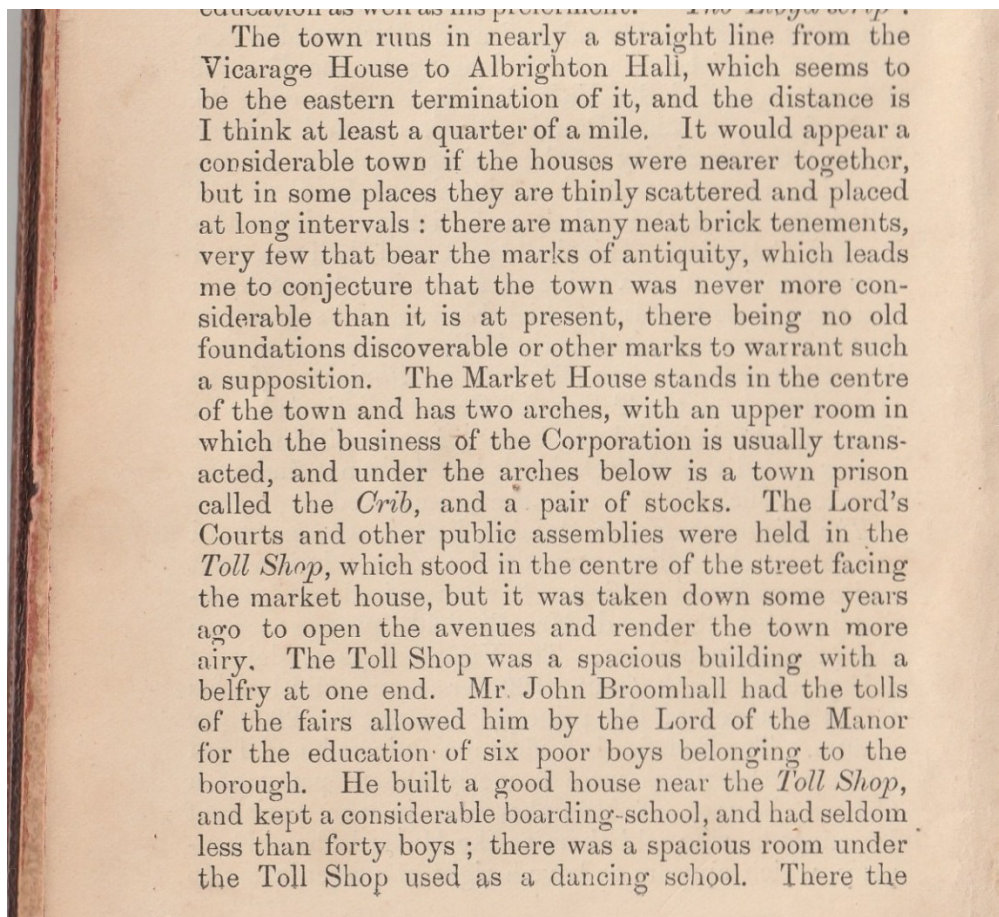
THIS parish lies wholly in the hundred of Brimstree : it is bounded on the north by the parish of Donnington ; on the west by those of Shifnal, Ryton and Beckbury ; on the south by Patteshall and Pattingham in Staffordshire, and on the east by Codsall and Tettenhall in the same county. The hamlets of Wildicot, Bishton, and Pepperhill are wholly detached from the body of the parish, the parish of Boningale cutting them off from it, and the church road from Wildicot and Bishton passing through the churchyard of Boningale. The extreme distance from north to south is four miles, viz. : from Wildicot on the south to Harriot Hays, the northern angle of the parish ; from east to west three miles, from Cosford brook, the western extremity, to Hampton brook the eastern. The parish contains 3,255 acres ;— it consists of a single township, the constablewick of Albrighton including also Humphreston in the contiguous parish of Donington.

Note the reference "The Parish contains 3,255 acres it consists of a single township, the constablewick of Albrighton..."

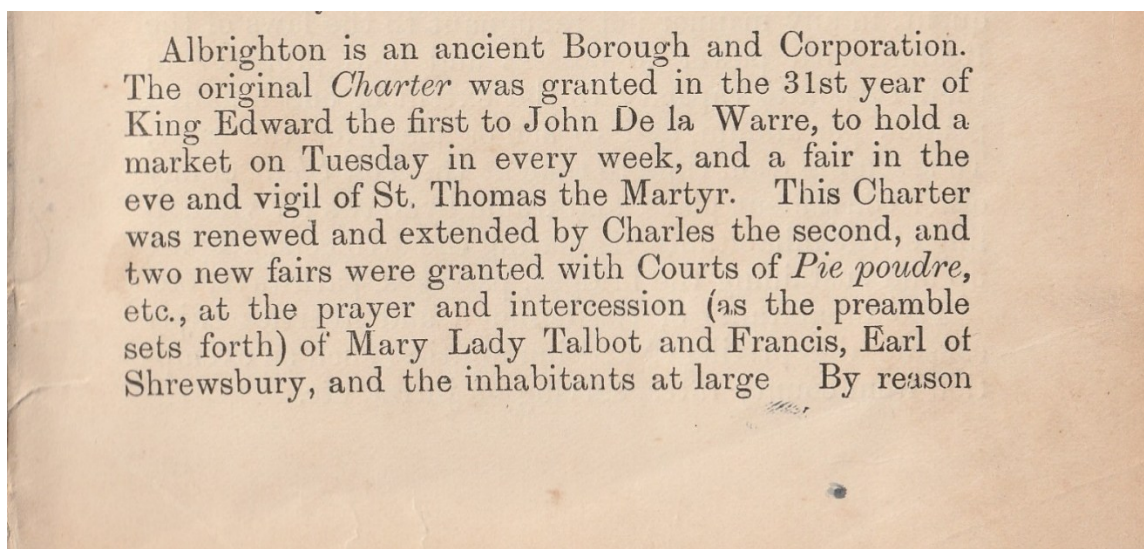
The Town of Albrighton may be said to commence in the vicinity of the churchyard, about which are several houses scattered, and opposite the south gate thereof is an old half-timbered house belonging to the Earl of Shrewsbury, now the Talbot Inn, and opposite it in front a field called the *Hall Orchard*, which lies close up to the churchyard, and at the bottom of it is a considerable piece of water belonging to the Earl of Shrewsbury called the *Hall Pool*, and on the opposite bank of the pool stand Donnington Church and Rectory House; the proximity of these churches in a country situation appears somewhat singular. In the field called the Hall Orchard is a burial ground for the Roman Catholics. This hall pool and hall orchard occurring without a vestige of a mansion house leads one to suppose that true, which I have heard suggested, that the house now used as the Talbot Inn was in former days the residence of the *Talbots of Albrighton* (for so was a branch of the Talbots of Grafton distinguished). There might indeed have been a house within what is now called the Hall Orchard, but I do not find that a trace of such site has ever been discovered.

The Vicarage House stands a little to the eastward of the church leading towards the town. It is a neat and commodious dwelling.

Two references to town, in this case towards the market area and market house



Note the reference to a “considerable town” Also the reference to the Market House and Toll Shop



Reference to Edward 1st Borough charter. The Henry III Charter referred to market and fair only.

