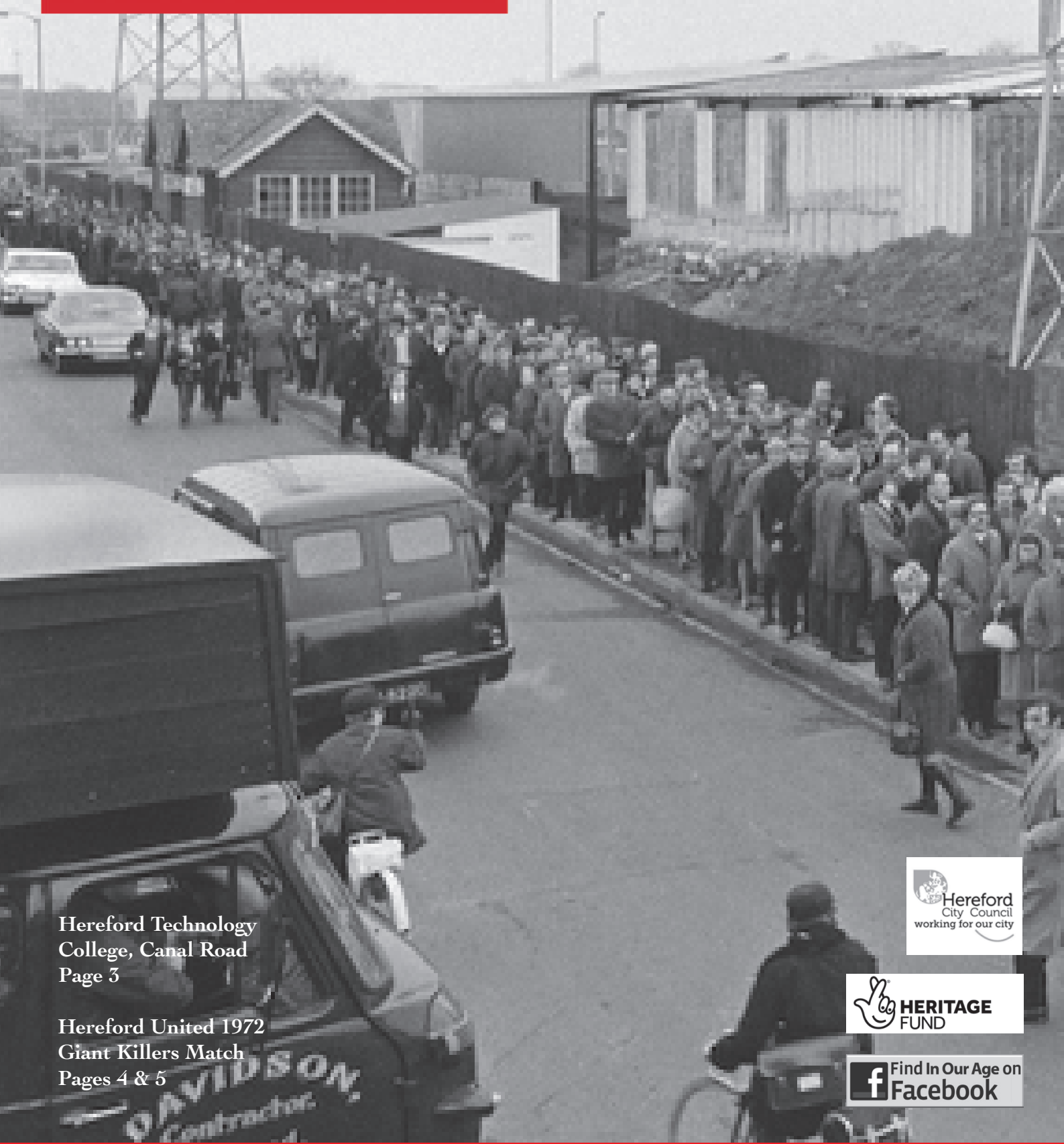


in

OUR AGE

HEREFORD LORE : LIVING LOCAL HISTORY

Issue 63
Spring 2022



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Welcome

A belated Happy New Year to all our readers. Who would have thought this time two years ago we were about to enter a pandemic? It's been challenging for all of us and we are so grateful for your support.

To our regular subscribers, we will be sending out renewal reminders with this issue. To those yet to take out a subscription, now's your chance. For just £15 per year you will receive four copies posted direct to your door. Subscriptions also allow Herefordshire Lore to continue its work recording people's memories. Our archive is ever-expanding, featuring interviews with Canary girls of the First World War and the Second World War; hop workers, farm labourers, cider makers, fishermen, milkmen, prisoners of war, and many more. But there is also an unexpected and delightful aspect to our work: connecting long-lost friends. In issue number 62, we featured Dennis Norris' recollections from Hereford Racecourse during World War Two. How amazing to receive a message from one of Dennis' old school friends, all the way from Perth, Australia. The two 90-year-olds are now in touch.

Marsha O'Mahony Editor

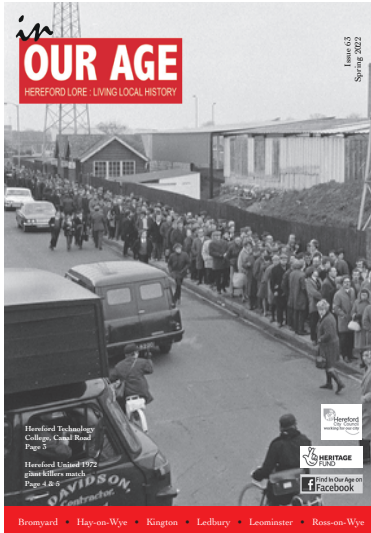
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Cover Story

Fans queue to buy tickets at Edgar Street ground for the Hereford Utd v Newcastle Utd match in February 1972.

Committee member Peter Mayne was there:

'Fifty years ago, Hereford became obsessed with football because of the FA Cup draw. Many employers throughout the city and county and beyond made the effort to facilitate their employees to attend the game. Everyone wanted a ticket. Rumour spread fast that we were going to get a hammering. This only increased the demand for tickets. Queues quickly formed around the Merton Meadow car park. If you had a ticket stub from the first leg you stood a better chance of a ticket to the Edgar Street Game. It was a day to remember.' Read more on the match to beat all matches, and Ronnie Radford's 'goal of the century' on pages 4 & 5.



(Photo: Derek Evans Collection/HARCI/Herefordshire Libraries)

Herefordshire Lore

Herefordshire Lore launched in 1989 and has been collecting and publishing your memories ever since. We are: chair Julie Orton-Davies, secretary Eileen Klotz, treasurer Harvey Payne, webmaster Chris Preece, proofs Sandy Green, associate editor Bill Laws, editor Marsha O'Mahony, and committee: Joyce Chamberlain, Keith and Krystyna James, Rosemary Lillico, Jean and Peter Mayne, Chris and Irene Tomlinson, Linda Ward and Betty Webb. Design: Pink Sheep. Print: Orphans Press.

To bring us more in line with the seasons, our first issue of 2022 is our Spring edition.

Learning all the trades at Hereford College of Further Education

Lynette Munoz's father, Thomas Hodgkinson, was a teacher in Blackburn, before arriving in Hereford in 1952 to teach at the College of Further Education in Newtown Road.

Established in 1946 on Newtown Road as a temporary site, the College was first opened to meet local demands for qualified blacksmiths, farriers and welders. Fifteen apprentices began their training at that time.

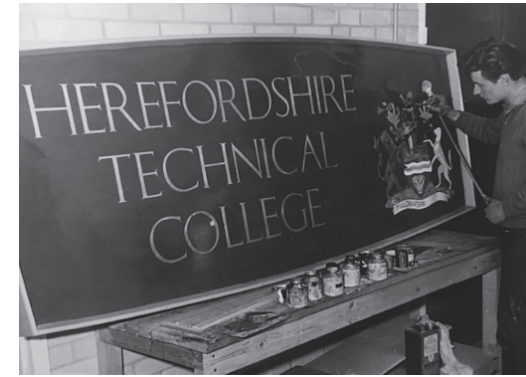
By 1950 it had developed from a training centre to a further education establishment, named Hereford College of Further Education. The College was essential to provide technical and commercial education for local firms established, or due to be established, in the Hereford area. Numbers had risen to 736 learners and by 1952/1953 this had soared with 1476 learners having enrolled.

The mid-1950s saw the development of the first phase of a permanent site at Folly Lane. Thomas Hodgkinson watched the new Folly Lane site go up, often bringing his daughter Lynette with him.

'In 1952 my dad applied for a job in Hereford. He was a master cabinet maker and carpenter. Accommodation was provided for us just off the Ross Road.

'At that time the college taught anything to do with the building trade. But the plan was that a new college was to be built. It was such an amazing thing for Hereford to have, this brand new state of the art college. They did sign writing there, cabinet work, all the trades. When the Folly Lane campus was being built dad used to take me up with him and walk around the foundations. He insisted on a wooden floor in the workshop, not concrete, because the tools needed to be in tip-top condition.

'He was so proud of the college and the students. He had many happy days up there.'



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That game and that goal – fifty years on

Everyone claims to have been at the legendary match. Herefordshire Lore committee member, Keith James was there, as a freelance cameraman.

‘Hereford United were always known as Giant Killers when it came to the FA cup and fifty years ago their supporters sensed the Edgar Street clash against Newcastle United would go down in the history books. Heavy snow and a delayed thaw turned the pitch into a quagmire that meant the ball wouldn’t run for the visitors who were used to playing on fine turf.

I was assistant to freelance Hereford cameraman Derek Evans and the studio was inundated with requests from the national newspapers for pictures of the almost daily pitch inspection. Each day the referee and the two managers would venture onto the mud and Newcastle manager Joe Harvey was christened “Farmer Joe” by the Daily Mirror as he stood in fine leather shoes caked with mud. Each delay seemed to add to the tension and the interest that the game was getting nationally.

Then the game was on.

The national newspapers sent their best sports photographers to the ground and each was stationed by the Hereford United goal. Newcastle striker and England player “Supermac” Malcolm Macdonald had pledged to “put ten past Hereford” so this was going to be where the action was. As “local knowledge” the national newspapers positioned our studio at the Newcastle goal “just in case” there was an upset.

‘Late in the game Newcastle took the lead and it seemed the game was lost for Hereford. Then in a rare moment when play moved into the Newcastle half a blistering thirty-yard shot from Ron Radford scorched into the corner of the Newcastle net. The assembled “old hands” photographers didn’t even raise their cameras because you just don’t score goals like that. Two lucky ones did – our studio was one and Barry Griffiths of the Hereford Times was the other. It’s likely just two pictures exist from the goal line of an unbelievable goal.

The fans erupted and poured onto the pitch for now the score was level but there would be greater euphoria in the closing minutes when Ricky George scored the home team’s second goal. As the players left the pitch the shockwaves and celebrations must have reached every football fan in Britain. The Radford goal became a legend and the game remembered as possibly the greatest FA shock of all time.’



Fans invade the pitch after Ronnie Radford's goal. (Photo: Derek Evans Collection/HARC/Herefordshire Libraries)



Pre-match pitch inspection. Caption Colin Addison is on the far left. (Photo: Derek Evans Collection/HARC/Herefordshire Libraries)



The moment Ronnie Radford's goal hit the back of the net. (Photo: Derek Evans Collection/HARC/Herefordshire Libraries)



Post-match celebrations in the shower room. (Photo: Derek Evans Collection/HARC/Herefordshire Libraries)

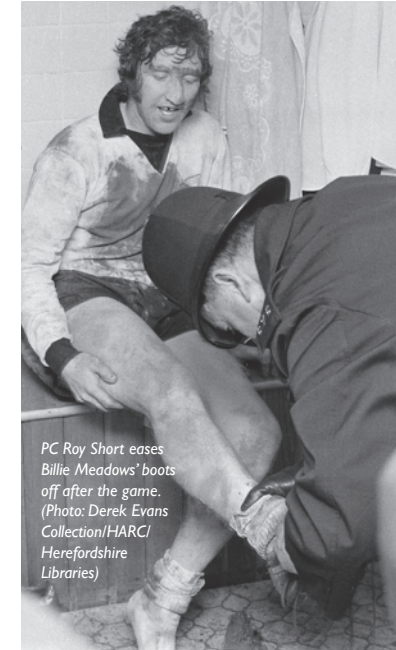
Postal workers demand time off for the match

The Edgar Street match was preceded by the first leg of the fixture at the Newcastle ground. Peter Mayne was a postman at the GPO Hereford and like all the other 200 postal workers – wanted to go. But would management let them?

‘Representation was made to our inspector, Mr L J Beavan, who was in control of the sorting office. Due to the excitement and growing support for the game, he felt obliged to approach the head postmaster, Mr P G Davies, for authorisation to release the men to attend the match. Permission was granted provided all letter deliveries were completed. On the day of the match, every delivery postman was told they had to report for duty at 4am so that every mail bag would be emptied and all the mail sorted. The guard blew the whistle and we were away on the train at 8.30am.

‘Our gang of posties, Bryan Morris, Mick Fowler, Big Jack Parrington and Allan Pugh, were all dressed in black trench Macs hoping it would disguise us. Once at the ground, we quickly realised that we were standing in the middle of the Newcastle supporters. Too late. When Bryan Owen scored in the first 17 seconds I went berserk. The Geordies called us carrot crunchers. When the final whistle blew at 1-1, the Newcastle lads shook our hands wishing us all the best in the replay at Edgar Street.

‘We got the train back. It was one of those old-fashioned coaches, with compartments seating six. One said “reserved” so we went in there and



PC Roy Short eases Billie Meadows' boots off after the game. (Photo: Derek Evans Collection/HARC/Herefordshire Libraries)

of course started drinking. Not long after, the door slid open and a voice said, “Sorry boys, this compartment is reserved.” It was none other than Harry Neild, a Hereford United director, with two boxes of miniature gin bottles under his arm. We went out into the corridor and drank all the way home. The train arrived back in Hereford just before 3.30am. We got off the train, walked straight across the taxi rank and back to work. What a day.’

Pete also went to the Edgar Street game. ‘All I can remember was Ronny Radford’s goal. Edgar Street erupted. I shouted so much I lost my false teeth and spent the next ten minutes on my hands and knees looking for them. Found them in the end!’

Readers' letters

Anti-German sentiment was running high in Hereford in 1918. While questions were raised about the Cathedral lectern (a Teutonic-looking eagle), Alderman James Corner was protesting over the appointment of wood-carving teacher Charles Gertner of 55 Green Street to the Art School: 'We want no Germans there!' he told the Education Committee.

Gertner, who later crafted a figure of Christ for St Xavier's in Hereford and another for Ledbury church, was not only Worcester-born, but had a brother fighting the Germans in France.

His great-granddaughter Karen Eldridge writes: 'Charles had three brothers and two sisters. Brother Frederick was a modeller at the Royal Worcester Factory as was his father. He, the father, had been born in Rio de Janeiro and became a British citizen in 1917.' The serving soldier was Francis (Somerset Light Infantry).

Charles married Violet, pictured here with (left to right) his aunt Florence, his wife and Francis' daughter Maud in 1928.



We believe Charles did work at the Art School while reader Jock Lockhead previously contacted IOA (info@herefordshirelore.org.uk) to say the figure of Christ was removed from the roof of St Xavier's in 1949. Can any reader shed more light on the subject?

Where are they now?



Denis Ruck from Hereford has sent in a delightful photo from 1951.

'I was at Michaelchurch Escley School in 1951. I was one of four sets of twins at that time. In total there were only between 24 and 30 pupils at the school. I am first left in the front row. The Prosser boys I still know but the Reynolds I have had no contact with since the mid-1950s.'

Don Mash, 90, writes from Monmouth

'I remember the fire in Woolworths, which resulted in a clear out of damaged goods in West Street, and the lorry which was to convey them, being surrounded by children, who were glad to receive some items like discarded banjos and scorched dolls, which the driver was glad to distribute. I also have a distant memory of a cage outside the Bunch of Carrots containing some monkeys. Can anyone remember it?'

Local History Speakers

Herefordshire Lore has history speakers for hire! Bill Laws and Marsha O'Mahony offer illustrated talks on a number of subjects: World War One, World War Two, Hops, River Wye, farming, health and more. Please get in touch for more details or to book.

Where's Wally?

Reader John Hyde from Lugwardine sheds more light on reports of a wartime plane crash in Eign Road, Hereford.

We previously reported (Age To Age 3/3) that an aircraft, possibly a Percival Proctor from RAF Madley, had crashed on an Eign Road orchard killing all those on board.

John, then a young lad, lived with his family at 109 (now 20) Eign Road, a half-timbered semi-detached black and white cottage, with his father Wilfred and mother. Wilf's father, also Wilfred, lived next door.

John heard the aircraft before he saw it: "I think the engine conked out and the plane was heading for our house. But grandfather had a tall pear tree and the plane's wing clipped the tree and turned it away from the house.

'One of the pilots had been thrown out [he was killed] but

my father and neighbour Mr Howe managed to get the other pilot out from the burning aircraft. Then the Military police arrived and we were all sent away.'

Around a year later, when the family had moved to Vaughan Street, the RAF survivor knocked on their door. 'I think his name was Wally. He said: "I want to thank your father for saving my life."'

As a gesture of thanks, Wally invited the family to his home in Preston and John and his mother spent a week there. While wartime Blackpool nearby held no attractions ('the beach was still mined') the neighbouring biscuit factory did: 'Wally's son took me down there and at the end of the shift all these windows would open and bags of broken biscuits were dropped down to the kids below!'



Another air crash

In September 1945 two airmen and a WAAF from Madley were killed in a crash. They were on an instructional flight from Madley signal station, when it crashed at Twyford Farm, Callow. Eyewitnesses at the time said the plane developed a spin 'and crashed becoming a total wreck'. The victims were P O Hunter Edward Simmonds of Epsom, Sgt John Robinson and LAC W Cowen, both of Madley. Can anyone shed any more light on these victims?

Radio School Madley in 2010

Peter Eedy writes from Australia

My late father Ronald Eedy (RAAF) was an instructor at Madley. He met his future wife, radio operator Bridget Curry (from Co. Wicklow, Eire), at Madley around April 1945 and they married in Hereford in September 1945.

I wondered if anyone here knew them.

Regards Peter Eedy (Brisbane Australia)
peter.eedy@gmail.com

Who is this fisherman?

Susannah English is wondering if any of our readers can help identify the gentleman on the left in the picture. Susannah's grandfather was H E Gilbert, who wrote the all-time classic, *The Tale of a Wye Fisherman*, and is seen on the right of the photo.

'I took all my grandmother's albums and scrapbooks to the

Hereford Archive & Records today. They were thrilled! They will be well cared for and seen by a much wider audience.

'This photo was among them. It is a 49lb salmon my grandfather caught at Aramstone, Kings Caple in 1927.' We've been unable to identify the man on the left - could you hazard a guess?

Backney Halt

Backney was the last of the four bridges over the Wye on the Hereford to Ross railway. The bridge spans were removed after the closure of the line in 1965.

The riverside parishes between Hereford and Ross, where once the train had been the chosen and most reliable form of transport, were badly hit. Mrs A. Pember, wife of the licensee of the British Lion at Fawley, told a reporter how upset she was: 'We shall miss the train very much in this area. In fact, we shall be completely lost without it.' Meanwhile, Mr J

Terry, sub-postmaster at Carey said, 'Five or six people have travelled from Ballingham to Hereford each day by train. The nearest bus is at Hoarwithy, three miles from the bottom of Ballingham Hill. We badly need a bus service.' Their cries for help came to nothing. Tracks were pulled up and bus services remained minimal.

A quiet spot today, Backney Halt was once an industrious spot, as John Brookes recalled:

'The halt at Backney Bridge closed just after the war.'

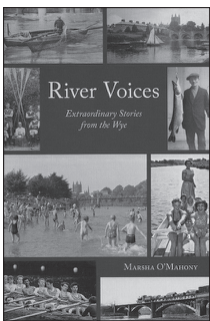


Backney Halt
(Photo: Mark Finning)

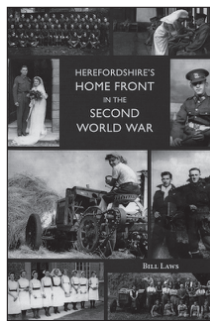
But we used to use Backney to to take our milk churns. We used to bring them down to the halt on a motorbike and side car. I didn't drive it. I was on the back. Well, all the farmers did then. We sent our sugar beet from there and hay and straw – all manner of things. It was only a small station but it was a very busy one and very important for loading stuff and sending it off onto Gloucester and Hereford.'

Editor's note: What are your memories of rail travel in the county? Please get in touch.

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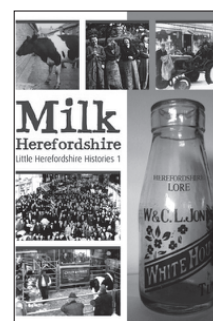
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