



The writing of this book has followed years of searching through documents - including deeds, wills, inventories, court papers and manorial records - combined with discussions with archaeologists and other researchers as well as with families who have lived for generations in the parish.

Early prehistoric man clearly visited the area for hunting and probably settled in the area at least on a seasonal basis. An ancient trackway crossed what became the parish from east to west and two settlements were definitely in existence during the earlier Roman period. Anglo-Saxon settlement is suggested by a large section of dyke to the west of the village centre, the entry in the Domesday Book and the building of at least one mill just outside the parish boundary. With the arrival of the Normans

came the construction of the castle and later attempts to turn Lyonshall into a market town.

Although little remains of Lyonshall Castle today, several of its lords played an important role in national events, at times supporting the Crown, at times in rebellion against it. William Devereux first fought alongside Henry III in Gascony, then joined Simon de Montfort alongside whom he was killed at the Battle of Evesham. Bartholomew de Badlesmere was at first a supporter of Edward II but was later hanged as a result of rebelling against him. Sir Simon Burley, tutor to Richard II, was seen as being too close to the king and exerting undue influence, and was executed by those who rebelled against Richard.

From the 1600s more can be discovered about the wider population of the parish from their wills and inventories, which give a feel for their homes, occupations and farming methods, the latter often being based around the growing of cereals and the grazing of cattle and sheep. The history of the management of the open fields has been gleaned from the records of the manor court, and the process of the gradual enclosure of these open fields explored through estate maps. Lyonshall was affected by Parliamentary Enclosure undertaken in neighbouring parishes. This resulted in the system of supporting the poor undergoing change, with the flexibility of parish overseers being constrained by central government. The Lyonshall overseers worked to good effect, helping many who were in great hardship, as shown by the examples and case studies examined.

The stories of crimes, notably larceny (or theft) but also slander and drunken misbehaviour, are told, and the appearance and disappearance of local pubs, the shifting of the village centre, the local woollen trade, the various mills, and the coming of the Industrial Revolution and the arrival of the tramway are all covered in a book which is informative not just about Lyonshall, but about rural conditions in north-western Herefordshire over the course of several centuries.

In 2001 Sarah Zaluckyj wrote Mercia: The Anglo-Saxon Kingdom of Central England, which has been reprinted many times, and in 2006 she and her husband John wrote The Celtic Christian Sites of the Southern Marches. They have lived in Lyonshall since 1993 and have spent considerable time over the past ten years gathering together the information for this book.

If you wish to buy a copy (cover price is £15), then the closest outlets are:

Kings News, Kington

Lyonshall Nurseries

Ashbys (Nisa Local)

The Walking Hub, Kington

Oakchurch

The New Strand in Eardisley

The Green Bean in Weobley.

Alternatively, you can go online to www.logastonpress.co.uk.

Note: The book is not available from Sarah and John Zaluckyj.