

SHROPSHIRE



Shropshire is a mainly rural county, bordered to the west by several Welsh counties. To the north it is bordered by Cheshire, to the east by Staffordshire, and to the south by Worcestershire and Herefordshire. The county was exceptional in that it did not employ its police force for the inspection of weights and measures until 1887, and then only briefly.

There were several ancient boroughs that had separate jurisdiction in the 19th century. Shrewsbury was the largest town, and it continued as a separate authority until 1974. The Borough of Wenlock had jurisdiction over a large and scattered area of the county, including the famous iron works at Coalbrookdale, but it appears that inspection was always carried by the county officers. The boroughs of Bridgnorth, Oswestry and Ludlow were all active until 1889, but there is no evidence of activity at Bishops Castle, although it is reported that an inspector was appointed there in 1835.

For the purposes of trade most of the county looked east towards the Black Country, where there were numerous makers of scales and weights.

A: Inspection by the County of SHROPSHIRE (officially known as SALOP until 1980)

Dates	Events	Marks	Comments
1801	First WM examiners appointed.		In 1816 an examiner named James Davies is mentioned.
1826	One set of standards [86] issued.		<i>Inspectors 1834-1886</i>
1834	One inspector appointed.		Samuel Farlow (1834-) Joseph Higgins (1839) John S. Pate (1839-42) John Hunt (1842-50 retired due to ill-health)
1850	Second set of standards [1045] issued. Two divisions (North and South) set up, with civilian inspectors.		Edward Evans (S. Division 1850-1874) Francis Whittaker (N. Division 1850-1874; then for the entire county 1874-1886)
1875	Following the retirement of inspector Evans, Whittaker became inspector for the whole county.		Whittaker's initials FW are sometimes found with the SALOP marks.
1882	Non-uniform mark still in use [AR].		
1886	Whittaker retired after 36 years. The police divisions were increased to eight and the superintendents of police became inspectors.		<i>Police superintendents as inspectors 1886-90</i> A: <i>Shrewsbury</i> T. Edwards B: <i>Oswestry</i> J. Langford C: <i>Whitchurch</i> John Edwards D: <i>Wellington</i> William Gallier E: <i>Bridgnorth</i> William Walters F: <i>Church Stretton</i> Th. Caswell G: <i>Pontesbury</i> Robert Straffen H: <i>Ludlow</i> John Simcox

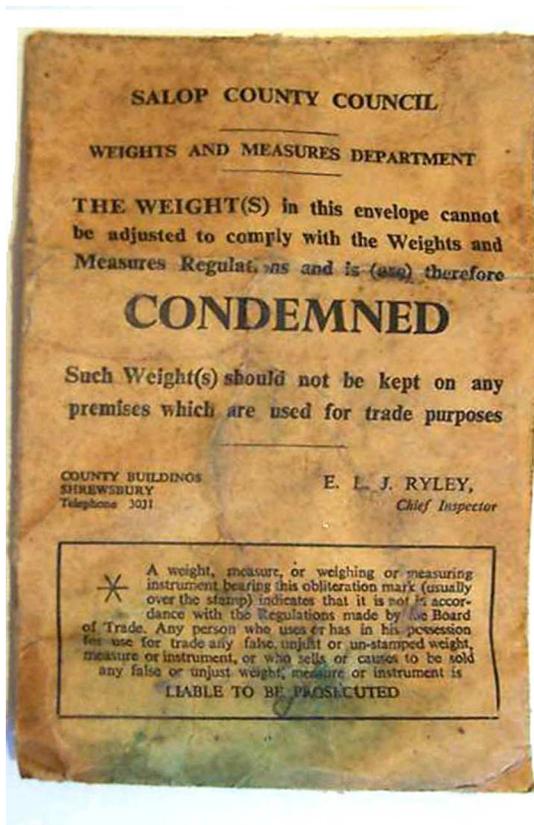


¶ A brass weight made in Birmingham in the period 1826-30. There are two county marks of the crown and SALOP, one of which has been overstamped with the initials of Francis Whitaker, a county inspector from 1850 until 1886.

¶ A 1oz brass weight with SALOP marks, probably c1860-90.



Dates	Events	Marks	Comments
1889	Salop CC formed.		The N and S marks were used with No. 567, 1890-1935.
1890	No. 567 issued. Civilian inspectors for two divisions appointed. Both offices were in Shrewsbury, but separate.	 	<p>Qualified inspectors:</p> <p><i>Northern Division 1890-1935</i> T. Aldersley (q1890/1-1919) [MR 19:20] T. Whitlock (1919-24) A.G. Strother (1924-35, then deputy chief 1935-45) [MR 24:43, 53:197]</p> <p><i>Southern Division 1890-1935</i> Thomas Brown (q1890/1-92) E.J. Symonds (1892-1923) H. Birchanall (1923-35)</p> <p><i>Chief Inspectors 1935 onwards:</i> H. Birchanall (1935-51) [MR 51:200] E.L.J. Ryley (1951-71) [MR 53:92; 72:2]</p>
	By 1912 the office for the Southern Division had moved to Shifnal.		
1935	Divisions united under one chief inspector [MR 35:63].		
1950	No.567 still in use.		
1956	County formally takes over WM authority from Wenlock.		
1974	Trading Standards Department formed.		



¶ A weight 'condemned' by E.L.J. Ryley, chief inspector for the county Council 1951-71.

B: Localities with separate jurisdiction in the county of SHROPSHIRE

Locality	Status	Marks		Dates & Notes
		Non-uniform	Number pre-1951	
Shrewsbury	AncBo MB:1835 qsb		556	s:1839 [864] r:1865 n:1891-1974
<p>The inspector appointed in 1834/5 was Samuel Farlow, who became superintendent of the borough police force when it was formed in 1836. He was also the county inspector and must have used the county standards until the borough acquired its own in 1839.</p> <p>John Vaughan, a tailor, was listed as inspector in 1840 [R] and Timothy White from 1850 [S] to 1859 [S].</p> <p>The county inspector Francis Whittaker acted for the borough in 1861 [H]. But by 1866 the chief constable John Hughes (CC 1856-70) was said to be responsible. When he retired in 1870, he handed over to Peter Owen [DA5/129/8/1]. By 1877 [MC] the IWM was Thomas Farr, a police sergeant, who continued until his retirement in 1895 [K].</p> <p>He was followed by qualified inspectors: B.R.Croxtton (1896-1904) [MR 04:305], and C.S. Herd (1904-13) [MR 04:286, 13:166] who died in office. W.C. Heas was the inspector (1914-50) [MR 76:3], being temporarily replaced by W.T. Stead during the Great War. R.P. Holdaway was the chief inspector from 1950 until the service was amalgamated with county in 1974 [MR 75:62].</p>				
Wenlock	AncBo MB:1835 qsb		---	s:1853 [1107] r:1865
<p>The Borough of Much Wenlock had jurisdiction over a large and scattered rural area outside the boundaries of the town itself. This area included the Coalbrookdale works at Ironbridge.</p> <p>It seems that the borough shared an inspector with the county from 1835 onwards, although separate standards were issued in 1853. This arrangement continued until Wenlock ceased to be a WM authority in 1956.</p> <p>The mark shown was used until 1889, after which the verification mark was the same as for the southern division of the county.</p>				



¶ A brass weight with the mark of Shrewsbury. As there is no indication of the denomination it probably dates from the early Victorian period.

¶ A brass weight with several Shrewsbury marks. The weight was made in the reign of George IV (1820-30). The date 1879 was stamped when Shrewsbury was still using the old heraldic mark, but there are also marks with the number 556 introduced in 1890.



¶ A brass weight with the WENLOCK mark. There is also a mark for the Southern division of the county, which was used in the Wenlock area in the reign of Edward VII (1901-1910).

Locality	Status	Marks		Dates & Notes
		Non-uniform	Number pre-1951	
Bridgnorth	AncBo MB:1835 qsb	 VR BN	---	s:1835 [721] r:1866
<p>The mark is similar to the old seal of the borough, except for the fact that the castle has only two towers, not three.</p> <p>In 1835 Thomas Nock (yeoman), Edward Goodall (head constable) and George Evans (town crier) were appointed as inspectors. George Evans continued as inspector and was listed in 1856 [K].</p> <p>The police force was reformed in 1856, and subsequently the superintendent acted as IWM. John Cole was superintendent 1857-87 and was listed as IWM in 1861 [H] and 1880 [S]; Charles Childs, superintendent 1887-89, was listed as IWM in 1888 [Po]. In 1889 the police force became part of the county force, and the borough ceased to be a WMA.</p>				
Oswestry	AncBo MB:1835 qsb	 O S Y	---	s:1835 [729] 1855 [1163] r:1866
<p>Henry Hughes gentleman, was appointed under the Act of 1834, having served previously, and was still in post in 1842 [P]. In 1856 [K] a new set of standards was issued to Edward Williams, listed as the IWM,.</p> <p>William Vaughan, whitesmith, was the IWM in 1861 [OB/F88/1] and was listed in 1870 [K]. He was followed as IWM by John Richards, listed in 1877 [MC] and in 1880 [S]. Authority was handed over to the county in 1889, and in 1891 [K] the IWM was Thomas Dutton.</p>				



¶ A 1oz brass weight with the mark of Bridgnorth, before 1890.



¶ A 4 ounce brass weight verified in Oswestry.

Locality	Status	Marks		Dates & Notes
		Non-uniform	Number pre-1951	
Ludlow	AncBo MB:1835 qsb	 ?	---	s:1849 [1026] r:1867

Under the Act of 1834, the inspector appointed for Ludlow was John Powell Bradford of Leominster, in Herefordshire, which is about 20km from Ludlow. He was also appointed inspector for Leominster and probably used their standards. The mark may have been used in either locality.

In 1849 standards were issued to the mayor, and in 1856 [K] Thomas Tipton was listed as the IWM. He was based at the police station but was not the superintendent of police. Henry Biggs, superintendent of police (1855-65) was listed as IWM in 1861 [H] and 1863 [K]. George Brooks was superintendent from 1865 to 1885, and was listed as IWM in 1868 [S] and 1880 [S]. James Wheatstone was superintendent 1885-88, and was followed by James (?) Simcox. In 1889 the borough force was absorbed by the county force, and in 1891 [K], John Simcox was listed as police superintendent 'for the borough and the county', and the IWM.

Bishops Castle: It was reported that this Ancient Borough had appointed an inspector, Matthew Griffiths, in 1835, but there is no record of standards, or any other WM activity. Bishops Castle was an unreformed borough until 1883, when it received a municipal charter.

C: The trade in Shropshire

SHREWSBURY	
Corbett	CORBETT & PEELE SALOP
	<i>On a round flat iron weight</i>
	Thomas Corbett, ironfounder, weight maker [1908 Hbk]. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perseverance Works, Castle Foregate <1865-1908> From about 1872 to 1881 the firm was known as Corbett and Peele.
Kinsey	Henry Kinsey, scale maker [1895 Kelly advt] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mardol Quay <1895-1913>, Latterly the firm was run by Rowland H. Kinsey. The Kinseys may have been related to Edward Kinsey, IWM for Gloucester 1890-1925.
Avery	First noted 1908. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 Primrose Street <1908-1910> • 115 Frankwell <1965>



¶ A 2lb iron weight bearing the name of Corbett & Peele, 1872-1881.



H. KINSEY,

PRACTICAL AND SCIENTIFIC

**SCALE & WEIGHING INSTRUMENT MAKER,
MARDOL QUAY, SHREWSBURY.**

Adjuster of Board of Trade Inspector's Scales & Assay Balances.

APOTHECARIES' BULLION AND DISPENSING SCALES,

Steelyards, Draming Machines, and every description of Weighing and Measuring Appliances.

ALL WORK GUARANTEED.

H. K. holds his Indentures endorsed and signed as a Competent workman, etc.

¶ Advertisement for Henry Kinsey of Shrewsbury, from Kelly's Directory of Shropshire 1895.

WENLOCK (Ironbridge)

Coalbrookdale

COALBROOKDALE C^o

C. B. D

C.B.DALE

Seen on iron weights

The famous iron works at Coalbrookdale was located in the extensive area under the jurisdiction of the Borough of Wenlock. By the middle of the 19th century the company was primarily engaged in making useful and decorative cast iron objects. Most of the weights bearing the Coalbrookdale name seem to date from this period, but the firm was still listed as making weights in 1910 [Hbk]. The company became part of Allied Ironfounders in 1929.



¶ Two weights from the Coalbrookdale Company. The one on the left has been verified in the 'Borough' of Wenlock, in which the foundry was situated.

OSWESTRY

Thomas

Edward Thomas & Co, general ironmongers etc. [1880 S, 1891 K].

- The Cross <1871-91 >

In 1871 [C] the firm was known as Thomas and Whitfield. An Avery catalogue from the 1880s has the firm's label on the front cover, suggesting that the firm acted as agents for Averys at that time. This arrangement probably ended when Averys opened their own premises in Oswestry. The Thomas firm was still in business in the 1960s.

Avery

First noted 1913 [K]

- Smithfield Street <1913>
- 61 Beatrice Street <1965>

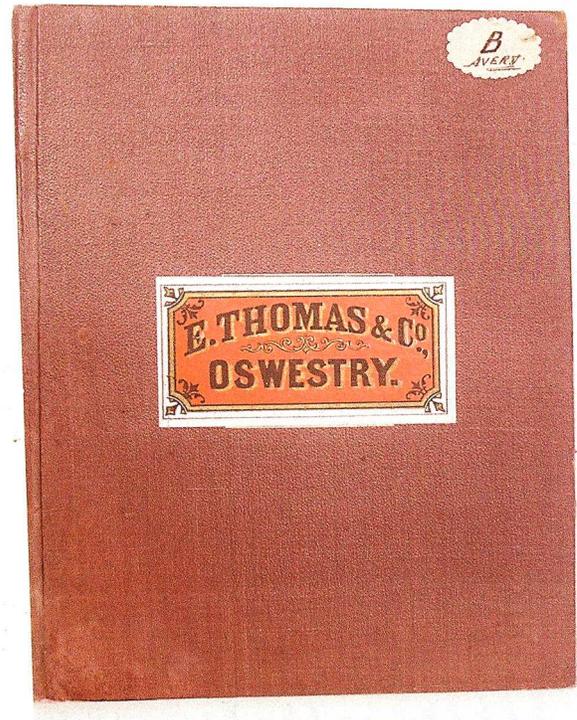
WELLINGTON

Avery

First noted 1908 [Hbk]

- 52 New Street <1908-13>
- 1 High Street <1965>

¶ An Avery scales catalogue c1880-85, with the label of E. Thomas, ironmonger, of Oswestry.



References for Shropshire

Published works

1. G.C. Baugh (ed.): *A History of Shropshire, Volume III*. Oxford University Press 1979, See pages 148, 159, 196.

Directories

- R. Robson's Directory of ... Shropshire [N106] 1840.
P. Pigot's Directory of ... Shropshire [N72] 1842.
S. Slater's Directory of ... Shropshire... . [N86] 1850; [ST29] 1859, 1868; [ST -] 1880.
K. Kelly's Directory of Shropshire. [ST 1176] 1856-1941.
H. Harrod 's Directory of ... Shropshire [ST -] 1861.
C. Cassey's History ... and Directory of Shropshire [ST1177] 1871, 1875.
MC. Mercer and Crocker's Directory for Shropshire [ST59] 1877.
Po. Porter's Directory for the County of Salop [ST1178] 1888.

Newspapers

Shrewbury Chronicle: Reports relating to the employment of the county police as inspectors, 2 July 1886, 22 October 1886, 7 January 1887, 21 January 1887, 8 April 1887.

Reports relating to the activities of the qualified inspectors, 13 November 1891, 10 February 1905.

Wenlock Advertiser: Contains regular reports from Francis Whitaker in his capacity as inspector for the Borough of Wenlock. For example, 7 February 1880.

Original documents

Shropshire Archives (Shrewsbury)

County

QS/1: Quarter Sessions Order Books. Contain many references to appointments and remuneration of inspectors.

QA/13: Quarter Sessions Papers, Inspection of Weights and Measures 1838-1886.

Bridgnorth

BB/C/6/2: Bridgnorth Borough. Various papers relating to weights and measures 1670-1828.

DA2/1112: Papers relating to the appointment of inspectors, 1828-36.

Shrewsbury

DA5/129/8: Shrewsbury Borough, weights and measures records 1870-1907.

Oswestry Town Council Archives

OB/F88: Oswestry Borough, several documents relating to WM., 1861-1889.

Personal communications

R.P. Holdaway: letters regarding local standards in Bridgnorth, Ludlow, Oswestry, etc. c1994.