Discovery Walk No. 3

Points of Interest

A As you walk towards the Hills, the hill to your left is Midsummer Hill, on the top of which is an iron age fort dating from about 400 B.C.

B The Gullet Quarry was one of many commercial quarries on the Malverns. The Conservators gradually acquired the land to close them down and there are now none left. What was an ugly scar is now an attractive (though potentially dangerous) feature which is being colonised by bicho. The stone wall at the car park viewpoint is made from Malvern Stone, probably from this very quarry. It is possible to make out Silurian an ugly scar is now an attractive (though potentially dangerous) feature which is being colonised by bicho. The stone wall at the car park viewpoint is made from Malvern Stone, probably from this very quarry. It is possible to make out Silurian

C The oldest enclosures were circular (see the map) and will be Saxon or mediaeval. It is possible to make out the shapes of other circular enclosures (marked with stones). These have reverted to common land.

D The Mill Pond has been cleaned up by the Conservators and is now a beauty spot that is home to aquatic wildlife. Some of the smallholdings here were probably enclosed in the 1400s.

E To your left is an ancient orchard. The old cider press has already been restored and work has started on the orchard. As you climb, you will see rectangular fields to the west, which are recent nineteenth century enclosures.

F As you turn, note the contrast between the irregular blocks of Malvern stone in the house to your right and the timber framed house to your left.

G Hollybush Church is a small basic Victorian Hall church and may have been built by and for the local quarrymen from the stone that they were quarrying. The stone is sedimentary, in contrast to the Malvern stone, and has been cut into regular blocks. The churchyard occupies a superlative situation with sweeping views of the hills and the Severn valley.

H Where the enclosure juts out, there is a very narrow lane between two hedges. It has been suggested that this was a device used by the drovers to count their stock after they had come through Hollybush pass.

I The stone quarried here was Hollybush Sandstone. This was deposited in the Cambrian period and is the oldest sandstone in Britain. The quarries may well have operated for many centuries.

J This area of the common contains rough grazing which is still used.

K Commons are one of the oldest forms of land tenure. These commons do not belong to the public but to individuals or organisations. Commoners, who generally live nearby, have rights to graze the commons with stock. Visitors should respect this working landscape and realise that driving their vehicles over these commons is not permitted and dogs should be kept on leads.

L The corrugated iron building is the Coombegreen Mission Room. Dating from 1894, it is so unusual that it is listed.

M Berry Street contains a wealth of interesting buildings from many periods. Note the typically idiosyncratic Victorian Methodist Church and, two hours later, Providence Bungalow, which incorporates an old railway carriage. The street itself was part of an old drovers’ road.

N The Farmers Arms public house is an inn dating from 1640. It probably catered for the drovers who were taking sheep (and some cattle) from Wales to London. Until recently, there was an outdoor skittles alley.

O A sizeable motte is all that remains of Castlemorton’s castle. In the mediaeval period, this would have dominated the landscape. The keep at Castlemorton figures in the fascinating book ‘Malvern Chase’ by W.S. Symonds, who was Rector of Pendock just south of here. Symonds was a renowned Victorian naturalist and paints a most realistic picture of this whole area during the Wars of the Roses in the fifteenth century.

P Castlemorton church is itself representative of many historical periods. The dedication to St. Gregory is unusual. The basis of the building is Norman on an older Saxon site. There was a rebuilding in 1387 and the spire and woodwork are from the 1600s. The porch is about 1490 and the base of the wooden cross from about 1200.

Q On first impression, Fristly House is an ancient timber framed and thatched construction that would have been common here in the sixteenth century. It is a more modern imitation. Much older is Rough Chase where the building is fifteenth century or older and the genuine timber frame and brick construction are visible. The old almshouse is a mixture of many styles from C18 onwards.

R The Robin Hood pub is an old wayside inn that has catered for travellers (Malvern/Gloucester) for many years. There are several others on this road.

S Banbury Tree House is an early example of a house by the architect C.F.A. Voysey in the Arts and Crafts style. Note the steep roof and the attention to detail.

T The whole common has suffered from creeping enclosure over the centuries. Oftentimes the building gives a clue as to the enclosure date (but there has been much rebuilding). The more circular a boundary, the older the enclosure is likely to be.

U There is an old orchard within this circular enclosure. The circuitous route of this part of the walk shows how most of these enclosures were random and unplanned.

V The curved timbers of a cruck framed building standing by a tree, whose curved trunk & boughs would render such crucks