

**An Introduction
to
Quarrying in Myddle**

February 2019

Presented by Colin Ruck

Geology of the local area

The local landscape of Myddle most probably looked like this image in the Triassic period 250 - 205 million years



Geographical and geological description of Myddle

- An area mainly of undulating plains 250 – 300 feet above sea level, broken only by low hills whose steep slopes form landmarks in the highly cultivated countryside.
- The sandstone was formed in the Triassic period 250 - 205 million years ago in desert conditions with wind blown sand forming massive dunes that formed the sandstone we see today at Grinshill, Myddle and all around this region.
- Conditions in Myddle were similar to central Australia today hot, dry and windy with lots of sand dunes. The wind was blowing from the east forming Aeolian sandstone.
- This was also the start of the Dinosaurs period and we can see remains in the sandstone. In Grinshill they have found evidence of a small **Rhynchosaur reptile**.

Geological movements known as faulting has produced a chain of hills; we can see Nescliffe, Grinshill and Hawkstone, Pym Hill and Webbscott, (the hills on Lower Road) and in the village at Myddle Hill.



Example of Triassic Aeolian Sandstone



Rhynchosaur reptile.

Model reconstruction based on fossil remains. Triassic Period, about 220 million years old. From Grinshill, Shropshire
Shrewsbury Museums Service.

A Definition

Stone may have been quarried in the area since Roman times but most evidence points towards the 1300's.

Myddle Red Sandstone is from the New Red Sandstone of Triassic age (250 million years ago to 200 million years ago). It is reddish brown in colour.

Sandstones from the New Red Sandstone series are acknowledged as generally being a very durable building and paving stone and have been used extensively in many towns and cities in the UK.

Myddle Red sandstone appears to be a durable stone that is not effected by acid rain or air pollution.

The compressive strength of the stone is comparable with limestone.

Overall, Myddle Red should be suitable for use in most aspects of load bearing masonry and cladding except where there is salt!

COLOUR

Colour is an important factor in the use of the stone as a building material

The redness of the stone is due to the presence of a thin film of Hematite, (Iron Oxide) around every Aeolian sand grain

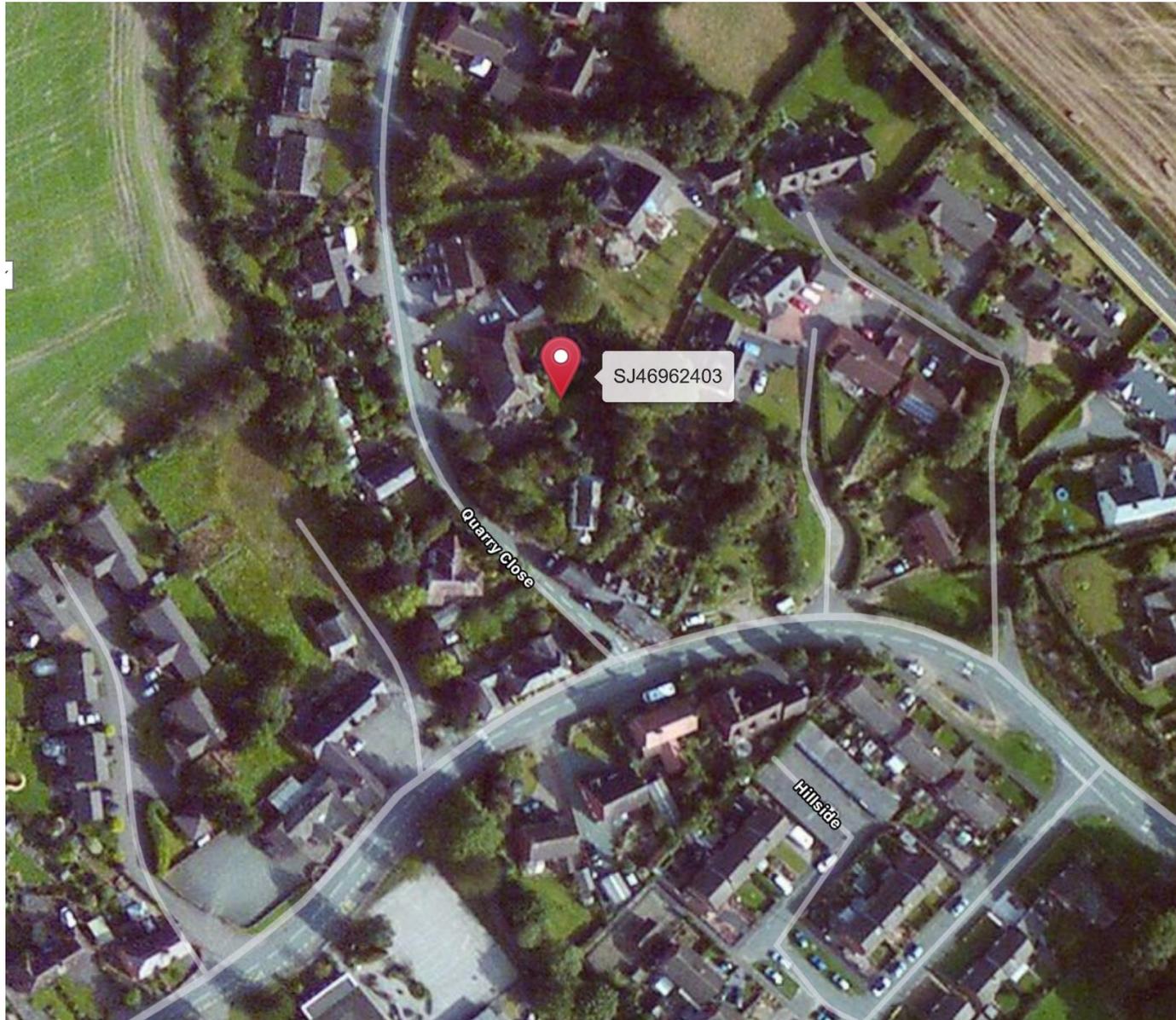
The white sandstones of Grinshill are similar but have been exposed to conditions where the red colour (the iron oxide) has been dissolved away probably by acidic conditions.

Builders and architects have shown that they prefer the white sandstone to the red sandstone for their buildings.

The white sandstone is less susceptible to salt damage.

Quarries in the local area

**West View Quarry, (SJ46962403) aka Myddle Quarry. Probably the first quarry.
Ceased - Sandstone (Upper Mottled Sandstone) Hand worked, pick marks visible**

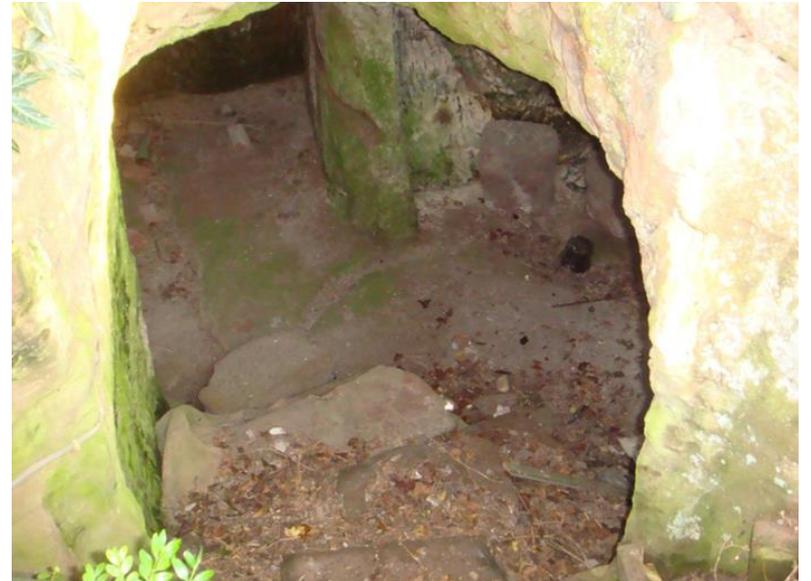




Quarry Close, Myddle
Possibly the first quarry
in the area and where
stone was probably
removed to build
Myddle Castle.



West View and The Rocks
Gardens, Brookside, Myddle.
West View has a cave house in the
rock.



**How the stone
was removed?**



The Quarry Pick

It had a wooden handle up to 80cms long and a metal head with points on one or both ends. The points acted like a chisel but the long handle allowed the user to exert more force in the stroke.

It was used to widen existing fissures in the rock or to make holes.

The Carver's Pick was a miniature version of the quarry pick, with a handle about 30cms long.

The tool was held with two hands and was used to shape stone blocks.

Close up of the pick strikes on the quarry walls





Wedge

Wedges were either wooden or metal and were used to split stone. Wooden wedges were too weak to break the stone directly but were inserted into rectangular holes made by the pick and then soaked in water. As the wood became saturated, it expanded and forced the stone to split along its natural bedding line or a fault. Metal wedges were also inserted into specially carved cuts and were simply hammered into the stone until it split



Plug and Feathers

This consisted of a central wedge (the plug) and two tapered wedges (the feathers). The feathers were inserted into a hole in the rock, their wider ends down, and the plug was then hammered down between them to split the rock.

By using this tool on a line of holes, the quarrymen could control the line along which the stone split.



Saw

A saw could be used on almost any type of stones and they were widely used by the Romans.

It consists of a long thin metal blade, about 0.5cm wide and often over 2 metres long. Normally these had a quarryman at each end but smaller saws were used by a single worker

on soft stone such as limestone or sandstone.

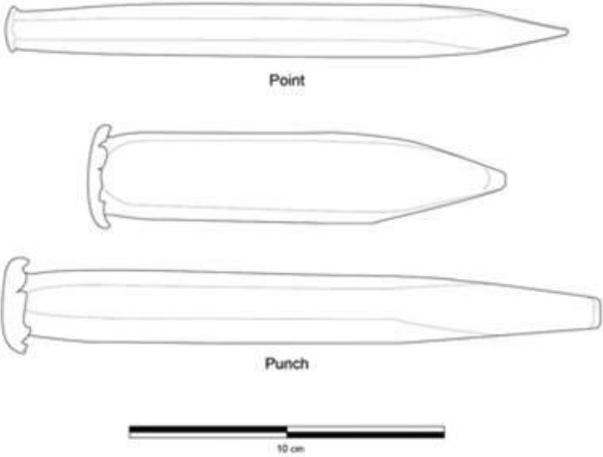
On soft stone, the blade was toothed while on harder stone it was flat and used in conjunction with abrasives mixed in water.



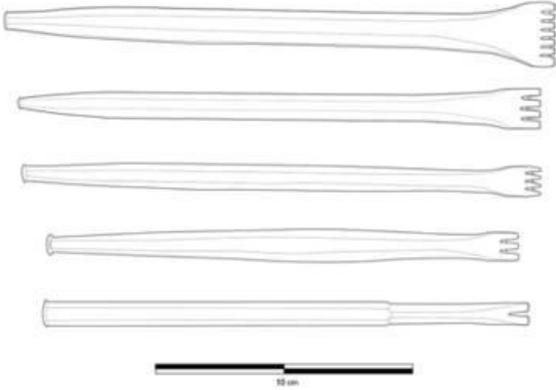
Drill

This was used to make a hole in the stone consisted of a drill bit, usually a chisel-like metal tool, set into a shaft connected to a wooden handle within which it could rotate freely.

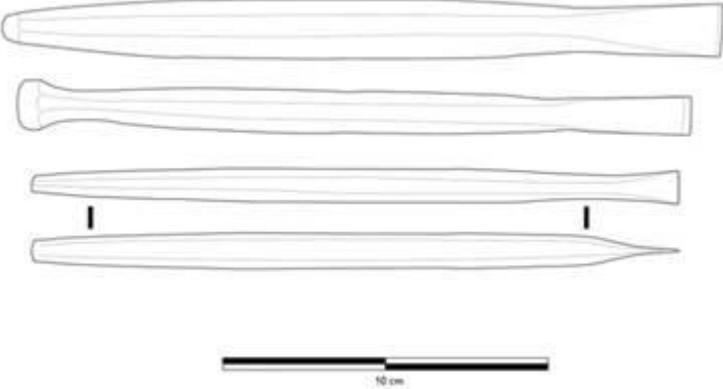
Various stonemason tools and chisels for working the sandstone once it had been removed to the workshops.



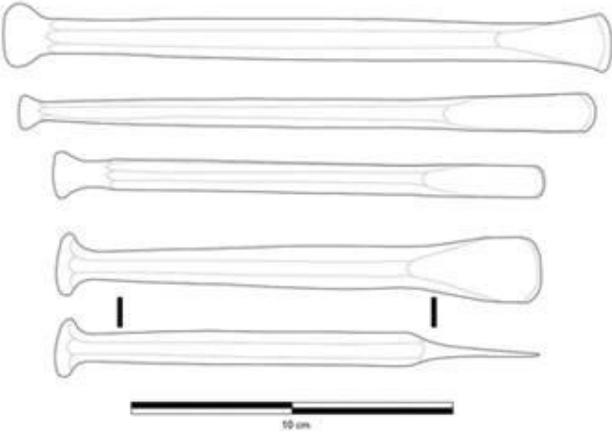
Point Chisels



Toothed Chisels



Flat Chisels



Roundel Chisels

From the 19th Century, things became a bit easier with the introduction of steam engines to help lift the stone and cut it.

Gunpowder was also widely used to break up the rock face.



British News Reel. 1933 Grinshill Quarry at work.

NO SOUND



BRITISH
PATHÉ

Census information can help research

Quarrymen of Myddle parish, 1841 -1911

1841

Joseph Cook,	Middle,	aged 30, Stone Mason
John Reeves,	Middle,	aged 45, Stone Mason
John Reeves,	Middle,	aged 22, Stone Mason
Thomas Pemberton,	Middle Wood,	aged 64, Stone Mason
James Shinton,	Middle Hill,	aged 50, Stone Mason
Thomas Beddow,	The Hollow,	aged 30, Stone Mason
Samuel Shinton,	Marton,	aged 60, Stone Mason
Charles Hatley,	Marton Lane,	aged 30, Stone Mason
William Cook,	Higher Lane,	aged 20, Stone Mason
Robert Carr,	Harmer Hill,	aged 30, Stone Mason
James Edwards,	Harmer Hill,	aged 30, Stone Mason
John Painter	Harmer Hill,	aged 40, Stone Mason
William Burgess,	Harmer Hill,	aged 40, Stone Mason

1851

James Shinton,	Middle Hill,	aged 66, Stone Mason
Joseph Cook,	Middle nr the Quarry,	aged 48, Stone Mason [quarryman]
Samuel Shinton,	Middle Wood,	aged 74, Stone Mason [quarryman]
William Painter,	Lower Lane towards Harmer,	aged 26, Stone Mason
John Reeves,	Lower Lane towards Harmer	aged 33, Stone Mason
William Jones,	Lower Lane leading to Harmer Hill,	aged 35, Stone masons Man
William Smith,	Webscot Lane,	aged 28, Stone Mason
Charles Heatley,	Marton	aged 43, Stone Mason
Richard Reeves,	Lower Lane, Harmer Hill,	aged 49, Stone Mason
John Cooper	Lower Lane, Harmer Hill,	aged 57, Labourer, stone breaker

1861

William Painter,	Lower Road, Middle	aged 36, Stone Mason
Charles Heatley,	Marton,	aged 54, Stone Mason
Thomas Ditor	Webscott Lane	aged 46, Quarryman
Thomas Beddow,	Webscott Lane,	aged 56, Stone Mason
William Smith,	Webscott Lane,	aged 38, Stone Mason
Joseph Smith,	Harmer Hill, Lower Road,	aged 31, Stone Mason

1871

Charles Heatley,	Marton,	aged 64, Stone Mason
Edward Chetter,	Marton,	aged 23, Stone Masons assistant
John Reeves,	Harmer Hill, Higher Road,	aged 51, Builder [Stone Mason]
William Painter	Harmer Hill, Lower Road,	aged 46, Stone Mason
William Painter	Harmer Hill, Lower Road,	aged 18, Stone Masons assistant
William Smith,	Webscott Lane, Bristle Bridge,	aged 48, Quarryman

From our research we can see that the quarries were probably most active in 1841 reducing to only 6 men in 1861-71 and then rising again in 1881-91 to 9 men eventually reduced to only 2 men in 1911.

Quarrymen of Myddle parish, 1841 -1911

An example of the local Painter Family

1841 (13 in total) active quarrying

John Painter Harmer Hill, aged 40, Stone Mason

1851(10 in total)

William Painter, Lower Lane towards Harmer, aged 26, Stone Mason

1861(6 in total)

William Painter, Lower Road, Middle aged 36, Stone Mason

1871(6 in total)

William Painter Harmer Hill, Lower Road, aged 46, Stone Mason

William Painter Harmer Hill, Lower Road, aged 18, Stone Masons assistant

1881(9 in total)

William Painter, Webscott, aged 56, Stone Mason

William Painter Webscott, aged 28, Stone Mason

1891(9 in total)

William Painter, Myddle, aged 66, Stone Mason

William Painter, Myddle, aged 38, Stone Mason

1901 (8 in total)

William Painter Webscott, aged 48, Stone Mason

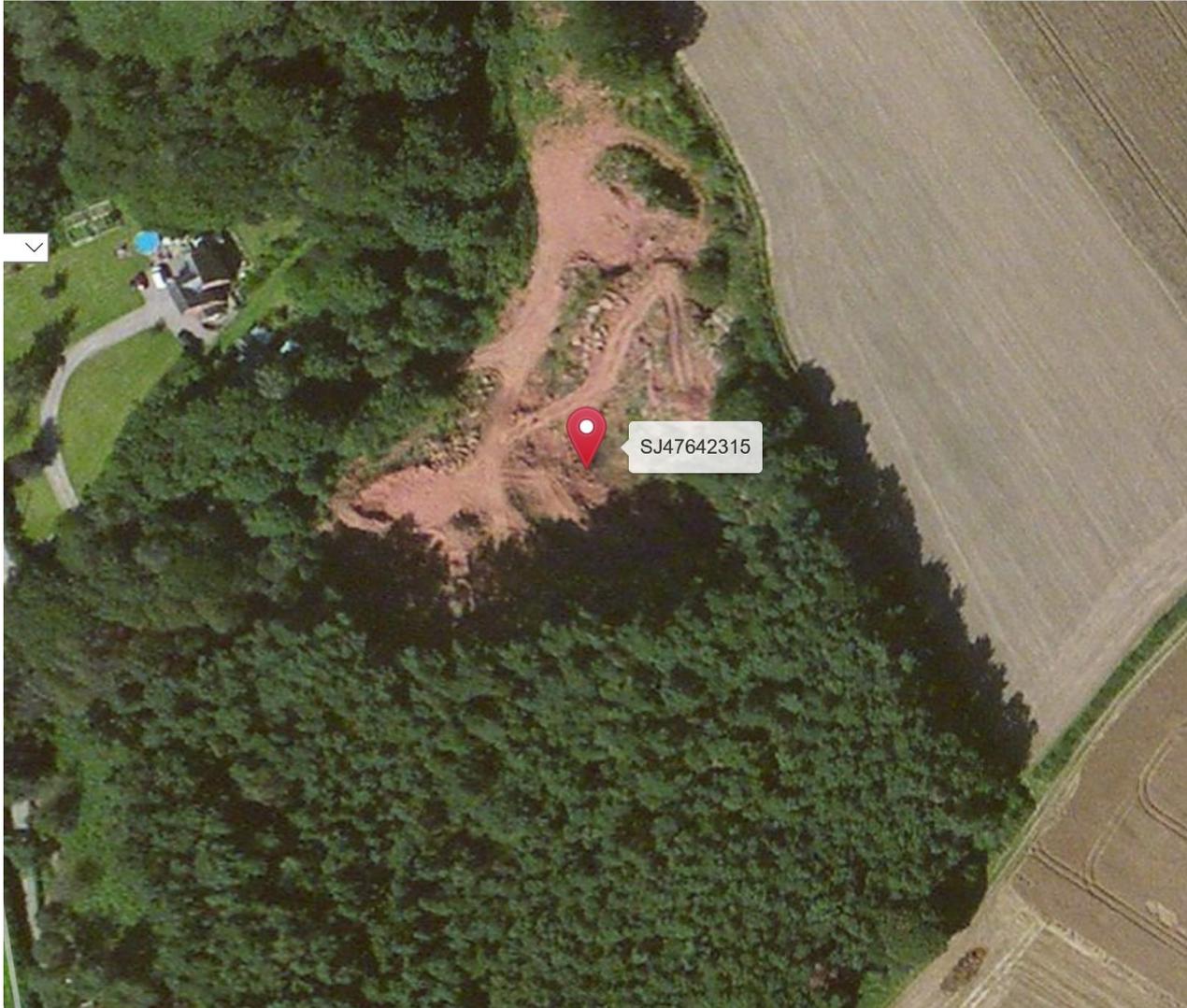
1911 (2 in total)

No mention of William Painter being a quarryman

**Myddle Quarry
Still
Working**

Webcott No.1 Quarry, Webcott (SJ47642315) aka Myddle No.1 Quarry
Sandstone (Upper Mottled Sandstone)

This quarry occasionally has small amounts of stone taken from it.



Myddle Quarry Lower Road.

Owned by Mr Michael Parker and
occasionally worked by
Shropshire Sandstone and Granite, Baschurch



Modern sandstone quarrying

1. Drill holes



2. Pour expanding cement into the holes



3. Remove large blocks to workshop where machines do the job of stone masons.

Primary sawing of the blocks into manageable sizes



Shaping three large cornice stones using a computer controlled cutting saw.
A computer controlled lathe is used to shape columns
The design work is done using a CAD programme.





Linear Profile
production Stage 1



Linear Profile
production Stage 2

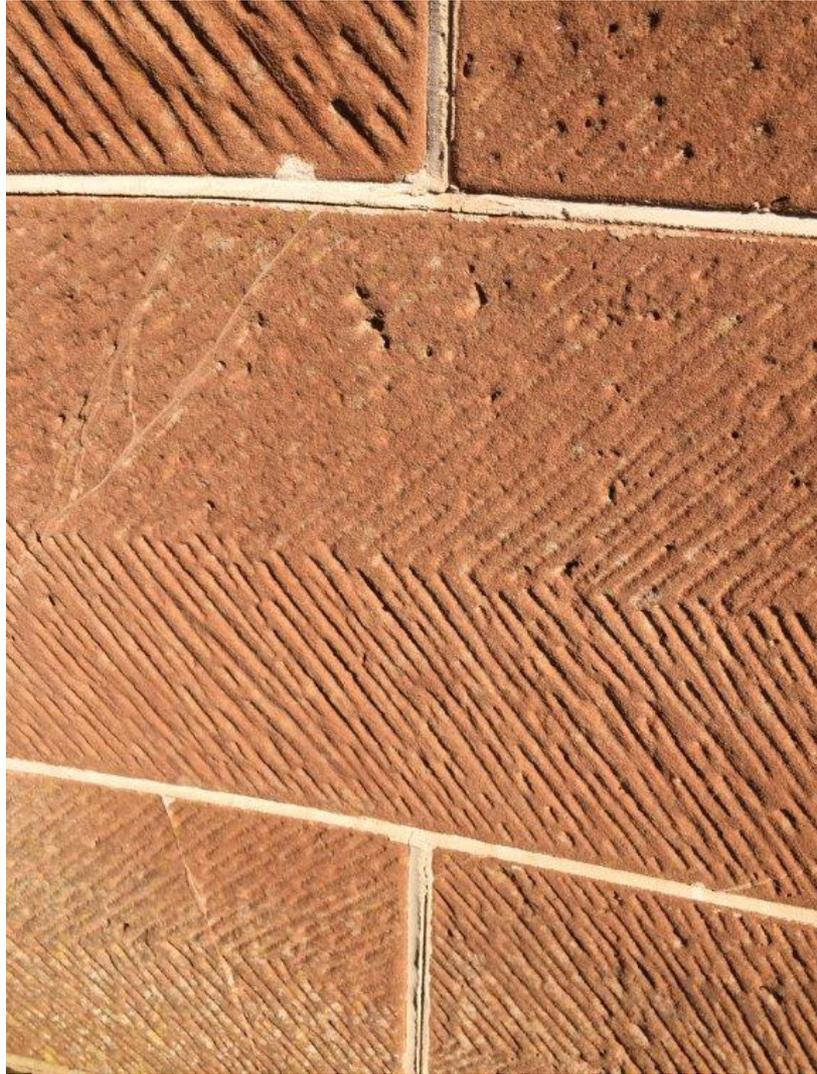


An example of turning work on the computerised lathe.

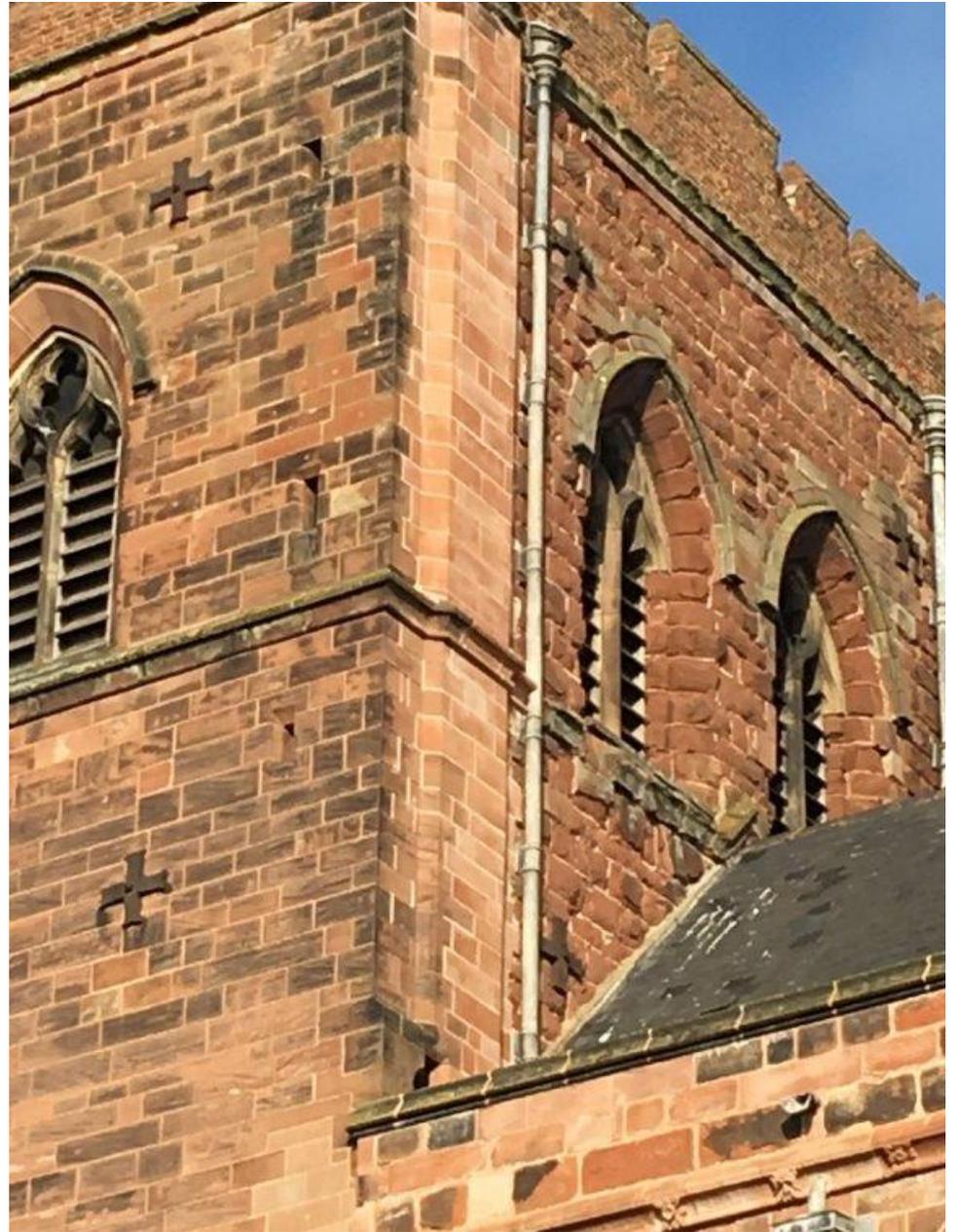
New Myddle Sandstone with imitation pick strike marks added by hand after machines have worked the blocks into shape.



The worked stone in situ.



Myddle red sandstone was used for the recent repairs on Shrewsbury Abbey.

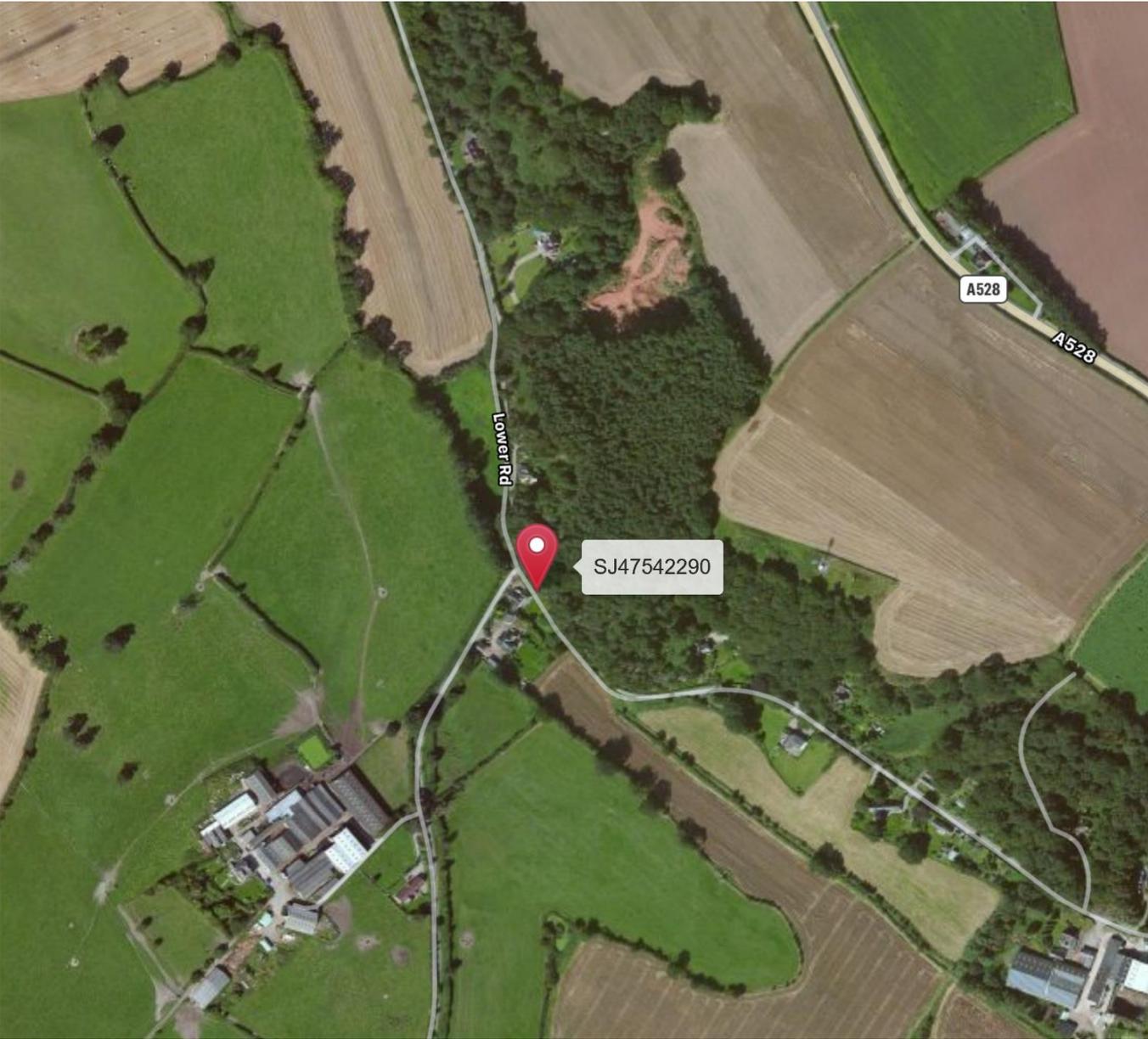


**Old Quarries
in the
Local Area**

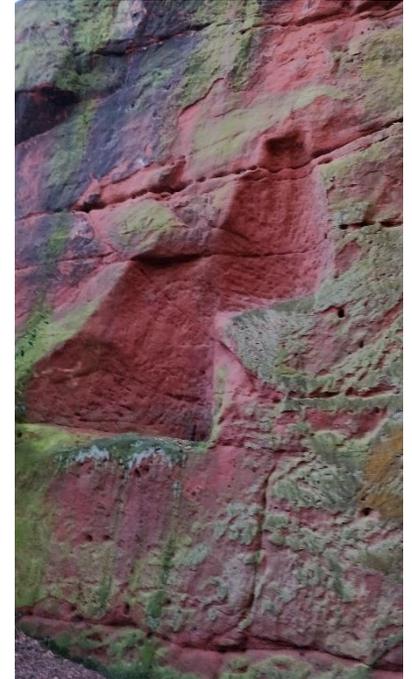
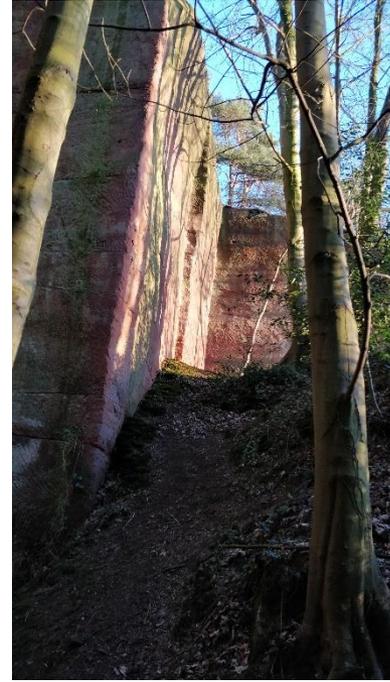
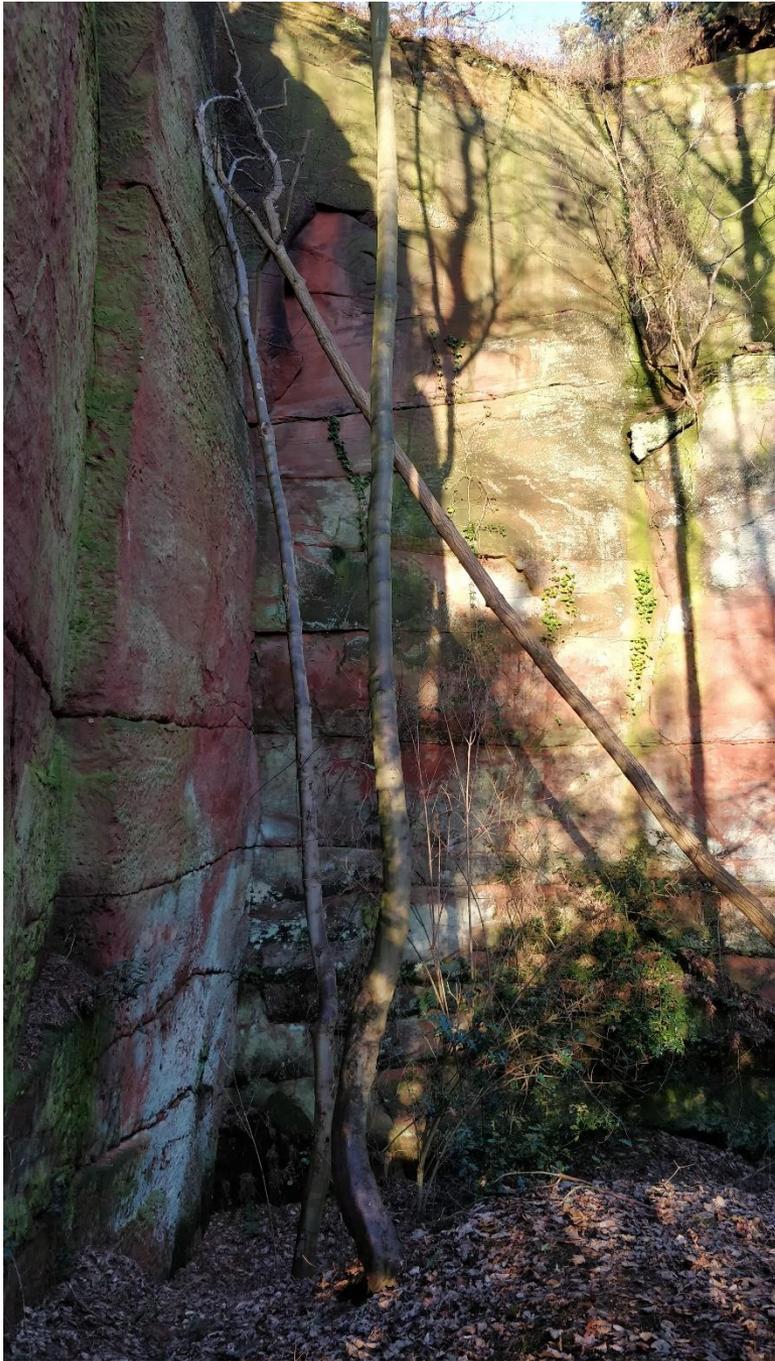
Quarries in the Cryn. On the left is the old quarry face.
On the right is the spoil heap of waste rubble from the workings



Webscott No.2 Quarry, Webscott (SJ47542290) aka Myddle No.2 Quarry
Ceased - Sandstone (Upper Mottled Sandstone)



Webscott 2 directly opposite Bristle Bridge



Webcott No.3 Quarry, Webcott (SJ47732291) aka Myddle No.3 Quarry
Ceased - Sandstone (Upper Mottled Sandstone)



Webbscott 3

Evidence of drill holes along a layer



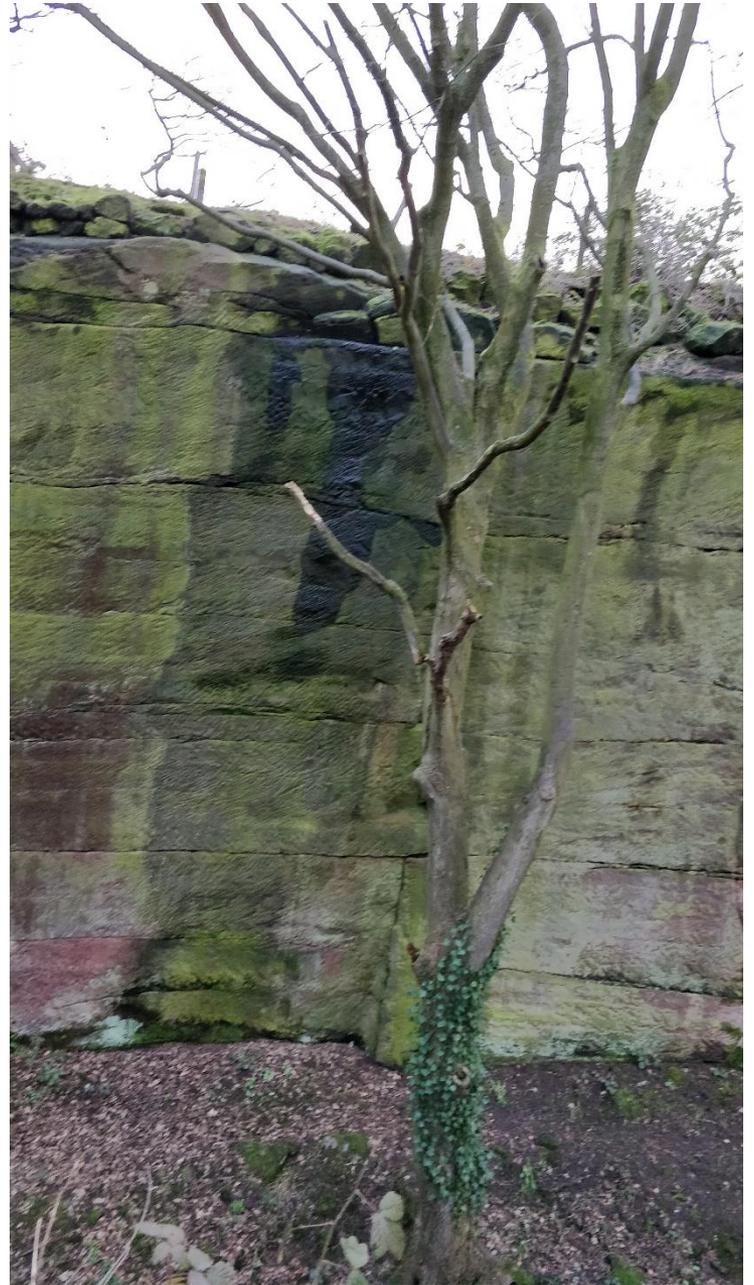
On the left rock being unusually worked from below



Webcott No.4 Quarry, Webcott (SJ47762282) aka Myddle
No.4 Quarry
Ceased - Sandstone (Upper Mottled Sandstone)



Webscott 4



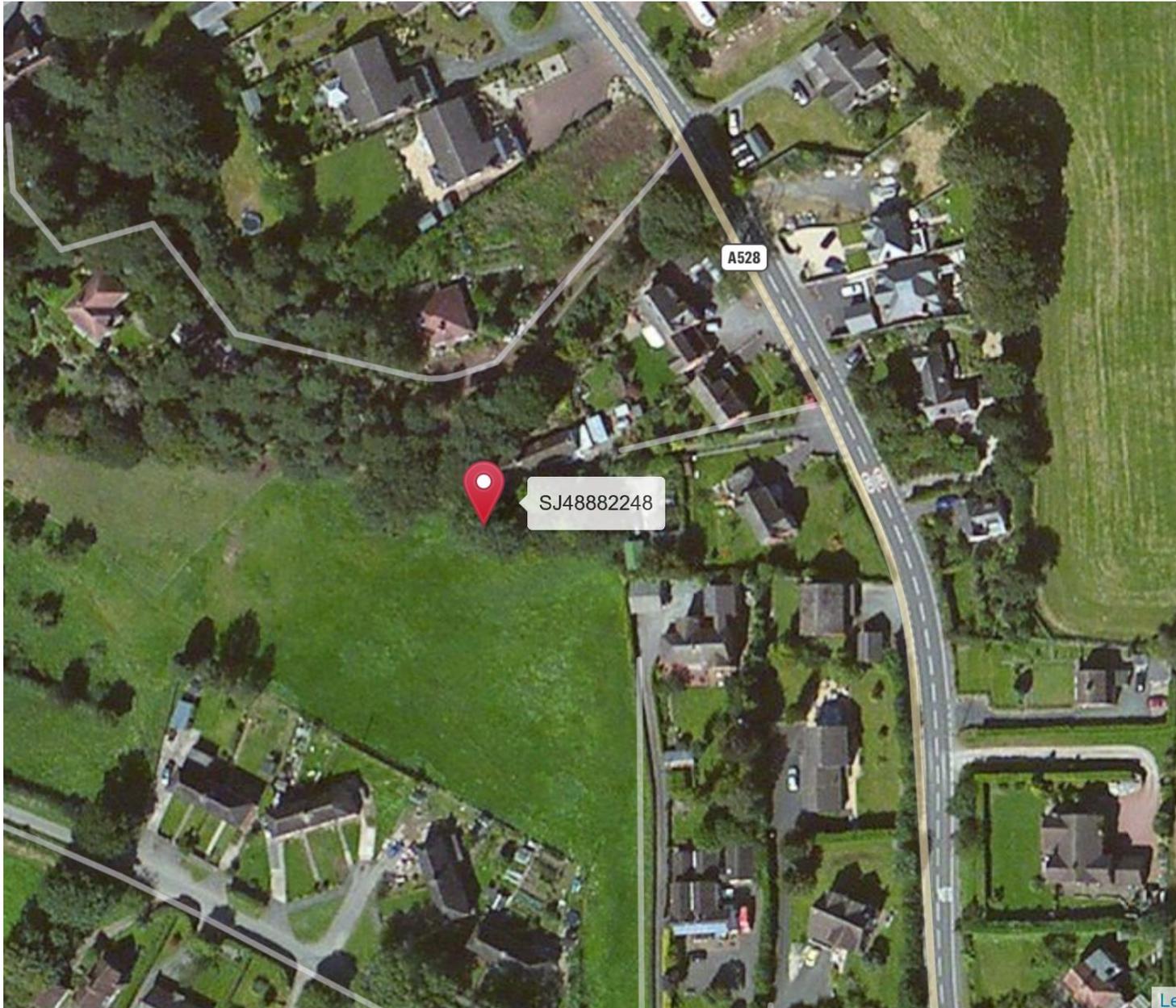
Webcott No.5 Quarry, Webcott (SJ47802285) aka Myddle No.5 Quarry
Ceased - Sandstone (Upper Mottled Sandstone)



Harmer Hill No.1 Quarry, Harmer Hill (SJ48812254)
Ceased - Sandstone (Upper Mottled Sandstone)



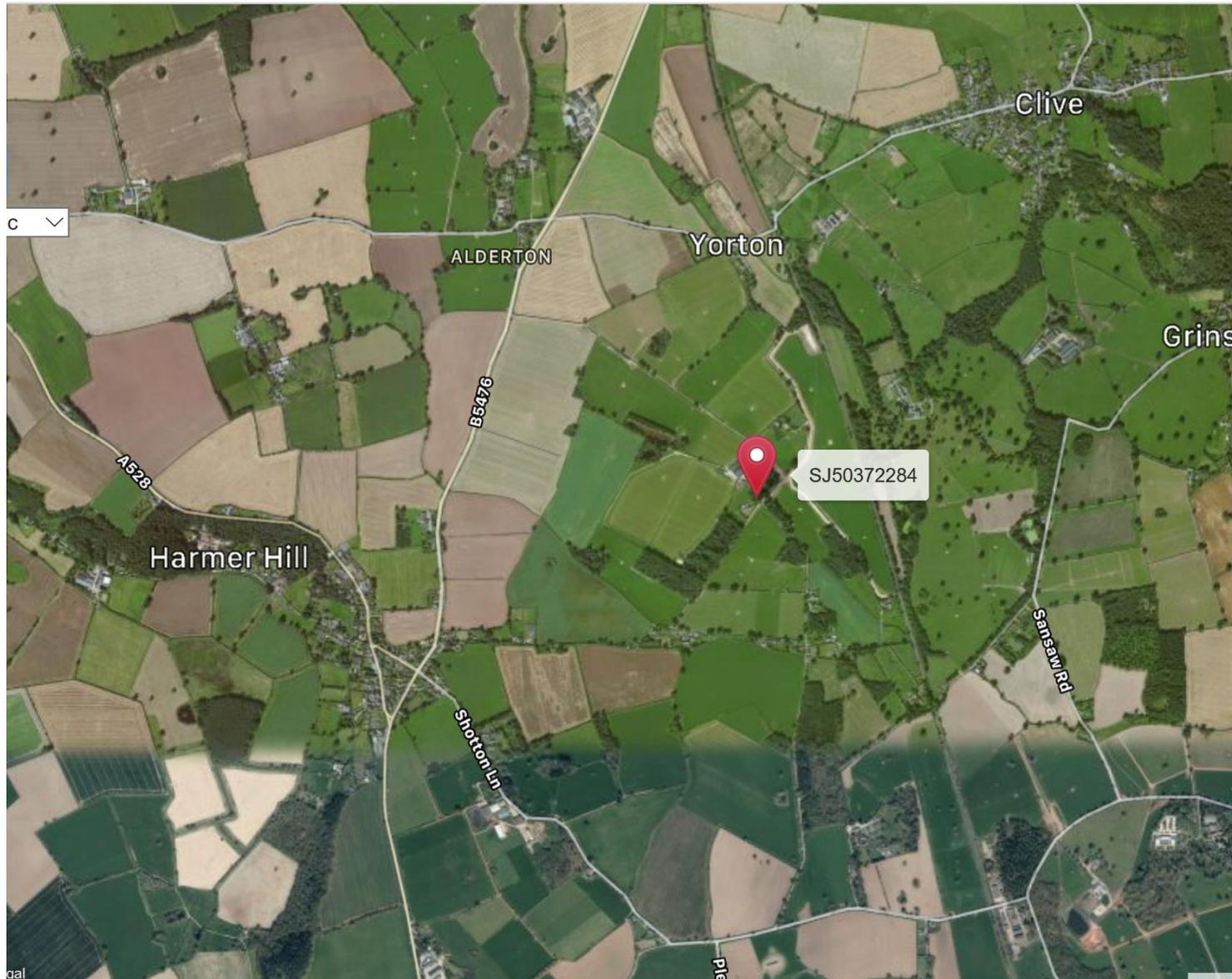
Harmer Hill No.2 Quarry, Harmer Hill (SJ48882248)
Ceased - Sandstone (Upper Mottled Sandstone)



Harmer Hill No.3 Quarry, Harmer Hill (SJ48982253)
Ceased - Sandstone (Upper Mottled Sandstone)



Yorton Villa Quarry, Yorton Heath (SJ50372284)
Ceased - Sandstone (Keuper Sandstone)



**Examples of
Sandstone use
in the
local area.**

Myddle Castle

- The castle is also one of the oldest buildings in Myddle.
- John Le Strange obtained a licence to fortify his house in 1308 and built in 1310





➤ The Castle probably ceased to be occupied c.1500 as it was described as "veri ruinus" by John Leland when he visited Myddle c.1540.



St Peter's Church, Myddle

- The pre-existence of this church is implied by the mention of a priest in the Domesday entry relating to the manor.
- The bottom part of the steeple was built of stone the rest of it was built of timber.
- In the time of Mr. Ralph Kinaston (also Chaplain to James I) 1596-1629 Rector, the tower was built of wood and was ruinous, he wanted the parishioners to take it down and rebuild it.
- A new tower was erected in 1634 and the mason was John Dod who lived at Clive and his wages were £5 for every yard from the bottom of the foundation to the top of the battlements.
- 1744 The church was rebuilt as we see it today, apart from the tower and an inset on the outside of the north wall commemorates this event.
- The churchyard walls. Each farm was designated a length to look after.



The Red Lion, Myddle 2016

- The 'Red Lion' is an old building
- It was moved from by the "Lich Gate" to its current site by Richard Maddock and put up in its present position at the bottom of Myddle Hill. In Gough's day the place was called Eagle Farm.
- Richard Maddock sold ale from it then
- When cock fighting was allowed, there was a cock pit in the kitchen of this inn.



The Red Lion in 1965



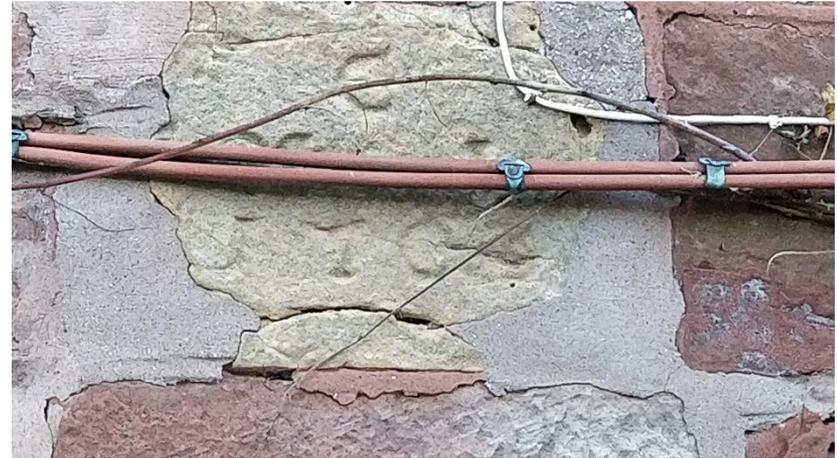
The old stables at the Red Lion now a holiday let.

Myddle Village Hall previously Myddle School





Old Quarryman' Cottages
at the bottom of
Brookside with a date of
1762 on the side of
cottage No. 13





No 11 Brookside, Mr Painter's House.
He was the mole and rabbit catcher



Some of the old cottages show signs of additions as in No.11 Brookside where a second story has been added.



Yew Tree House 2019



Yew Tree House was probably the Quarry Managers residence.



Myddle.

- See the man with the buckets, just carrying water from the pump!!
- Yew Tree House, Myddle Bridge, Bottom of Brookside
- Notice the two story building, it is now only one.



The Blacksmith Arms now a private residence.



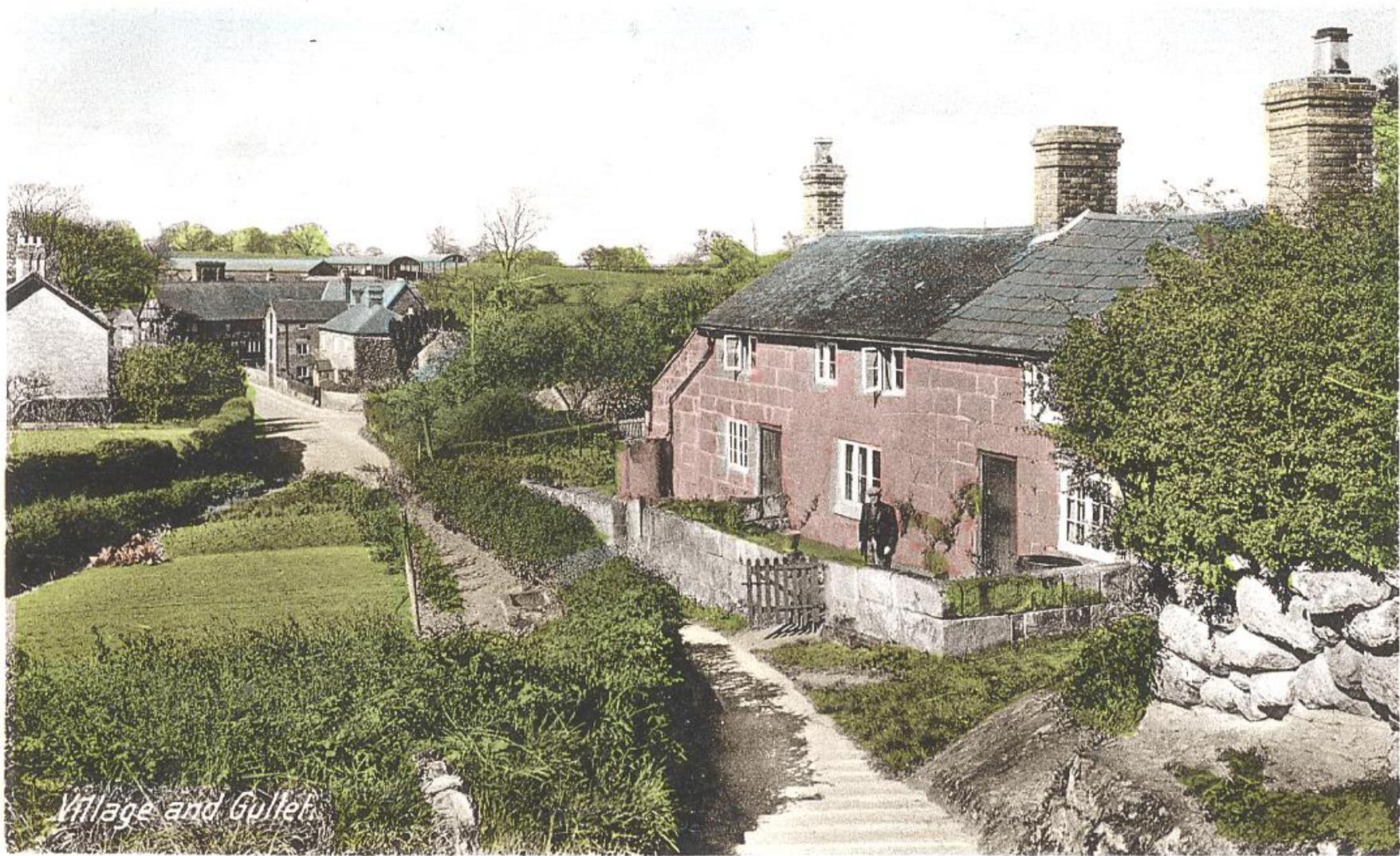
The Old Smithy at the top of the bank at the junction on the A524



The Nest

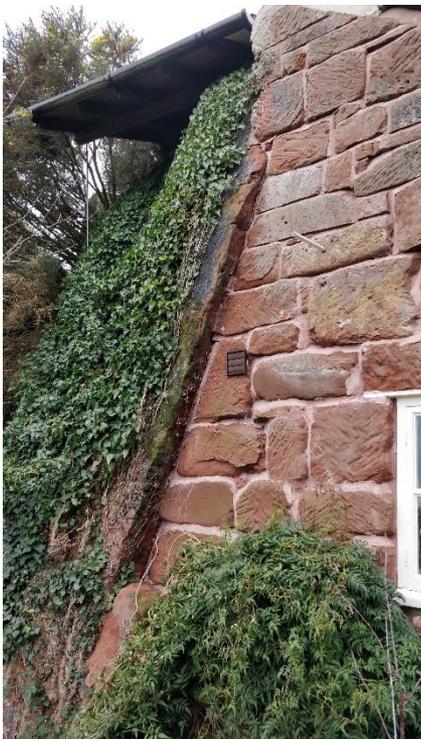


Brook Cottage and Bristle Bridge on Lower Road
Supposedly named according to Gough because of a
“monstrous boar killed by Scoggan”



The Gullet in Myddle







Moss Farm on Lower Road, thought to be Meare House, which was moved when the Mere was drained



The Chapel at Harmer Hill, built in 1833



Cryn cottage

At Webscott there was a primitive Methodist chapel which was erected in 1842. It has now been converted into a house.





Scoggan's Goblin Hole on Lower Road.

A cave like dwelling with a stone chimney made by a man called Fardo in Richard Gough's time.



Only a few properties in Harmer Hill are of any great age



Another church of the parish was at Harmer Hill. It was built by subscription and opened 31st May 1865. It was a school church licensed for public worship. During the week it was allowed to be used as an elementary day school.

Dog grave in the woodland area of Myddle playing field





Myddle Hill

Any ideas how and why these are on Myddle Hill?

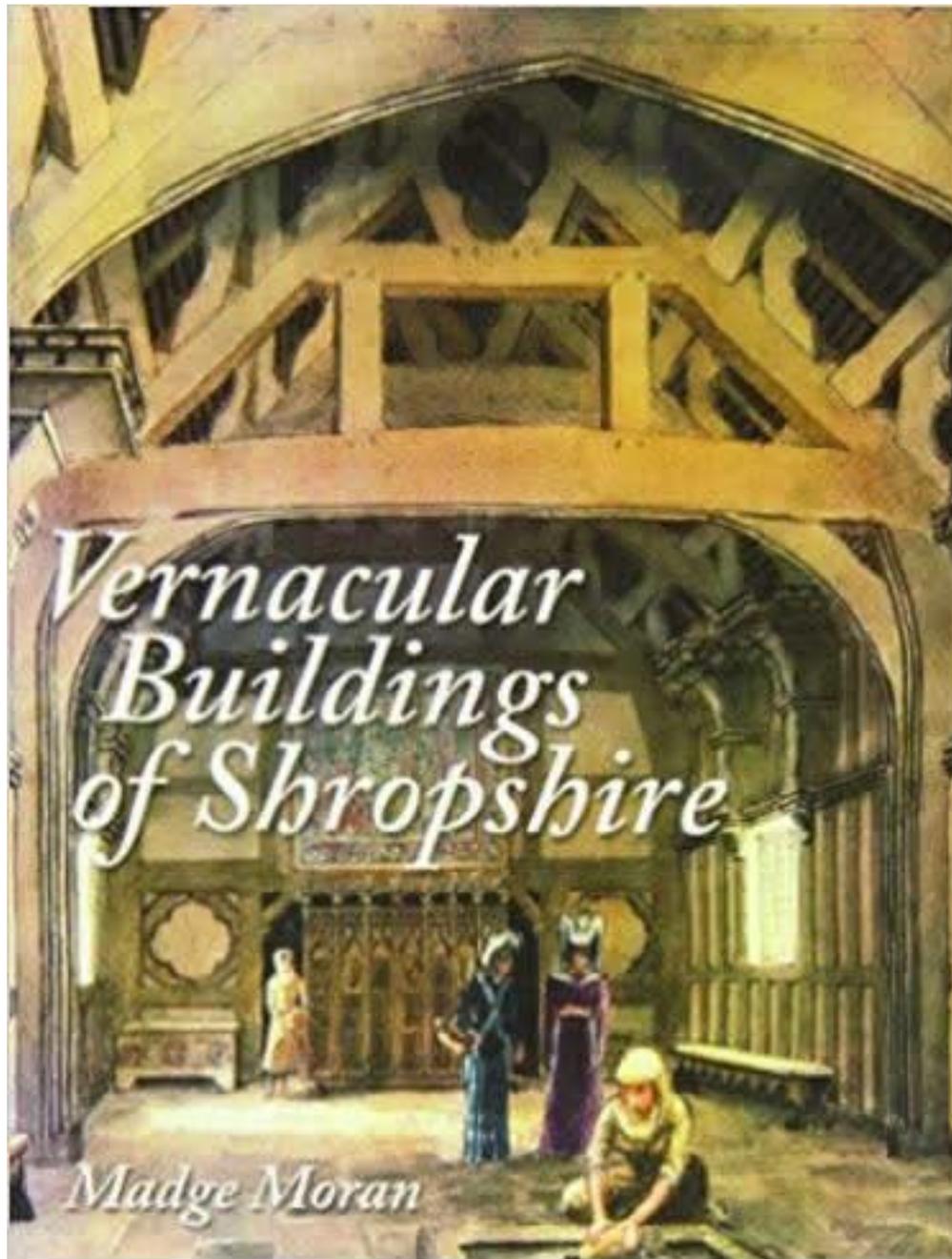


Examples of where the stone from Myddle Quarries has been used.

- 1307. The quarry in Myddle village almost certainly provided the stone for the building of the original Myddle castle in for Lord Lestrangle of Knockin.
- 1634 St Peter's tower was rebuilt in stone by John Dod at a cost of £5/yard
- 1744 The main church was rebuilt, apart from the tower.
- Numerous sandstone cottages in the local villages.
- Numerous farm building
- Miles of farm walls
- Tombs and head stones

More recently. The stone is now used for renovating original red sandstone buildings. Examples of where the stone has been used.

- Shrewsbury Abbey
- Biddulph Grange
- Marton Hall
- Houlston Manor
- Bridgewater Arms
- Numerous road bridge repairs
- St Martin's Church, Birmingham
- Hawkstone Follies

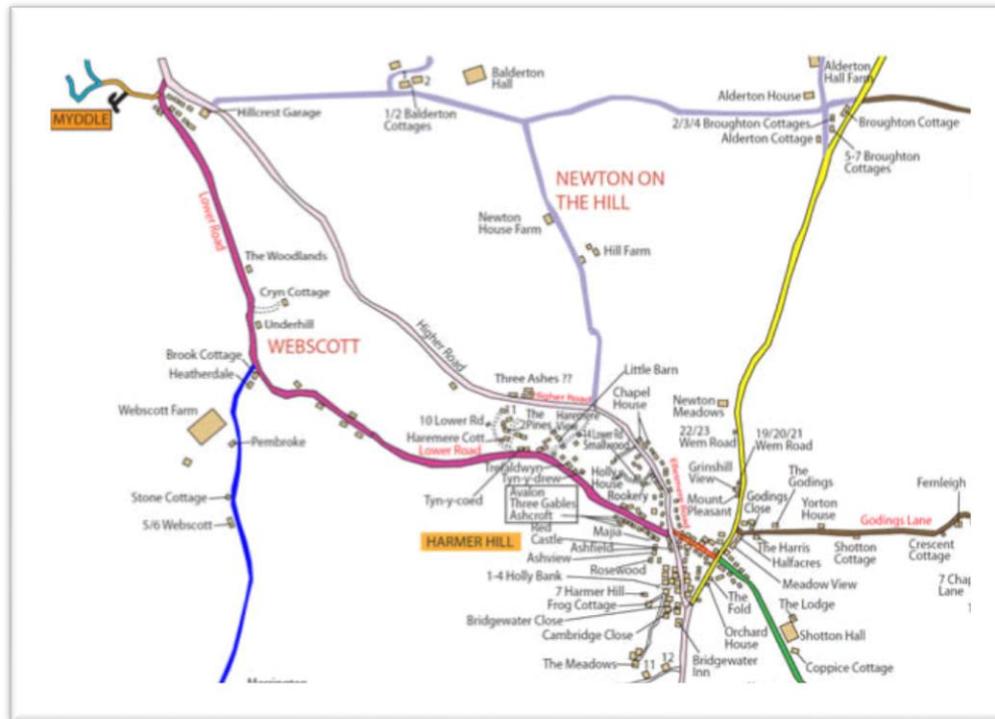


Does anyone have a copy of this book?

Apparently it has some of the details we are looking for.

The next step:-

- Identify the Sandstone properties and log each one on a map with an image and any details we can find. Each house will then have a page on the Myddle.net web site.
- Identify where our named Quarrymen on the census lived and worked
- Anyone who would like to help please leave your name and email address with us tonight and we will contact you.



Don't forget www.myddle.net has a mountain of information related to the village



- Home
- Latest News
- Contact us
- Important Local Contacts
- Local Photos
- Local Planning Applications
- Parish Council
- Community Led Plan
- History
- Church
- Pre School
- Myddle Primary School
- The Corbet School
- Village Hall
- The Red Lion Pub
- Myddle Village Shop
- Walk & Cycle
- Myddle HeartBeat

[Home](#) » [History](#)

Myddle History

 Select Language -| ▾



Remains of Myddle Castle possibly a converted house, constructed in 1310 by the current Lord of the Manor, Lord John Le Strange, to protect the family from the Welsh.

Myddle, (also known in the past as Middle or Medle) is part of the civil parish of Myddle And Broughton, which lies about six miles north west of Shrewsbury. Map grid Reference SJ46902357

The information, pictures and stories on these pages have been contributed by villagers and their friends and families from Myddle, Broughton, Harmer Hill, and the surrounding area. We welcome new content and will add it to the History pages as soon as we can.

We hope visitors to myddle.net will find something of interest here!

Sub Menu
Historical Maps
Myddle Quarries
Myddle Parish Monthly Magazine
Past Times
Recent Historical Finds
Parish History Society
Myddle Church
Broughton Church
History of Myddle Project
The Manor of Myddle
Myddle Castle
Myddle Rectory
Myddle War Memorial
Harmer Hill
Richard Gough
Sleep Airfield

**Thank you
for your interest
and coming here
tonight!**