

# MALVERN and Its Famous Visitors



[www.malverncivicsociety.org.uk](http://www.malverncivicsociety.org.uk)



## Introduction

Malvern has been host to many famous people over the years.

The road over the Hill at the Wyche Cutting has been an important trading route since prehistoric times and travellers used to stay in Malvern as they made their way over the Hill.

The establishment of the Priory Church in 1085 afforded accommodation to travellers and pilgrims alike; the timber framed Guesten Hall remained as a centre of hospitality long after the Dissolution and was only demolished in 1841 to make way for the Abbey [sic] Hotel; it was used as a tithe barn in the 17C and 18C.

One of the earliest famous visitors to our town was Princess Victoria in 1831 who stayed for some time with her Mother, the Duchess of Kent.

Some have come to benefit from the Water Cure in the last half of the Nineteenth Century - three thousand people a year travelled to Malvern, mainly by train, to take advantage of the Health Spa facilities offered by Doctors Wilson and Gully.

One of those who came for the Cure was Charles Darwin and his daughter, Annie, who had tuberculosis and who died in Malvern in 1851.

The years after the First World War saw a number of actors and musicians come to the town to support the Malvern Festival - founded in 1929 by Barry Jackson, impresario and founder of the Birmingham Repertory Theatre, in conjunction with George Bernard Shaw and, of course, Edward Elgar.

The Second World War saw the arrival of the Radar Research Establishment, second only to Bletchley Park in its contribution to the war effort; many well known scientific names started their careers at that time in Malvern.

In the 1990s a number of Green Plaques were erected by the Civic Society to recognise the places associated with the Water Cure.

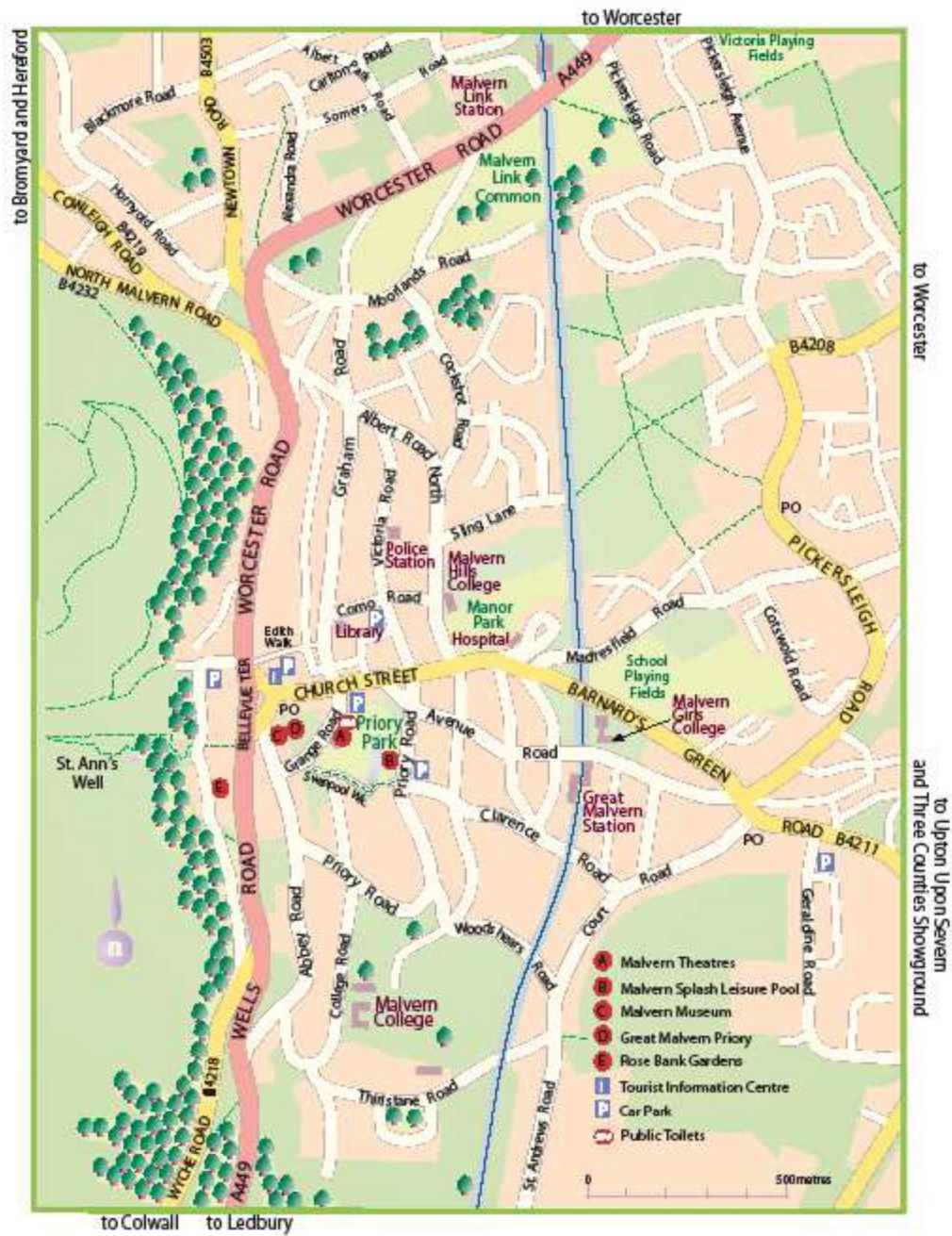
Since 2006, the Society has been putting up Blue Plaques to identify where famous visitors stayed in the town - and some seven have been put up in that period funded by a generous grant from the District Council.

The work continues as Malvern has always been a popular inland spa and is probably the best preserved Victorian town in the country.

Other interesting people who lived or stayed include: see Appendix

Revised September 2019

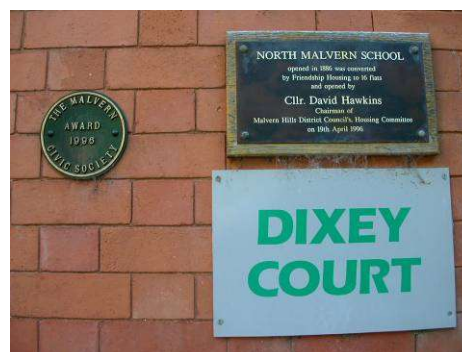
## Great Malvern



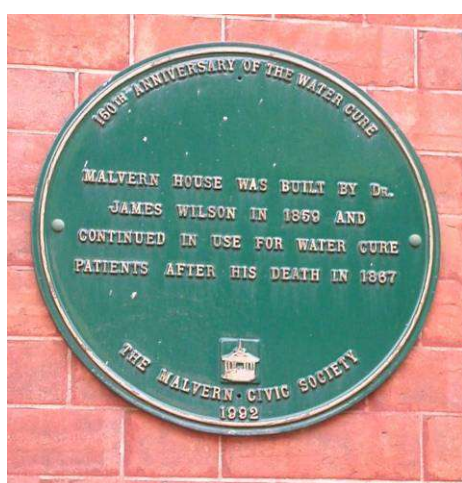




Forli, 35, Alexandra Road  
Home of Edward Elgar 1891-1899



Dixey Court, North Malvern Road



Malvern House, Abbey Road



Ellerslie, Abbey Road



Lloyds Bank, Belle Vue Terrace



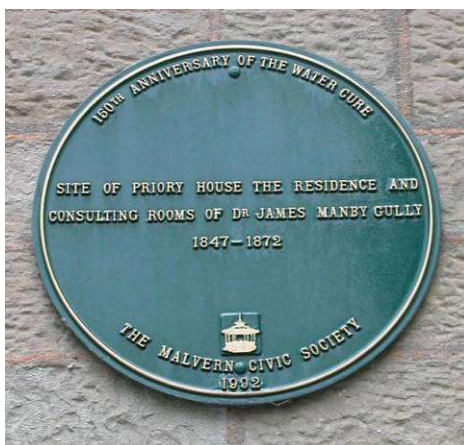
Malvern's First Hospital  
Redwood House, Hospital Bank



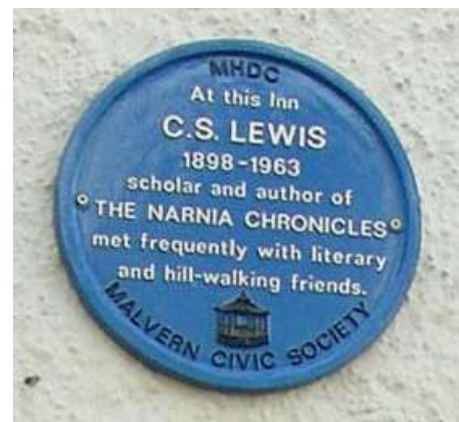
Spa Cottage, Priory Road



Lawnside, Albert Road North



The Council House, Avenue Road



The Unicorn Inn, Worcester Road



Malvern College Music School  
College Road

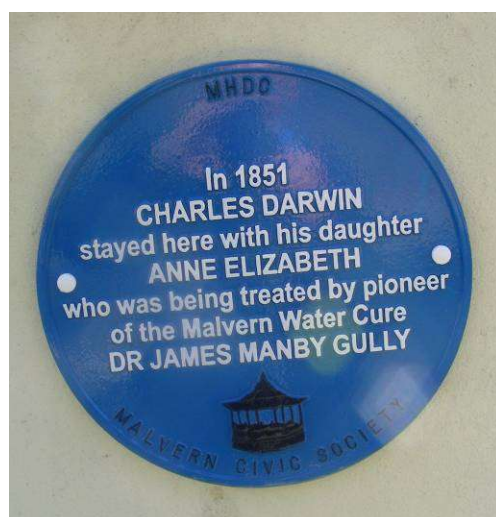


Barnards Green House

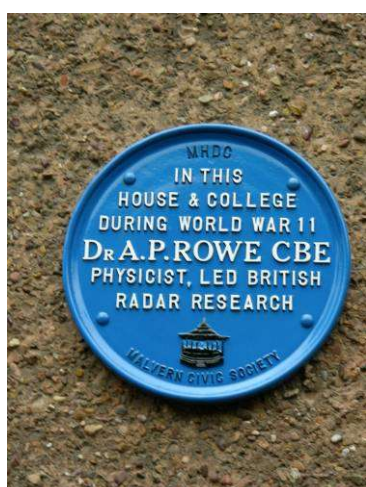




Aldwyn Towers



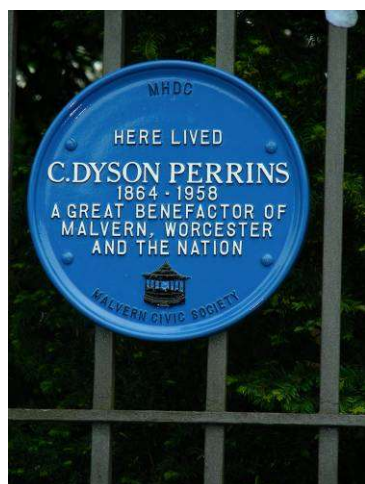
Montreal House, Worcester Road



Malvern College



Florence Nightingale  
Malvernbury, Abbey Road



Davenham,  
Worcester Road



Dr James Wilson's Practice  
Park View, Abbey Road

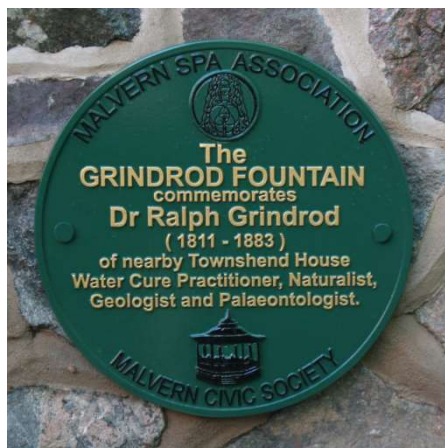


George Bernard Shaw  
Malvern Festival 1928



Sir John Cockcroft  
Back Lane

Back  
Lane



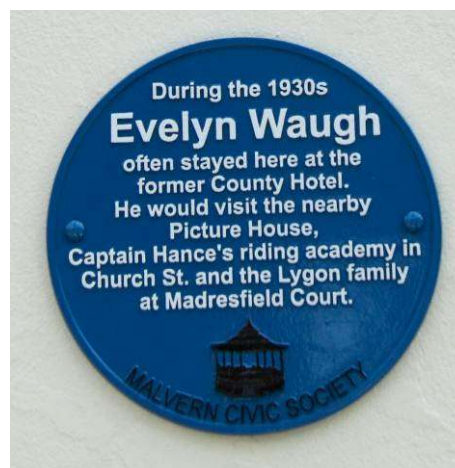
Dr Grindrod  
Situated in the grounds of Malvern College  
Can be viewed by appointment



Dame Laura Knight  
Mount Pleasant Hotel, Belle Vue Terrace



Santler Court



Evelyn Waugh  
Park View, Abbey Road  
Used to be the County Hotel

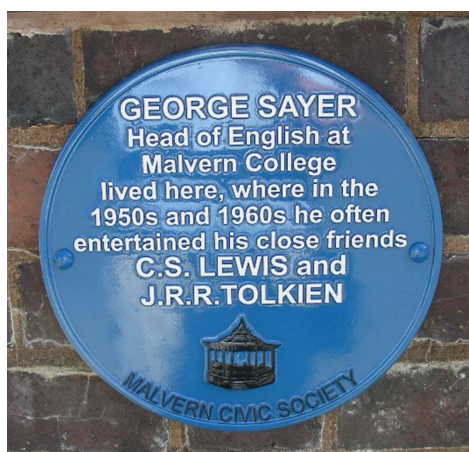




Santler Car Works , Upper Howsell Road



Church Street



34, Alexandra Road



Worcester Road Promenade

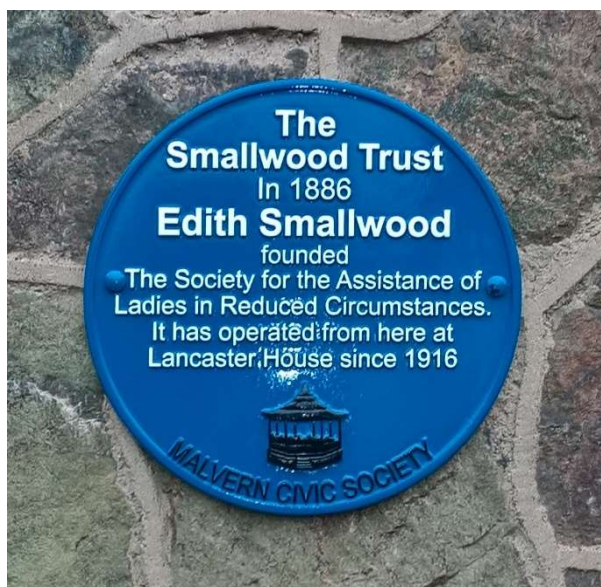


Fair View, Lower Wyche Road





Worcester Road on the corner of Bank Street



25, Hornyold Road



# APPENDIX

## **WH Auden**

The Downs School

## **TE Lawrence**

## **Charles Dickens**

## **Lady Falcon Scott, wife of the explorer**

Worcester Road, Link Top

## **Elgar**

Craiglea, 86 Wells Road [1899-1904]

Saetano, 7, The Lees [1888-89]

## **Stanley Baldwin**

Woodgate, Albert Road North

## **Lady Howard de Walden**

The Right Honourable Lucy Joan Cavendish Scott, Lady Howard de Walden, lived in West Malvern for less than ten years but during that time she exerted a tremendous influence. She initiated a lot of building work which is still much in evidence today, and also created employment for local people, and brought workers into the village from elsewhere.

She was the fourth daughter of the fourth Duke of Portland. Due to the death of siblings without issue, she inherited the vast Cavendish fortune, including the land on which Harley Street and Cavendish and Portland Squares are built. Sadly, although it was said that she conducted a large correspondence until shortly before her death, it has not been possible to trace any letters written from West Malvern.

She died at the mansion in August 1899 at the age of 92.

## **Roget**

Peter Mark Roget was born in London in 1779 the son of a Swiss Huguenot pastor. After gaining a medical degree in Edinburgh at the age of 19, he practiced as a physician in London and Manchester. He became Secretary of the Royal Society and a founder of the Manchester Medical School. These days he is remembered for one outstanding work, his Thesaurus. During his later years he spent many months at Ashfield House where he died in 1869 at the age of 90. His daughter Catherine Mary remained unmarried and continued living in West Malvern until her death in 1905 at the age of 79. Father and daughter share one grave in St. James's churchyard and the direction of their burial is worth noting.

They lie north-south instead of the usual east-west. It would seem that the most probable explanation was shortage of space in the churchyard. Three of their neighbours lie in the same direction almost under a hedge.

## **Mazo de la Roche**

Canadian born author – children attended the Downs School 1932-38

## **Pusey**



Dr. Edward Pusey frequently stayed at the Clergy House of Rest at St. Edward's from about 1874. He was connected with the Oxford Movement and in 1843 had been suspended from preaching before the University for two years because of an heretical sermon.

### **Jowett**

Dr. Benjamin Jowett, professor of Greek and Master of Balliol College, Oxford, was a frequent visitor from 1848 until his death in 1893. He stayed first at the Westminster Arms and later at Ashfield House where he entertained a number of well known visitors. In 1889 he became a Conservator. The appointment seems a strange one and either because of lack of interest or advancing years it would appear that he attended few meetings and contributed nothing.

In a letter written in 1868 he writes, "Bishop Temple is staying at the inn hard by, and every now and then we see P- in the distance - a black figure which we carefully avoid". The 'black figure' presumably was Pusey. He was also less than polite about the church, writing to Lady Abercromby in 1881 he says, "It is time to go to church which here is an excellent form of penance".

He was obviously unaware of certain local developments as in 1853 he wrote, "Fortunately I am two miles away from the Water Cures, and have no temptation to dilate my intellects in that way"..

### **Swinburne**

Algernon Charles Swinburne frequently visited Jowett when he was at Ashfield House and he may even haunt the place! When Dr. Shakespeare and family lived at Ashfield House, his daughter, then a young girl, had asked who was the funny little man in a cape and flat hat that she had seen leaving. There had been no such visitor but her account was an accurate description of Swinburne.

### **Wordsworth**

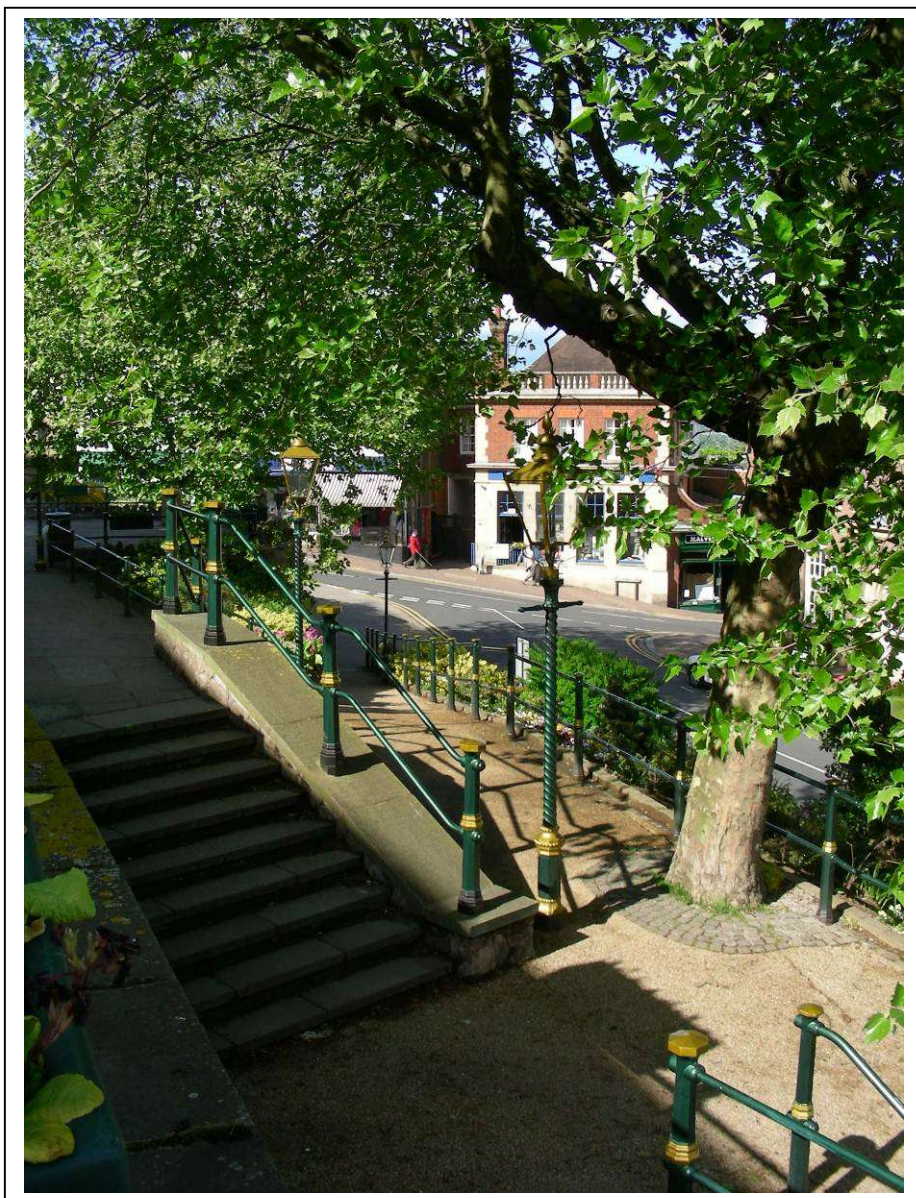
The first occupant of the vicarage was the Rev. George Hutchinson, who at that time was a bachelor, and his sisters Sara and Elizabeth came to keep house for him. Two years later, when his father retired from farming, his parents also joined the household. George's father Tom Hutchinson was a brother of Mary Wordsworth (wife of the poet), and William and Mary came for a month's visit in June 1849. Although he was then 79 years old, William spent much of his time walking in the company of his nephew and other members of the family. These walks were usually limited to surrounding areas such as Mathon Lodge and the Wyche but it would seem that on one occasion he walked as far as Hanley, making the return by carriage.

### **Walter de la Mare**

Walter de la Mare stayed at the Westminster Arms and in 1919 he wrote asking Miss Baird for permission to wander around the grounds of St. James's. By way of thanks she received a book of his poems with the inscription, "But 'twas beyond a mortals share to wander solitary there".

### **Baden - Powell**

Miss Baird met Lord Baden-Powell through her involvement with the Girl Guide movement. During two summers the Baden-Powell family camped in the grounds of St. James's, close to a summer-house where they raised a flag to celebrate their visit. This was the reason why the summer house became known as the Chiefs shelter. Later both his daughters were educated at the school.



BELLE VUE TERRACE

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