



## A BRIEF HISTORY OF CLENT

The earliest record of Clent is in the Domesday Book (1086) as the named manor of the Worcestershire Hundred, lying just outside the Royal forests of Feckenham and Kinver. In Mediaeval times the farming community of Clent was strongly influenced by Halesowen Abbey, established in the 13th century.

From the 16th century scythe makers and later wheelwrights, locksmiths and nailers thrived in the area. At about this time almshouses were built near the church. The village was still quite small, there being only 160 persons over 16yrs recorded in 1676.

In the 1700's Clent began to resemble the village we know today. Squire John Amphlett of Clent House founded the village school. Old Clent Grove, and the castle folly at Adams Hill were built by the Liells. Lord Lyttleton set up the Four Stones on Clent Hill.

After 1800 prosperous industrialists began to buy and develop houses in the village. Links with the Black Country became closer still when in 1834 men from Lye cut through Buttonbank to form The Rocks cutting. By 1864 the church had to be extended and was subsequently rebuilt. A railway line through Clent to Bromsgrove was planned but never materialised, though the 'Woodman Hotel' (now the 'French Hen'), a part of this plan, did get built.

Other buildings from the 19th century include the Police station, Wesleyan chapel and the Foresters Convalescent Home. A new infant school and extended junior school were the work of the Durant family who now occupied Clent Hall. The Amphlett estate cottages and Clent Cottage were completed in 1879. Towards the end of the century Field House was built, and developments were commenced around Western road. The Cross Keys Public House (now residential) was also built at this time adjacent to Gallows Brook, which still marks the border between Clent and Hagley.

Thousands of visitors a year were attracted to the area in the early 1900's. Boarding houses and shops flourished. The 'Alfred Roberts' Parish Hall and the All Saints Home for Girls were erected, and after the First World War houses were built in Summerfield Road and Pool Furlong. A former Tudor malthouse was donated to the Catholic Church and converted into a chapel.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF CLENT continued



After the Second World War more houses were built in King's Meadow. There was also considerable development around the Pinewoods Avenue/ Newfield Road/ Western Road areas which now hold a substantial proportion of Clent's inhabitants. To accommodate the needs of a young population within the Parish, the junior and nursery schools were extended.

Today, in addition to the two churches, this lively parish boasts a number of active societies and groups. It is well served with restaurants and pubs and has a few retail outlets, although it lacks a general store.

Historically Clent has consisted of a number of scattered settlements, and in the 1960's was split by the A491 link road. Despite this, its residents have a strong sense of community, demonstrated not only by their enthusiasm for the recent Centenary and Millennium celebrations, but also by the response to the Survey on which this document is based.