

STEDMAN COUSINS



Dear Cousins,

This year's Reunion (the 10th) proved to be really exciting. The weekend began on Saturday morning at the 12thC Shipton Church at the northern end of the Corvedale. The church is next door to Shipton Hall the former home of the Lutwyche family. There were at least three Stedman baptisms, three burials and two marriages recorded here. One of the recorded marriages, that of the Rev Samuel Stedman (Minister of the parish of Easthope) was to Dorothy, daughter of George Ludlowe of The Morehouse.

From Shipton we drove through Stanton Long (where we believe our John [of the Banke] was born in 1604, then through Holdgate (John Stedman and his sister Anne [of the Torpley Hall family] were baptized there in 1736 and 1738); from Holdgate through winding and narrow lanes to Tugford and Abdon (the Taskers and Phoebe Page's home village). Our goal was Heath chapel. Sited in the middle of a field, the Norman chapel of Heath is all that remains of an abandoned village. Entry to the field is through a set of wrought iron gates and the very large key was found according to instructions (handing on the back of a notice board in the field).



We were surprised to find the interior of the chapel was so light, despite the few small windows. The chapel walls had moved considerable over the years as can be seen from this photo - there were large gaps between the trusses/supports* and the walls. (*or whatever the correct term is) Some remnants of wall paintings were visible. We thought perhaps one of the benefits from the boxed pews would be the prevention of draughts on cold windy days. However the wooden benches didn't look very comfortable.



After our visit to Heath we were ready for lunch which we had arranged at 'The Tally Ho' Inn in Bouldon. Unfortunately the chef became ill and had to go home and we had to content ourselves with limited bar snacks.

From Bouldon we drove through Diddlebury and on to Bache Mill. Our destination was Spring Grove a house furthest from the road, accessible by a single track lane in a remote area. Gina, the lady currently living in the house, was there to welcome us and allowed us to look around both inside and out at the oldest parts of this old house.



As Dave has already clearly explained there is enough evidence to say with reasonable certainty that this was where our Banke House was. As you can see from the photos above, there is much evidence of parts of a very old structure still visible. We're awaiting news from some architectural people to give us their professional views. I think we were all excited and thrilled that at last we have found the Banke House.



Above are some more views of the bank which will give you an idea of the area in which Spring Grove/Banke House stands.

After our interesting day around the Corvedale, we had a 'Stedman family meal' together at the Horse and Jockey in the evening.



Sunday morning we met at the Judges Lodgings in Presteigne for our leisurely tour of not just the Judges lodgings but the court and the prisoners cells beneath. In the gallery of former Radnorshire policemen are some photos of Clive's grandfather Thomas Stedman who was a policeman in the area.



Roger and Bob listening to the audio tour and taking it easy.

After our tour, some of the Cousins went on to Brampton Bryan to see the re-enactment of an English Civil War battle whilst others stayed for lunch at the Radnorshire Arms Hotel. A building formerly the home of Sir Christopher Hatton, Lord Chancellor to Elizabeth.



Despite the date of 1616 on the front porch, the house is Tudor (later additions were made).

I have been asked about more Stedman Cousins T-shirts and wondered if anyone else was interested in ordering any more. Before I make enquiries, perhaps you could let me know. Perhaps you'd like a different colour or one for a family member.

With best wishes

Sandra