

Some unnoted instruments in Butcher Row Museum, Ledbury

Butcher Row House Museum describes itself as containing ‘many items of local interest including a small collection of musical instruments ranging from a ‘hurdy-gurdy’ to a Tibetan pipe fashioned from a (human) thigh bone’. The ‘locality’ of the latter might seem a little tenuous for Ledbury but the establishment is situated just off the cobbled roadway up to the church and in close and convenient proximity to the ‘Prince of Wales’ pub. which does an excellent lunch of faggot, chips, peas and gravy washed down with local cider.

The museum is a cramped, Dickensian collection of local memorabilia presided over by volunteers to match but I was most surprised to find, upstairs, a collection musical instruments in various states of disrepair that might benefit from closer examination by persons familiar more with them than I.

Note the long Persian oud with its triple tied frets; the ‘arch cittern’ strung with what looks like guitar strings and an English guitar. The best preserved of the instruments, a hurdy-gurdy just about features in one of my photographs but, generally, the light conditions were poor making photography difficult.

Would anyone have the time to make a better survey?









This archcittern is labelled as: ‘made in London by Joseph Buchinger who traded as a musical instrument maker, music seller and publisher between 1785 and 1811. It appears to be a hybrid having a body similar to a French archcittern but with the neck, peg box, number of strings and tie bridge of an English harp-lute-guitar.’





