

**BROSELEY
LOCAL HISTORY
SOCIETY**



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EDITORIAL

Broseley Local History Society

The Society was originally formed as the Wilkinson Society in 1972 and was renamed in 1997 to reflect its main purpose:

‘the research, preservation and promotion of Broseley’s unique heritage’.

Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month beginning at 7.30 pm, at Broseley Social Club; and annual events include a summer outing, an autumn walk and a winter dinner. Members receive a quarterly newsletter and an annual journal. The Society’s collection of artefacts is at present in storage, with some items on display at Broseley Cemetery Chapel.

The Society has a web site which contains information about Broseley, copies of the newsletter and articles from previous journals. This can be found at *www.broseley.org.uk*

The Journal

The journal is published annually. The four articles in this issue represent the ongoing research of Society members and others, and we are grateful to individual contributors. Our thanks also to Steve Dewhirst for design and typesetting.

Contributions for the next issue would be welcome and should be sent to the editor, Neil Clarke, Cranleigh, Little Wenlock, TF6 5BH.

William Whitehead Watts

A Gifted and Pioneering Geologist

by Janet Doody

William Whitehead Watts, born on the 7th June 1860, was the eldest son of Isaac and Maria Watts of High Street, Broseley. A number of sources describe Isaac as a music teacher, but the census records show he was a draper. His younger son Thomas Isaac Watts was a music teacher. Isaac Watts was born in Trentham, Staffordshire and had moved into Broseley by 1860. Prior to his marriage in 1856, he had been employed as a draper's assistant to Henry Bowen in Bridgnorth.

William attended Bitterley Grammar School (1869-1870), Shifnal Grammar School (1871 -1873) and then Denstone College, near Uttoxeter (1873-1878). In 1878 he won a scholarship worth £40 to Sidney College, Cambridge. Here he initially studied chemistry but a lecturer persuaded him to take up geology, which he soon made his main subject. He graduated with 1st Class Honours degree in 1882, was then awarded a MA in 1885 and a Science Doctorate in 1909. Whilst a student he was a founder member of the Sedgwick Club, a University geology society said to be the oldest student-run geology society in the world.

From 1882 to 1891 William became a lecturer for Cambridge University in their adult education classes, teaching geology, physical geography and archaeology. The courses were held throughout the Midlands, and during this time William was reputed to have taught in no less than 36 towns. He was also a part-time Science Master at his old school, Denstone College; and taught at both Yorkshire College, Leeds (now University of Leeds) and at Mason College Birmingham, as well as continuing to map the geology of Shropshire. In 1891 he became a petrographer (studying the formation and composition of rocks) for the British Geological Survey, working both in Ireland and London.

William returned to teaching from 1897 to 1906, becoming deputy professor to Charles Lapworth at Mason Science College, Birmingham (later incorporated into the University of Birmingham). Both he and Professor Lapworth contributed much knowledge to the geology of the Midlands and especially Shropshire. In 1898 William published "Geology for Beginners", which became very successful

Geol. Mag., 1915

PLATE XVI



Sincerely yours
W. W. Watts

Photo Elliot & Fry

*Dr William Whitehead Watts LL.D.,
ScD., F.R.S. (1860-1947), Emeritus
Professor of Geology at Imperial
College of Science and Technology*

running to a number of editions, the last in 1937. In 1906 he became professor and head of the geology department at the Royal School of Mines, later Imperial College, London, where he stayed until his retirement in 1931. Whilst at the RSM he developed a new postgraduate and research programme and built up a departmental library and specimen collection. During the First World War he became advisor to a number of Government Departments, ranging from munitions and aeronautics to the supply of water.

In 1912 he was elected President of the Geological Society of London and later Fellow of the Royal Society. William was awarded the Wollaston Medal by the Geological Society and was twice President of the Geological Association, 1908-1910 and 1930-32. He tried to

encourage the enjoyment of geology through field trips with the Geological Association, visiting a number of sites, including Paris, Tenby, Frome and North Wales. He was awarded a number of Honorary Degrees from several universities, and on his retirement the Watts Medal was established, to be awarded each year for the best graduate student at Imperial College.

William Watts's first original work in geology was in mapping the Breidden Hills, near Welshpool; but his best known contribution was in the mapping of Charnwood Forest, Leicestershire, which he

started in 1896. Although he published short accounts of his work on Charnwood Forest, it was not completed until after he retired and finally published posthumously in 1947.

William married Louisa Adelaide Aitchison on 2nd March 1889 at St. George, Bloomsbury, but sadly she died in childbirth on 13th February 1891; their daughter, Beatrice Mary Adelaide, later married Professor W. G. Fearnside. In 1894 William married Rachel Turnour, nee Rogers (Rachel had been previously married to Louisa's brother); their daughter, Marjorie Lilian, married Lt. Col. Ernest N. Snep in 1919 and they moved to Australia.

In 1901, whilst at Mason College, William lived at Holmwood, Bracebridge Road, Sutton Coldfield, but by 1911 he had moved to Hillside, Langley Park, Road, Sutton, Surrey, where he was still living at the time of his death. He died on 30th July 1947 at the Kingslea Nursing Home, Mulgrave Road, Sutton, Surrey and is buried in the Mill Road Cemetery, Cambridge.

William seems to have been a charismatic teacher and was recognised for his humour and witty remarks, known as "Watticisms". This was often at the expense of his own research, for which he was sometimes criticised; and he replied that he "felt it was more profitable to produce tools than goods, and thus by producing researchers, one was putting one's talents out at compound interest".

William embraced with enthusiasm the use of a motor car to transport him to his various engagements, becoming an early member of the RAC. Although enthusiastic regarding motor cars, he disliked the telephone and refused to have a secretary, writing up his own reports and articles on an ancient typewriter. His favourite author was Kipling; he had strong likes and dislikes, was staunchly conservative, liked parodies and nonsense verse and was a heavy pipe smoker. He was active into old age, giving a lecture. The happy relations which he maintained with all who worked with him and under him were due to his personal charm, his friendliness and his unfailing good humour.

Sources

Boynton, Helen & Ford, Trevor: 'William W. Watts, pioneer Midlands Geologist',

Mercian Geologist 2010, volume 17, page 195

www.ancestry.com – [sneppfamilytree](http://sneppfamilytree.com) & [cookefamilytree](http://cookefamilytree.com)
(gillcooke159)

Alison House

by Vin Callcut

Introduction

Church Street is the main link between the centre of the old important industrial town of Broseley and its church.^{1 2} On it are many interesting private houses including of course ‘The Lawns’, ‘The Mint’, ‘Broseley Hall’, ‘Raddle Hall’, ‘White Hall’ and the ‘Iron Topped House’ to mention a few that are covered in the Broseley Town Trail leaflet.³ Many of the other houses have history in them, some having been covered previously in the Memory Meeting on Church Street⁴ and memories of life at No 37.⁵ These included several of the houses that used to be shops or workshops.

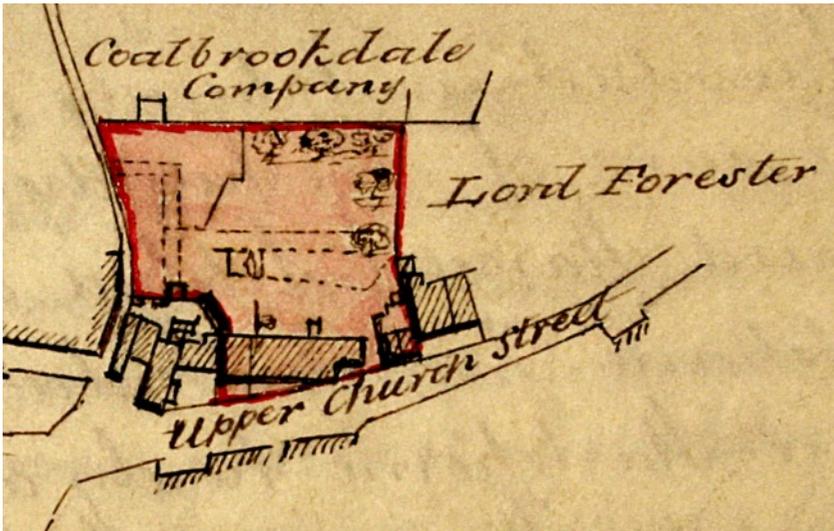
‘Though the majority of houses in Broseley are small brick buildings with little pretention to architectural beauty, their builders seem to have taken a pride in them.’⁶

Sited inconspicuously behind a high brick wall, Alison House looks unpretentious but nevertheless has seen a lot of Broseley’s events during its lifetime. The name became disused during the 1980s so it now just bears the number ‘50’. This paper looks at some of the folk who lived in it and the changes they made over 300 years. There are some records extant but many details remain unknown.



View of Alison House from Church Street

For many years the house was owned by one of the influential members of the local Hartshorne families. They had also built up titles to two houses to the right, two or three houses to the left, a slaughterhouse behind and the whole of the 'Clench Acre' land now often called 'The Fair Field' as well as business premises in Broseley. Later it was owned by part of the Instone family and the house to the left that is now No 52 Church Street was previously one site of the Instone's butcher's shop. Before then it was part of the house stables. It will not be considered here except to note that it once had through access to this house. Here we cover only with the main building known as 'Alison House'.



Map of the property from and 1887 mortgage deed.

Alison House Records available

These are a fascinatingly helpful contribution to the history of the house, albeit they leave many questions unanswered. There are originals or copies of thirteen significant deeds now in the Shropshire Archives available to study. Some were deposited from the records of Cooper and Co., Solicitors, and are under a 'SA1681/113/1-20' reference. Others have been borrowed, copied and donated. They are under accession SA 7588. Where these documents show that money has been borrowed and from whom, it is unfortunate they do not say whether this is for house improvements or other reasons, information that would have been useful. This is a brief summary.

-
-
- 1713 Richard Hartshorne, (carpenter) bought the plot measuring 42 yards North to South and 8 yards east to west. There was a condition that, within twelve months a dwelling should be built of a size at least 20ft x 10ft x 12ft high.
- 1730 Richard Hartshorne bought the land and houses for £281 of which £250 was to William Mayor and £30 to Robert Evans.
- 1782 George Hartshorne, carpenter, and his wife Ann had 6 dwellings, 2 shops and six gardens and borrowed £150/- from John Parry.
- 1783 George Hartshorne borrowed £650/- from Thomas Milner.
- 1788 Richard Hartshorne and his wife Mary took out a 100 year mortgage of £150 from John Whaler.
- 1806 Will of Ann Hartshorne
- 1810 Will of Richard Hartshorne
- 1821 Schedule of deeds re houses and premises in Broseley the property of Hezekiah Hartshorne in mortgage to Mrs Sarah Potts for securing £150 and interest.
- 1822 Hezekiah Hartshorne (Brick maker) and Abraham Hartshorne (Grocer) bought two roods of Clench Acre land (half an acre) from John Onions.
- 1872 Frederick Hezekiah Hartshorne, MD, physician and surgeon, son of Hezekiah Hartshorne, redeemed the mortgage.
- 1878 The medical practice, profession, drugs and bottles of the late Frederick Hezekiah Hartshorne were sold by Helena S Hartshorne to Dr Francis J Hart for £150/-
- 1881 Mrs Harriett Sophia Hartshorne of Chiswick, widow of Frederick Hezekiah borrowed £150 from Henry Milton.
- 1884 Mrs Harriett Sophia Hartshorne of 1, Victoria Villas, High Road, Chiswick, widow of Frederick Hezekiah Hartshorne (d 1878), her daughters Helena Sophia Hartshorne, spinster, and Fanny Beatrice Hartshorne, spinster, and son Bernard Frederic Hartshorne (surgeon), all of Blenheim Lodge, Chiswick, sold 'Allison House', two cottages, garden, stable and hereditaments to George Arthur Tailer for £525/-/. The cottages were at that time occupied by Robert Pearce and Ann Glover and the stable by Richard Alfred Instone.
- 1887 G A Tailer mortgaged the property for £450/- to Ann Bartlam and Alfred Thorn, later Alfred Thorn-Pudsey
- 1929 Alfred H. Thorn-Pudsey sold the property to Charles Frederick Instone.
-
-

- 1963 Alison House, No 50, and goodwill of butcher's shop given by Gerald Charles Frederick Instone of 55 Church Street to Gerald Instone after his marriage to Peggy.

First House.

A 1713 deed in the Shropshire Archives reads, briefly:

'Lease by Robert Evans for 99 years or the lives of Richard Hartshorne, carpenter of Broseley, Anne his wife and Elizabeth their daughter .

'All that piece or parcell or platt of of ground (being part of a parcel of ground situate and lying in Broseley called the Clenchacre now in the tenure of Robert Evans) which shooteth from an ash tree in the hedge near the barn lately erected by Richard Watkis and now in his possession down to the garden hedge in the possession of Ursula Watkis widow or her assigns and is to contain six yards in breadth at the bottom and eight yards in breadth at the top and forty two yards or thereabouts in length. - 'And further that the said Richard Hartshorne shall erect and build upon the said premises within the space of twelve months a good and substantial dwelling house with brick from the ground up to the wall- plate which shall contain one and twenty foot in length, twelve foot in breadth and eleven foot from the ground in height up to the wall- plate.'

Many houses in Broseley have been much modified through the centuries. From the small beginning mentioned it was expanded to a row of small terrace houses, built to accommodate the curve of the street. Three of these were knocked through to make a big family house, suited to a Broseley surgeon and his family. The fourth was demolished to make way for a schoolroom and annex. A prominent architect planned a rear extension to give an elegant Georgian elevation with a significant entrance. Inside he included circular a hallway and appropriate reception rooms.

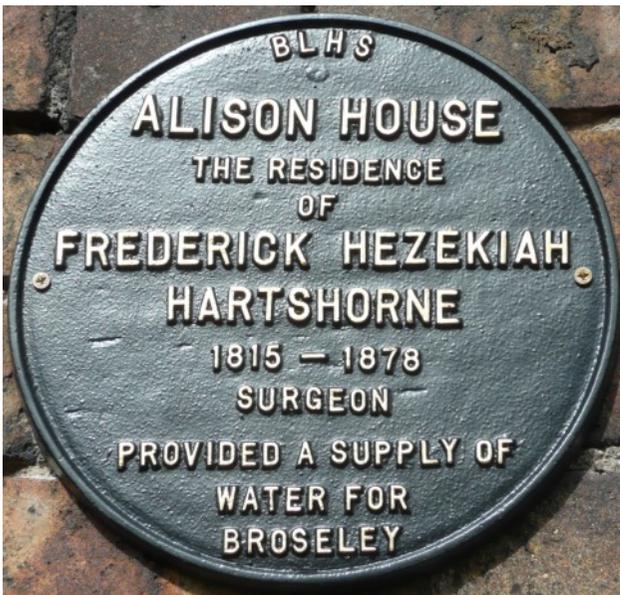
Selected Hartshorne quotes in literature

'There were so many Hartshornes in the Broseley Benthall area in the 18th and 19th centuries that they must be considered as a clan rather than a family'.⁷

- 1600 'The Hartshorne family has been connected with Broseley and Benthall from Queen Elizabeth's time (1558-1603) to the present day (1914).⁸
- 1635 'The family of Hartshorne appears to have resided in Broseley and neighbourhood from the time of Queen Elizabeth. The name occurs in the register in 1635, and again from 1765 to 1773; and is found in the Corporation register at earlier dates.⁹

- 1685 'F. H. Hartshorne Esq. informs us that he has a pipe found in Broseley of an earlier date than any of those in Mr Thursfield's collection (i.e. pre 1685); a collection that is now the property of Mr Mayer of Liverpool.'¹⁰
- 1696 The Rev Richard Hartshorne (d. 2nd Feb 1696), rector of Willey, married Elizabeth Corbet, daughter of Thomas and Judith Corbet of Dean (in Willey). The monument to them in Barrow church was erected by their son, Richard Corbett Hartshorne, A M, rector of Broseley.¹¹
- 1692-1762 Nonconformity in Broseley – 'The Broseley (Quaker) meeting house was erected in 1692 at which time the mineral property of the district was becoming appreciated. The old Meeting-House at Broseley was then the only one for Friends on both sides of the Severn. Burials include Abraham and Mary Darby and seven other Darbys, Hannah Reynolds, wife of Richard together with other names such as Dixon and Hartshorne up to 1762.'¹²
- 1752 Andrew Hartshorne and Richard Weaver were Broseley Churchwardens for the year.¹³
- 1759 'An old deed in the possession of F H Hartshorne Esq., who is a descendant of the family and lives in the ancestral home, shows certain exchanges of land in the Fiery Field between Andrew Hartshorne and William Bromley in 1759. Another deed of 1759 shows that Andrew Hartshorne 'leased a piece of waste land near Clench-Acre for 500 years'. Another (date?) shows that Richard Hartshorne leased to Robert Evans a piece of ground in the 'Clenchacre which shooteth from an ash tree near the barn lately erected by R Watkiss down to the garden hedge of Ursula Watkiss, widow'.¹⁴
- 1776 John Hartshorne subscribes £52/10/-, a one-sixtieth share towards the estimated £3,150/-/- cost of building the iron bridge between Broseley and Madeley. He was one of thirteen subscribers, supporting John Wilkinson and Abraham Darby.¹⁵
- 1789 The minutes of the Broseley Anti-Felons Committee show the presence of George Hartshorne amongst the twenty men present who also included names such as John Guest, John Onions and John Rose. The meeting was held at the House of Mr. John Cleobury at 'The Fox Inn' in Broseley.¹⁶
- 1839 'In 1839 Foster was working at least five ironstone mines and one coal mine, he had already sub-let ironstone mines and one

- coal mine to the brick makers William Davies and Hezekiah Hartshorne who had opened up clay mines to supply their works.¹⁷
- 1841 ‘The most notable of the family was the Rev. Charles Henry Hartshorne, MA FSA, author of ‘Salopia Antiqua’ (of 1841), who was for some years the curate of Broseley.’¹⁸
- 1861 In 1861 Dr. F. H. Hartshorne, found a good supply of water in his garden. At Pritchard's instigation it was made freely available to the public with Mr George Pritchard guaranteeing a payment by the Town of a nominal £10 per year. The open pool at the Delph was filled in. After the death of Mr George Pritchard, his brother, Mr John Pritchard, M.P. resolved not to continue with the payment nor to reimburse the well digging costs. Dr. Hartshorne therefore cut off his supply, so the board dug a deeper well nearby which intercepted the supply of water to the grounds of Alison House.¹⁹ There was acrimonious correspondence in the ‘Wellington Journal’ and ‘Birmingham Daily Post’, ‘Eddowe’s Shrewsbury Chronicle’ through the Summer of 1862.
- 1865 After much acrimony over the water and his reputation, Dr Hartshorne published with comments a justifying logical summary.²⁰



BLHS plaque commemorating the water supply provided by Dr Hartshorne

Important Cast-iron Fireback

1879 'F. H. Hartshorne Esq. has a singular iron plate of rude manufacture which he obtained from a man on Shirlot' who said that it came from under an old home built of stone. It may have served as an hearth stone.²¹



The fireback cast locally in 1618

It was recently found again under a modern fireplace in a reception room and has been identified as a significantly old fireback by Hodginson.²² This hearth back can best be described as half an octagon. There has been a beaded edge cast round the top three edges of the hearth backplate. Although Randall quotes the number on it as '1080', the lettering actually reads the date as:

1618

IR IR

with a crossbar at the middle of each 'I'. While the initials could be those of the foundryman or first owner, the 'IR' is thought to be actually 'JR' for King James I (King James VI of Scotland) who ruled in England from 1603 -1625. There is a gradation of thickness from left to right caused by the cast iron being poured into a non-level open mould and on one of the edges the beading is largely eroded. It has

been broken into three pieces, obviously many years ago. The only iron furnace near Shirlett was the Old Willey furnace, the next nearest being at Kenley.²³

This artefact may be one of the earliest known items of dated cast iron made in the Broseley area.

Broseley Bricks

'The bricks and tiles made at Broseley are not surpassed by any in the kingdom'.²⁴

In Broseley we are rightly proud of the use of bricks made locally and they have obviously been used in each phase of this property. Fronting on the road, Alison House has a substantial brick wall showing several interesting features. Can the type of brick and bricklaying be used to date a property? The classic study by Lloyd²⁵ is very useful for prestigious buildings but perhaps less so in Broseley.

Broseley has long been famous for the production of bricks, tiles, drains and other clayware. There is great local pride in having the town built largely of 'Broseley Bricks' but, what are they and how do you tell a Broseley brick from any other? 'They are notable for their brown and red mottled nature'.²⁶ In 'British History Online' it is thought that Broseley Bricks were first used nearby for Raddle Hall in Church Street c1663.²⁷

The local geology is of layers of clay interspersed with coal measures and ironstone and the land undulates considerably. Over the years, there were many brickmakers who worked several deposits in the district. In 1870 there were an average of 13 workers in each brickfield and 1,347 workers in Shropshire, giving about 107 brick works in the county, many of which would have been in and around Broseley.²⁸ Most of the bricks are handmade. This means that they come in shades of several colours. If bricks are fractured, it can be seen that the texture is frequently not uniform and inclusions of ironmaker's slag and refractories are common. Good use has been made of the best clay by forming it round substantial residues that may have come from heaps left by the Broseley iron industry. The clay itself would have come from measures that included the excellent fireclay that stands high temperatures and was previously needed to line blast furnaces. The bricks themselves would have had to be fired at higher temperatures than normal for house bricks. This would develop the near-glassy structure of great strength, hardness and durability that even now defeats all but the best of today's SDS²⁹ drills. Batches of Broseley bricks vary in length from 9 to 11 inches (230-280mm) and thicknesses are similarly



Four examples of inclusions in the interior of Broseley bricks

non-standard between 2 and 4 inches (50-100mm). The only generalisation that seems to be true is that they are hard and durable. Unless much better information becomes available, it seems impossible to date bricks by their appearance.

There are many ways in which bricks can be laid and names for many of the styles ('bonds'). Broseley brickies seem to have laid bricks in several different ways and it does not seem to help with dating. The high wall facing the road looks tidy at the front but the rear shows that good use was made of whatever was available.

Some Owners & Tenants of Alison House, 1713 – 2013

While the owners are shown in the available deeds, the house was rented out at times to other folk. Census returns have been difficult to study because the address is not given in the early ones and they are still closed after 1901. The Registers of Electors are available thereafter but arranged in alphabetical order. This table summarises some findings.

| Year | Source |
|------------|--|
| 1713, 1730 | Richard Hartshorne (carpenter), Ann his wife and their daughter Elizabeth. Deeds ³⁰ |
| 1782 | George Hartshorne (carpenter) and Ann his wife Deed |

| | | |
|------------|---|-------------------------|
| 1788 | Richard Hartshorne and Mary his wife. | Deed |
| 1822 | Hezekiah Hartshorne, Abraham Hartshorne. | Deed |
| 1829, 1872 | Hezekiah Hartshorne, (brickmaker) | Deeds |
| 1829,35,42 | Hezekiah Hartshorne, grocer and tea deal | Griffiths ³¹ |
| 1851,61,71 | Frederick Hezekiah Hartshorne, surgeon with residence at Broseley Hall. | Griffiths |
| 1881 | Mrs Harriett Sophia Hartshorne and daughters Helena and Fanny and son Bernard. | Deed |
| 1884 | Mrs Harriett Sophia Hartshorne and daughters Helena and Fanny and son Bernard of Chiswick. | Deed |
| 1884 | George Arthur Tailer. (Richard Instone occupied the stable) | Deed |
| 1885 | Miss Dawson, resident and mistress of boarding/day school, successor to Miss Hobday. | Griffiths |
| 1887 | George Alfred Tailer mortgaged to Ann Bartlam and Alfred Henry Thorn (Pudsey) | Deed |
| 1891 | Benjamin Smart, encaustic tile manufacturer and his family | Census |
| 1896 | George Arthur Tailer | Register |
| 1899 | Alison House partnership between Drs Holt & Jacobson dissolved. | Griffiths |
| 1900 | Dr. George Oscar Jacobsen | Register |
| 1901 | Dr. William Dyson | Census |
| 1904 | Dr. William Dyson | Register |
| 1914 | Thomas Fenn | Register |
| 1920–1929 | John Lyons du Sautoy. He was the manager of Lloyd's Bank according to 1925 Kelly's directory. | Register |
| 1929 | Alfred H Thorn-Pudsey sold to Charles Frederick Instone. | Deed |
| 1930 | Charles Frederick Instone and Dora Edith Instone and their children. | Register |
| 1963-2002 | Gerald & Peggy Instone, Alison, Andrew, Jane & Stuart | |
| 2002 on | Vin and Hilary Callcut | |

Parts of the house were sublet at various times for a school, doctors surgery and dental practice. Much of this history is as yet unknown.

When searching for register entries for this and nearby properties, note that the address is in 'Upper Church Street' for part of the period until early in the 20th century with the church end being in 'Lower Church Street'.

Who built it?

As mentioned, the plot was bought by Richard Hartshorne, a carpenter, in 1713 with the condition that within twelve months a dwelling should be built of a size 20ft x 10ft x 12ft high. His descendants have ensured that a lot has happened since then with extensions and conversions that he would not recognise. The surname 'Hartshorne' has been common in this part of Shropshire for centuries, with and without the 'e'. No effort has been made here to investigate the complicated family tree.

Further developments followed fairly quickly as the deeds from 1730 onwards show. By 1822 we have the first plan attached to a deed when the 'Fair Field' land was bought from part of a large lot owned by John Onions. The adjacent land was owned by Mr Jas. Griffiths.

An 1887 plan shows that ownership of the surrounding land had changed. The road is now named 'Upper Church Street'. The Coalbrookdale Company now owned John Onions' plot while Lord Forester's name replaces that of Mr Griffiths.

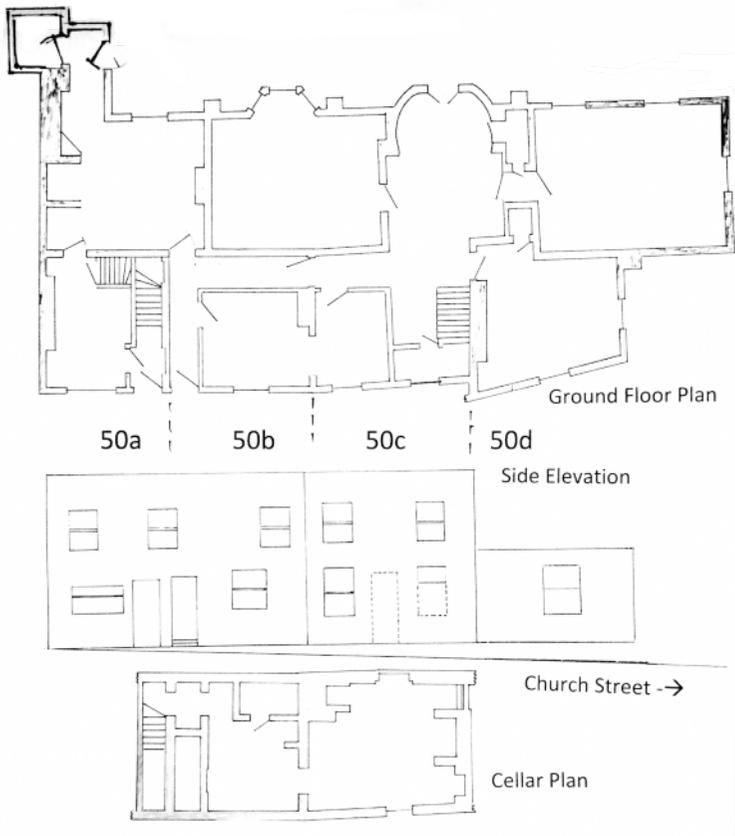
The present house dimensions are rather larger than those originally specified. Like Topsy, *'It has just grown'*.³² This was long before planning applications were mandatory and recorded so that type of information is unavailable. Some clues regarding the history of a house might be gained by relating deeds that raise cash by extra mortgages to design periods and building materials such as Broseley bricks. So far there has been limited success and the facts given in this paper do leave a lot of questions to be answered.

Description

The street frontage of Alison house has been mentioned in memory evenings. The main feature is a tall wall of Broseley bricks with tiled headers. It is about 2m (7ft) height and is pierced only by a small arch giving access to the house. The bricks show a good bond to the street but the rear is much less regular, showing an opportunistic re-use of second hand bricks. Of the possible reasons for the wall, the favourite is simply that it was essential when cattle were being driven towards the slaughterhouse at the rear. To the right of the whole house is a driveway

that once had a strong iron gate installed to discourage driven cattle returning to the street. Gerald Instone had the obsolete slaughterhouse demolished a while ago and replaced it with a modern dwelling.

A look at the street-side elevation seen from behind the wall shows that the house layout is far from simple. Windows and doors have been moved and re-sized and there is an obvious join. Close inspection shows that the two-story part of the house has been developed from three small cottages. To the right of the main house is a single story extension with a small window. This was built on the site of a fourth cottage. For identification, the diagrams show the previous house sites as '50a', '50b', '50c' and '50d'. Church Street outside the house is



Sketch of the street-side elevation and plans of ground floor and cellars

curving and dropping gently. The plan of the house moves with it but that is not obvious at first. The ground floor is level throughout and only a few people realise that there is a bend in the layout.

The front elevation diagram shows the present arrangement of doors and windows. There is a vertical line where the brickwork between '50b' and '50c' shows that two buildings were joined. They lie at an



The Georgian elevation probably designed by Edward Haycock

angle of about 5° which has to be accommodated in the rooms. The right hand one (50c) will have had a door on to the street, now filled in with later-looking bricks.

To the left is the larger part of the house (50a & 50b), formed from two smaller terrace houses that previously had adjoining front doors on to Church Street. It was previously also joined through to the Instone butcher's shop that was to the left. A look at the brickwork shows that windows, and an upstairs door with perhaps a goods crane, have been inserted here and there and others removed to leave the original layout somewhat confused.

To the right, the single story extension built on the site of a previous house has one very large room that was built as a schoolroom with high



Miss Edith Stuart's Bible Class in 1894.

ceiling. Fronting the street is a small room of irregular shape. The brickwork of this is continuous with that of the high wall.

Inside the house the room layout near the street reflects the original houses. There is a central corridor running parallel with the street. Behind this is a later extension with larger rooms with a classic Georgian frontage not visible from the street. This has an 1830s style architect designed hallway with a circular design incorporating the main double doors which open on to the driveway and garden. From photos and discussion, Julia Ionides suggests that this could be the work of Edward Haycock (1790-1870) from the large family of Haycocks of Shrewsbury.³³ Either side of the hallways are two large reception rooms used as dining room and sitting room. Also leading off is a study and a cupboard with door curved to suit the radius of the hallway.

What is now the sitting room is part of the single story section of the house (50d) and was at one time converted for use as a schoolroom. The wall by the doorway into the sitting room showed that the doorway itself has had several modifications in its time, one of which may have been a porched main entrance. The window on to the driveway is original to the extension, possibly the best in the house and is complete with



The maker's mark and design registration on the rear of a window latch

original box shutters that are still in good order. The brass window furniture was found to have been made by William Tonks & Sons and bore a Design Registration mark dated to 30th June 1869 which may, or may not, help with dating this, the last extension to the property.³⁴

There are cellars under the older parts of the house. That under '50b' has a suspended ceiling whilst under '50c' it is barrel vaulted bricks. This section has an alcove with bricked up chimney for the original copper copper that would have been used for both brewing and washing water. There is a bricked-up doorway that might have once led up out to the rear of the property when ground levels were lower. It cannot now lead under the dining room due to that being built over an infill. The right hand wall has a large alcove to take a

range oven fire with bread oven to the right. Very unusually, the chimney above the range was split into two flues with a 'V' shape. The right hand flue leads to the existing chimney while the use of the left hand flue is unknown. The floor is of bricks with drainage channels and shows significant wear as one of the five places in the house where a kitchen has been active. To the left of the range is the bottom of a flight of steps, now bricked up, that would have come up under the site of '50d'. To the street side there used to be steps up that were used by local residents when the cellar was designated as an air raid shelter during WWII.

Another site for a kitchen has been found where a range had been installed up at ground level in the street side of '50d'. This would have had a water supply from another cast iron rainwater tank above it, now removed. Other kitchen sites have been found at the rear and front of '50a'. The present kitchen is installed in the room previously the

dispensary. When the plaster came off the wall dividing '50b' and '50c' there were signs of both a previous large doorway and that later it had been narrowed to a single and then infilled completely. At its foot is a worn threshold stone made from part of an old slate gravestone dated 26th June 1717. The wall line here marks the angled join in the house.

At the rebuilt end of the house is a simple Georgian staircase with brass rails. At the other end there is a narrow set of stairs that may have been re-directed once or twice. There are accessible attic rooms on the street side of the house. These had all had plastered linings so could have been dormitories for school children or servants.

The drive at the right side of the house curls round to a hard standing in front of the Georgian main entrance. Here the ground has been raised to a level providing parking and a strip of garden. Some years ago this was used as a stage by BROADS for a Shakespearian production.

Summary and Conclusions.

This progress report shows that

- The earliest part of this very interesting private house may date from around 1713.
- It was then part of the development of the Church Street trend for small groups of terrace houses and businesses.
- Later some of the terrace houses were amalgamated to make a larger family home.
- The building has been extended and modified significantly.
- Many changes have been made during the last 300 years and have been noted. It is not yet possible to date the changes positively.

Alison House in Broseley's Church Street has obviously had a very interesting history over the last 300 years or so. Besides two significant Broseley family names it has also seen a variety of others and many occupations. It has been much modified over time and there are a few background clues. More information would be very welcome.

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1915

“It was in 1915 the old world ended” (D.H. Lawrence)

by Janet Doody

For both the Central Powers and the Allies the campaigns of 1915 had been failures; on the Western Front there was a general “stalemate” with little achieved on either side. The first British offensive on March 10th, the Battle of Neuve Chapelle, lasted three days and resulted in the loss of some 13,000 men and gained “one wrecked village”.

The following month the Germans, whose “disregard for international agreements was already evident”, wished to try out their new weapon, chlorine gas. On 22nd April just north of Ypres, a cloud of swirling greenish-yellow vapour was spotted, followed by soldiers in gas helmets. The Allies, having no gas masks, retreated in panic, coughing and half blind. It was to be some time before gas masks were available to the Allies; many soldiers faced these attacks with nothing more than holding wet cloths to their faces. The Second Battle of Ypres settled into “for its size, one of



The Yeomanry held its annual training camp at Walcot Park, Lydbury North, on the estate of the Clive family.

the most murderous battles of the war” and, despite the thousands of casualties on both sides, nowhere had the front line moved more than three miles.

Broseley soldiers on the Western Front

Private 7192 Jerry (Jeremiah) Goodall, 2nd Battalion King’s Shropshire Light Infantry, died on 27th April 1915. The 2nd was part of the original regular force and was amongst the first to accompany the British Expeditionary Force. The Ypres Salient saw some of the hardest fighting and Jerry was probably amongst those who witnessed that first use of chlorine gas.

Private 9693 Thomas Owen, also 2nd Battalion KSLI, was reported missing in action and was assumed to have died on 16th May 1915 at the Battle of Frezenburg Ridge. Thomas was the son of John and Harriet Owen, who, in 1911, lived at 23 The Folly.

Private 10375 Charles Beddow, 1st Battalion KSLI, died on 9th August 1915. It was here that the 1st played a leading part in the attack on the Hooge positions. Charles, too, was reported missing in action.

Private 10543 William Chadwick of Benthall, 5th Battalion KSLI, was killed in action on 25th September 1915,

These soldiers are all remembered on the Menin Gate Memorial in Ypres, a stark reminder that generally infers their remains were never identified.

Private 12019 Ernest Williams, 11th Battalion The King’s Liverpool Regiment, who was also from Benthall, was killed in action in Belgium on 12th August 1915, and is buried in the Ypres Reservoir Cemetery.

Gallipoli

In April 1915 the Allies landed at Gallipoli. Once Turkey had aligned itself to the Central Powers, Russia requested Allied assistance in the area of the Straits of the Dardanelles, that narrow strip of water separating Europe from Asia Minor.

British, French and Anzac (Australia and New Zealand) troops landed on the Gallipoli peninsula with the aim of capturing (eventually) the city of Constantinople. At some beaches men

landed safely with little opposition, but at the principal landings on “W” and “V” the beaches were heavily defended. On “V” beach an old collier boat, the *River Clyde* had been converted into a crude infantry landing craft; she had around 2000 men in her hold who



Arthur Davies Bagley.

were hoping to rush ashore along with accompanying open boats containing the rest of the infantry. However, as soon as the troops began to land, the Turks opened fire and “within a few minutes...this attack to all intent and purposes was defeated; troops were almost wiped out of existence”. This was the first day of the Gallipoli Campaign; there were around 260 more days to go. By 31st British losses alone were around 38,000 men. On 19-20th December the beaches of the Gallipoli peninsula were abandoned: unlike the landings, the Turkish forces were completely deceived, there was no interference and no losses.

Local servicemen at Gallipoli

Private 107 Arthur Davies Bagley, 5th Battalion Australian Infantry killed on 25th April 1915 at Gallipoli; originally from Broseley Arthur emigrated in 1911, a comrade wrote “he was shot through the head by a sniper whilst going to the assistance of a wounded officer.” Private Bagley is remembered on the Lone Pine Memorial (a curious reminder of Shropshire – see Malcolm Saville’s Lone Pine Five books for children)

Able Seaman Charles Williams born in Stanton Lacy, but later moved to Chepstow, was awarded the Victoria Cross for his action at Gallipoli. During the landing from the “River Clyde” at V. Beach, he assisted in replacing in position the lighters (small boats) forming the bridge to the shore and which had broken adrift, holding on to a line in the water for over an hour until killed (25th April 1915). In Chepstow there is a gun taken from a captured German submarine, which was presented by His Majesty King George V to the town of Chepstow in recognition of the award of the Victoria Cross to Able Seaman Williams.

Other fronts

The war was also being fought on other fronts; in the East Russia was fighting the Central Powers, whilst in South Africa General Botha accepted the surrender of the German forces in South West Africa. Troops were spread throughout the world; at one point the 4th Battalion KSLI was stationed in Singapore where one of their duties was escorting German prisoners to Australia. In April Italy left the Triple Alliance and a young Benito Mussolini started a paper campaign for the Allies.

The Home Front

Zeppelin raids took place on both Kings Lynn and later on London, and in February the German sea blockade came into effect. On 8th May the Lusitania was torpedoed off the Irish coast with the loss over around 1200 lives, and in October the British Nurse Edith Cavell, working in Belgium, was executed by a German Firing Squad for treason. The poet Rupert Brooke died on 23rd April on his way to the Aegean Campaign.

The Government announced in September that the war was costing £3.5 million a day, and urged women to sign on for war work; Emmeline Parkhurst stated, "Women are only too anxious to be recruited". The average wage for women munition workers was said to be 32 shillings a week, day shift, and £3 for night shift. However, in South Wales 200,000 miners' went on strike for more pay,

Not surprisingly perhaps, the planned Berlin Olympic Games were cancelled; the Wimbledon Tennis Championships were suspended, but the Jockey Club decided not to suspend race meetings. In the F.A. Cup Final, Sheffield Wednesday beat Chelsea 3-0 and in July the Football Association decided that internationals and cup-ties would not be played in the forthcoming season. Dr. W. G. Grace died on 23rd October, at the age of 67.

The local *Wellington Journal and Shrewsbury News* reported that in Broseley local industries were dying out and there was a weekly exodus of families into munition work; four of the largest shops in the main street were void and about 200 cottages in the district were uninhabited. However, the *Western Daily Press* reported in January that a new garage was being built by the Bristol Tram & Carriage



*The Oakes family. From left:
Mab (Mabel), Cis (Cecil), Mrs Eliza (mother) Bert, Gertie, Berts' wife*

Company and that “The entrance to the offices is on the corner, which has a turret with a clock, and Broseley tiles will form the roof”.

Cecil Oakes' war

Early in 1915 Cis (Cecil) Oakes, the youngest child of Edward and Eliza Oakes of 5 Barber Road, left Broseley to work in Coventry, lodging with his sister Hilda Mabel (affectionately known as “Mabs”) and her family at 47 Bramble Street. Despite being discharged by the Shropshire Yeomanry in 1914 as “being unlikely to make a fit soldier”, Cis was received, probably gratefully when he enlisted on 10th September 1915, was drafted to the Royal Warwickshire Regiment and was stationed at the Albany Barracks, Parkhurst on the Isle of Wight.

Cis's letters home to both his parents and sister Mabs at this stage are full of descriptions and detail of Army life. His main request, in almost every letter, is for them to send him money and he complains constantly about the Army not sending any wages on time:

“Well mother I am writing to ask you if you will send me a few shillings to carry me on to the end of the month till we are paid, for I have only picked up five shillings since we have been up from Warwick..... accounts do not come through till the end of this



Edie and Cis Oakes

month and then we shall be settled up, there are some who have been up here as long as two months and only picked up a shilling. All I want some money for is to get some stamps and some tobacco”.

“I am writing to ask you if you will advance me the money to come down, for I am longing to see you all once again, for I don’t suppose I shall see you again for a very long time, and perhaps never again for we are all passed fit for active service, when I joined I was for home & abroad service, but we have all been inspected by the medical board today and passed all fit for the field”.

Cis continues to explain that the Army only pays for a pass home one way so that it can, *“get us all back again for there has been as many drafts (soldiers) granted free passes, and the majority have been absent at the time the draft is about to proceed”*. The Army, *“don’t give us the pass till we give them the money for our one way”*; he is not averse to trying emotional blackmail either, *“of course if you don’t send I shall take it for granted you do not want to see me”!*

Like many other soldiers he missed home and often felt very sorry for himself: *“I have had an abscess in my cheek, but it is much better now, but of course it’s had to take its own course, for you do not get much sympathy in the Army, now is the time that a fellow who has not thought much of his home before hand, it makes him think of it now, for its very rough & ready in the Army”*.

There was some news his parents, especially his mother, probably did not want to hear but perhaps describes the despair some new

recruits may have felt at the prospect of overseas service: *We have had three of our comrades to bury this last week, one blew his brains out in his hut, another cut his throat & another died in drink, so you see what it does for some of them, but it will not kill me.*"

Although Cis mentions no other soldiers by name, most seem to be "strangers" to him, but he does say he is "*pals with them all but I don't go out with any of them for its best to keep away from them for they only on off on the beer, and I am very pleased to tell you I have signed the pledge up here and I feel much more happy and contented*". This does not last! He adds that "*Oh by the way, you will not know me when I come down for I have grown a moustache according to military orders, but I don't know how you will like it*".

It was not until September 1916 that Cis was sent to France, although he does record other recruits that passed through his barracks: "*We took a draft of the boys from here who are on their way now to the Dardanelles. They went away quite cheerful, but oh, it does seem a shame that the poor boys should go to be shot down, but still when duty calls we must obey, it's no good saying you won't go.*"

The War in 1915

John Terraine described the Western Front of 1915 as a scene of "trench-locked armies, millions of men facing each other at distances varying from a few yards to nearly a mile.....being more or less a continuous line of some 450 mile" resulting in a "dreadful equilibrium it seemed nothing could alter" which was to last for the next three years.

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A collection of letters of the Oakes Family of Broseley

A Railwayman's Recollections - part 2

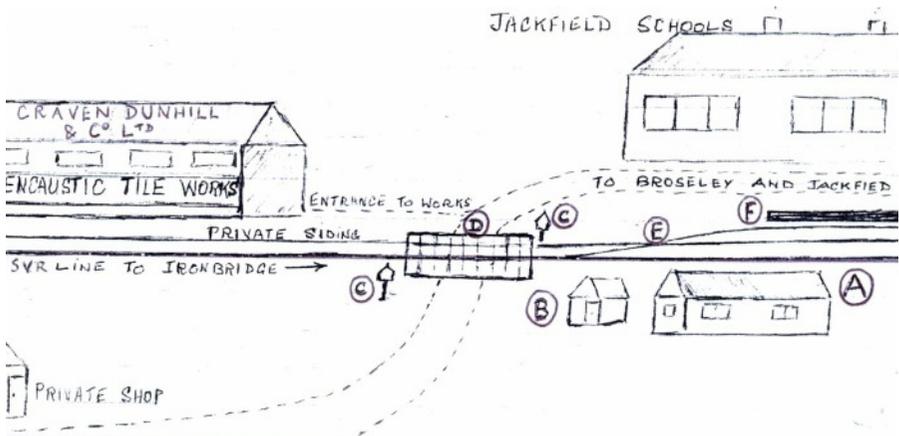
edited by Neil Clarke

Mr E. Hitchens of Comberton, Kidderminster spent most of his working life (1914-164) at various locations on the Severn Valley line. On retirement, he compiled notes of his work and made sketches of a number of these locations. In part 1 of this article (Journal No.35, 2013), he recalled his time as porter at Ironbridge & Broseley station and referred to his relief work at Jackfield crossings. In this second part, he gives further details of working the crossing gates and sidings at Jackfield, mentions the layout of station yards in the Gorge, and describes some of the traffic on the line.

Jackfield crossings

'When the trade depression [of the 1930s] made itself felt, I was informed that I was no longer required in my present post and was 'utilised' at most stations in the Worcester Division, including all those on the Severn Valley line between Hartlebury and Ironbridge & Broseley; also at two crossing gates at Jackfield. I did a week at each gate from 8.30 am to 8.30 pm daily while the crossing keepers took their annual leave.'

Jackfield No.1 crossing (sketch in part 1) 'was usually referred to as Dickens' Crossing. Mr W. Dickens was GWR goods checker, and was



Jackfield Number 2 crossing

A. Crossing keeper's bungalow, B. Ground frame, C. Oil lamps showing red light to road traffic, D. Level crossing gates, E. Sidings and hand points, F. Loading dock for roofing tiles.

also in charge of the crossing gates up till he had completed his hours of duty. His wife then took over until the last train (the 7.45 pm Shrewsbury to Hartlebury) had passed...The firms using the sidings were Craven Dunnill & Co., John Doughty & Son, Prestage & Broseley Tileries, W. P. Jones and C. R. Jones’.

Jackfield No.2 crossing (sketch below) ‘was at one time referred to as Baynham’s Crossing. Mrs Baynham was full-time gate woman and lived with her husband Fred and family in the bungalow provided. Mr Baynham was employed as a goods checker by the GWR at Maw & Co.’s siding.’

Station yards

Linley and Coalport are briefly mentioned by Mr Hitchens. ‘Linley Halt used to have a ground frame and short siding years ago, and was staffed by a grade 1 porter. The brickworks at Coalport [*Gitchfield*] had a private siding and their own shunting engine.’

Ironbridge & Broseley is given more detail. ‘Ironbridge & Broseley had a signal box which controlled the level crossing gates. There were also three sidings and a loading dock on the up [*north*] side of the



A Shrewsbury bound train leaving Ironbridge and Broseley Station. Note the signalman waiting to hand the token for the section to Buildwas to the Driver

Mr F. Allan,

line; the other siding on the opposite side was the shed road, with a back road for mileage and coal traffic, and here most of the shunting was done...roofing tiles and scrap iron were loaded and there was a regular tar tank. Parcels and goods traffic was heavy, including pottery ware from Benthall in crates and clay pipes made by William Southern at Broseley. Lots of these pipes were sent to fairgrounds, others were packed neatly in cardboard boxes with sawdust. The station master always kept a good supply of boxes of clay pipes (13 to a box, price 1 shilling), as passengers, drivers and guards often wanted a box. R.T. Smith were cartage agents until taken over by the GWR; men, horses and drays were replaced in about 1929 with road motors. When the power station was being built at Buildwas, the steel towers to carry the cables were carted from Ironbridge & Broseley station to the site by the GWR; each separate angle iron was then assembled by the power company or their contractors.'

Passenger and excursion trains

In his notes, Mr Hitchens described some of the passenger and excursion trains which served local stations on the line. 'Passenger traffic to Shrewsbury was very good on Saturdays, and also on the days of the Shrewsbury Flower Show, when a special train ran from Ironbridge & Broseley, returning late after the fireworks display. Eyton-on-Severn Point-to-point race meeting attracted a lot of passengers by train, (at first) to Cressage station before the halt was built at Cound [1934] – then they alighted there and crossed the Severn by ferry boat.'

Excursion trains run on summer Sundays to various seaside resorts were well patronised, but came in for criticism in letters to the local press if they did not run to time. But, as Mr Hitchens, who was a guard on the line at the time of its closure in 1963, pointed out: 'It was quite easy to run to time going in broad daylight – passengers were eager to board the train and get a seat – but it was a different problem coming back in the dark with a train of nine coaches. It could only be done with having a driver who was well acquainted with the gradients, and a good fireman to keep a sharp look out, stop the first part of the train at each platform, and then pull up when required. Otherwise it often meant setting the train back, and then pulling up again because not one of the platforms would hold nine coaches.'
