

Nos 18 -22 High Street, Shrivenham

(Next door to the Prince of Wales Pub)

The history known so far by Neil B. Maw



Whilst we have researched and discovered a considerable amount of historical information on the Prince of Wales public house (See SHS Listing No N 261), information on the buildings next door had remained elusive. At the opposite end of the block (No 22) we have discovered a respectable amount mainly brought about by documents that enabled us to pinpoint the location of the King's Arms public house. It was common historical knowledge that there was a pub of that name in the village, but its exact location was unknown (SHS Listing No N1025). Living memory is useful, and memories extracted from grandparents a bonus, but beyond that it's documentation to which we turn for facts. We are grateful to Chris Openshaw for allowing us to scan and study the documentation in his possession for No 18. (We will prefix references to his documents as C.O.) As well as providing the details of a century of ownership, references made to earlier indentures gave vital clues to earlier history.

It may be prudent to start this history at circa 1906, work back in time and return to this spot later. C.O. Doc 2 dated June 1906, refers to an indenture dated 24th June 1878,

whereby Thomas Lee borrowed £400 to purchase, 'All that freehold messuage, tenement and shop situate in the high street.' It also included a 'freehold dwelling house or cottage in the high street.' The document was brought about by the death of Thomas Lee in December 1898 and his widow Martha eventually selling the property to pay off the mortgage. The purchaser was John Pocock from Watchfield and upon his death in July 1908 it was put up for sale by public auction a year later. (See below Faringdon Adver 21st August 1909).

Sales by Auction.

**To Small Capitalists and Others.
Shrivenham, Berks.**

VALUABLE FREEHOLD PROPERTY,
Consisting of a Double-fronted and well-fitted SHOP, occupying a very imposing position in the High Street, Shrivenham; together with the comfortable DWELLING HOUSE, possessing ample accommodation, Outhouses and Small Garden in the rear, being well adapted for Trade Purposes of any description; together with the FREEHOLD COTTAGE, with Garden and Smith's Shop adjoining, let to Mr C. Tovey at £14 per annum, Tenant paying Rates.

Possession of the Shop and Dwelling House may be had on completion of the purchase, and of the Cottage and Shop on September 29th, 1909.

DYKE, JACKSON & CHANDLER

ARE favoured with instructions from the Representatives of the late Mr John Pocock, to Sell the above Property by Auction, at the Barrington Arms Hotel, Shrivenham, on Friday, 27th August, 1909, at 6 for 6.15 in the evening.

Particulars with the Conditions of Sale may be obtained of the Auctioneers, at their Offices, Faringdon and Abingdon, Berks, and of Messrs. CROWDY & SON, Solicitors, Faringdon.

From the description of the property, we learn that there is a 'Smith's Shop' to the rear. In 1841 Thomas Lee (senior) operated a Blacksmith Shop in the building that today is an Indian restaurant, opposite the Co-op store in the high street. This was confirmed by the Tithe Map of 1844 (See SHS Listing N 239). Thomas had two sons who were both Blacksmiths, John and Thomas. (See below)

Thomas Lee in 1851
 1851 England, Wales & Scotland Census
 Shrevenham, Faringdon, Berkshire & Oxfordshire, England

View original record Add to tree Print More actions

Household members (8 people) Copy to clipboard

First name(s)	Last name	Relationship	Marital status	Sex	Age	Birth year	Occupation	Birth place
Thomas	Lee	Head	Married	Male	42	1809	Blacksmith employing one man	Devon, England
Henry	Lee	Son	-	Male	-	-	-	Shrevenham, Berkshire, England
Hannah M	Lee	Daughter	-	Female	8	1843	Scholar	Shrevenham, Berkshire, England
Sarah Jane	Lee	Daughter	-	Female	8	1843	Scholar	Shrevenham, Berkshire, England
Mary Ann	Lee	Daughter	-	Female	14	1837	-	Ilfacombe, Devon, England
Thomas	Lee	Son	Unmarried	Male	16	1835	Blacksmith	Ilfacombe, Devon, England
John	Lee	Son	Unmarried	Male	18	1833	Blacksmith	Ilfacombe, Devon, England
Mary Ann	Lee	Wife	Married	Female	38	1813	-	Ilfacombe, Devon, England

Show 3 fewer rows

But it was Thomas who stayed in Shrevenham, and whilst his father remained in the Smithy at the west end of the high street, Thomas junior moved to the east end and the shop next to the Prince of Wales public house to run his Ironmongers Shop. (See below).

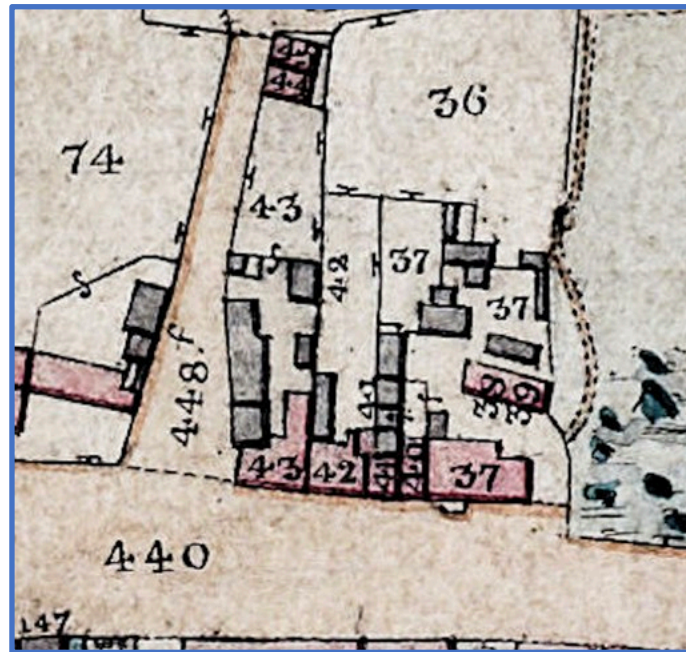
Thomas Lee Junior in 1861
 1861 England, Wales & Scotland Census
 Ironmongers Shop, Shrevenham, Faringdon, Berkshire & Oxfordshire, England

View original record Add to tree Print More actions

Household members (2 people) Copy to clipboard

First name(s)	Last name	Relationship	Marital status	Sex	Age	Birth year	Occupation	Birth place
Thomas	Lee Junior	Head	Married	Male	27	1834	Iron monger & black smith	Ilfacombe, Devon, England
Martha	Lee	Wife	Married	Female	26	1835	-	Ashbury, Berkshire, England

The Beckett Estate Map of 1866 confirmed the information by listing that Thomas Lee was indeed the occupier. The owner is listed as Daniel Day who also owned the property next door (today No 22 - on map No 43), but we know from C.O. Doc 2 that Thomas Lee purchased it later in 1878. The map extract below clearly defined the property as No 42 and also showed the dark coloured building to the rear that was Thomas Lee's Smithy.



To take the history of these properties back further we looked at the census of 1841. Identifying the location of where a person lived can be difficult to establish. The commissioner's walk-order could often appear to be erratic. By establishing known facts and transferring them onto the census can usually make more sense of it. For instance, we know that in 1849 Daniel Day purchased the property that today is No 22 High St (43 on the Estate Map above). It's probable but not yet proven that Daniel had operated the bakery and shop before buying it, as he is listed on the 1841 census as a Grocer. But listed almost next door is a Blacksmith and his family known as William Horn.

Readers of Shrivenham history will know that the sharp bend at the east end of the village where the Longcote road joins the high street, was known as '*Horns Corner.*' There is a traditional story that Horn the Blacksmith at some time had incurred the wrath of Lord Barrington who effectively dried up his work and drove him out of business. No local historian has produced any evidence to substantiate this legend, but before we look at it in more detail, an auction that took place in 1825 requires close attention. (See below).

of the auctioneers, Faringdon.

FREEHOLD RESIDENCES,
At SHRIVENHAM, BERKS.

TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION,
 By FIDEL and SON,
 On Thursday the 14th day of April, 1825, at the
 Barrington's Arms Inn, Shrivenham, at Three o'clock
 in the afternoon,—Three newly-erected DWELL-
 ING HOUSES, most eligibly situated in the much
 admired village of Shrivenham, in the county of
 Berks; together with a BLACKSMITH'S SHOP,
 producing an annual rent of 28*l.* 16*s.* in the several
 occupations of Messrs. Saunders, Hughes, Butler,
 and Horne. The property is an excellent investment
 for money, and capable of being converted for the
 purposes of trade, having spacious gardens attached
 to each house. May be viewed by applying on the
 premises; and further particulars had of the auc-
 tioneers, Faringdon.

The above advert that appeared in the Oxford Journal on Saturday 2nd April 1825, revealed some interesting information. It's rare that we get to know exactly when a property was built but here, we have it – 'three newly erected dwelling houses.' The tenants listed above match well with what we know from the census of 1841. Families Saunders and Hughes were still there and a Betty Butler is mentioned in C.O. Doc 2, who was John Butler's daughter. It is also highly likely that the new properties were built by local builder John Streat (See below) whose family owned the land, and the Prince of Wales pub next door was owned by Henry Streat. (Advert - Devizes & Wilts Gazette 26th Oct 1843).

SALE NEXT WEDNESDAY & TWO FOLLOWING DAYS
 AT SHRIVENHAM, BERKS.

TO BUILDERS AND OTHERS.

TO be SOLD BY AUCTION, by MESSRS. FIDEL
 and SON, without reserve, on WEDNESDAY the 17th
 of May and two following days, all the valuable seasoned
 STOCK OF TIMBER AND PLANK,
 Prepared JOINER'S WORK, BATH STONE, IRON-
 MONGERY TOOLS, &c., on the premises at Shricen-
 ham, Berks, the property of Mr. JOHN STREAT, who
 has declined the Building Business:

Comprising more particularly a large quantity of sea-
 soned oak plank, of various thickness; ditto deal board and
 plank; 3 logs of Memel timber; deal planks; 30 well-
 made pannelled doors, from 1½ to 2½ inch; sash frames and
 sashes; wainscot and mahogany board and plank; mahog-
 any Veneer; quantity of deal weather boarding; ditto
 mouldings; 12 joiners' benches; several blocks of Bath
 stone; 20 casks of cement and plaster; 130 excellent mould-
 ing and other planes; excellent turning lathe and tools;
 scaffold poles, ladders, lines and blocks, &c.

The Ironmongery comprises about 2 tons of nails, a large
 assortment of locks, latches, bolts, hinges, screws, fastenings,
 &c.; ranges and stoves, quantity of iron and lead piping,
 quantity of paint, colors and white lead, 1 ton of bar iron,
 and numerous other articles; the whole of which will be
 expressed in catalogues and may be had one week prior to
 the sale by a post paid application to the AUCTIONEERS,
 Faringdon, Berks.

An early attendance is requested on each day.
 May be viewed the day previous to the Sale.

The census of 1841 showed that William Horn was operating as a Blacksmith and we know now that he was located by the Prince of Wales pub. We have no definitive beginning for the Prince of Wales. Research already carried out on the property suggest that it was initially a basic beer house, just a room set aside for people to buy beer to take away or drink in, circa 1815. To turn it into a 'Public House,' it was renovated and named after Albert Edward the eldest son of Queen Victoria who was born in 1841 and titled the Prince of Wales until he succeeded his mother in 1901. (See SHS No N261). Even though Horn's Smithy was likely to have been a stopping point for horses to be shod, we can only speculate as to why his name would be associated with the bend about 200 yards away. Perhaps it was used as a navigational aid being either just before or directly after the sharp corner. The other part of the legend has some degree of truth. At an inquest held in Shrivenham on the 19th May 1851, it was stated that for many years William Horn had been a Blacksmith, *'but in consequence of his intemperate habits had lost all his business.'* There is no reference to upsetting Lord Barrington in any way, and it can only be assumed that the suggestion was just local gossip. But he met a tragic end as the newspaper article reported that *'he was found by his lodger suspended from a beam in his bedroom, life having been extinct some hours.'* (Below - Reading Mercury Sat 24th May 1851).

WANTAGE.

INQUESTS.—An inquest was held on Monday last at Shrivenham, before Mr. Wasborough, on view of the body of William Horn. It appeared by the evidence, that the deceased had been for many years a blacksmith, but in consequence of his intemperate habits had lost all his business, and for the last twelve months had gained a livelihood by carrying parcels for Mr. Canfield, from the Railway Station. That his earnings had lately decreased to the extent of five or six shillings per week, in consequence of the breaking up of Lord Radnor's establishment at Colechill. That deceased had complained of pain in his head for about three days before his death, during which period he took no food, and about seven o'clock, on the evening of Saturday, he was found by his lodger suspended from a beam in his bed room, life having been extinct some hours. Verdict—Temporary Insanity. Two other inquests were held by the same coroner, on Tuesday last, at Faringdon, the first upon the body of

Sometime between 1825 and the 1860s, alterations were made that would enable an Ironmongers shop in the middle of the three houses as confirmed by the 1861 census. It's not known if the shop window at the cross trees end was in place by then. The photo below is dated just before the year 1900 and it clearly shows the two shop windows. (Photo from the SHS Collection).



The census of 1871 showed that Thomas junior was still running his Ironmongers shop and Smithy. With him was his wife Martha and also his parents Thomas and Mary. The next census of 1881 showed Thomas and Martha still at the shop but Thomas senior and Mary had moved to Stanford in the Vale, presumably to continue their retirement. In 1891 it was recorded as the same but with Thomas and Martha was a 14-year-old lad called Hugh who was a nephew. Thomas never made the 1901 census having died in 1898. Martha seems to have continued to run the business but is likely to have employed someone to operate the Smithy. In the document C.O.1 of 1906, the name William Albert Chandler is mentioned as the occupier of the shop and smithy, and the cottage attached by Clarence Tovey.

The whole property was purchased by John Pocock of Watchfield in June 1906. He borrowed £450 from Edward Crowdy of Faringdon which was secured against the property. It's not known if John Pocock had any input with the business or if he resided there, but his ownership was short caused by his death in July 1908. As a result

of the ensuing probate the premises was put up for public auction on 27th August 1909.

(Below - Faringdon Adver 21st Aug 1909).

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Document C.O. 3, an indenture dated 29th Sept 1909, showed that the property was purchased by Frederick Tucker of Shrivenham, Blacksmith. He bid £350 at the auction which is £100 less than was owed to Edward Crowdy who released it from incumbrances in full. But written on the title page of this Indenture was details of a Indenture of Conveyance dated 11th February 1926, whereby Fred Tucker sold a Dwellinghouse and Shop to Charles Waring. So this is where the property was split up.

A newspaper article of 1932 provided more information regarding Frederick Tucker. (North Wilts Herald 4th Nov 1932). In an interview with a reporter, he claimed that he had worked at the Smithy from when he was a young lad and that he assisted his uncle Thomas Taylor. He stated that Thomas had been working at Shrivenham as a Smith for 50 years and before that his father John Taylor had managed the business. But it was Fred Tucker who purchased the Smithy and associated premises when it came up for auction in 1909. In the article mentioned above it was stated that the Smithy

building was very old in appearance and was thatched. Fred Tucker related that at one time, three men were employed there and three forges were kept going. He lamented that there was not the amount of business available as in former years and today only one forge was working. He added that he knew of at least four smiths of this neighbourhood who have had to give up their work within the last year, and that he was the only man still doing it. The work that kept him going was from gentlemen patrons and huntsmen. (Below. Photo from 1935 courtesy of Paul Williams).



By 1959 Fred Tucker had retired and C.O. Doc 6 is a conveyance that sold the property to Roy Gage, with the description of *'All those two cottages situate in the High Street, Shrivenham, occupied by Miss Foster and Frederick Tucker together with two shops adjoining occupied by Fred Tucker and Roy Gage.'* This is puzzling in the light of the conveyance mentioned above where Fred Tucker sold a dwelling and shop to Charles Waring. Perhaps that sale was never completed.

Roy Gage was described on the conveyance as a *'Fish Fryer'* but we don't have the information if he used the shop as a fish and chip shop. The numbers of the high street were different then and Roy and Edna Gage were listed as living further up the high street, but not in the premises they would buy over the road at No 47 and operate as a fish and chip shop for over 20 years. (The same property referred to earlier that was a Blacksmith Shop opposite the Co-op, occupied by Thomas Lea). But whether the shop at No 20 was used for the same, by 1965 it was a butcher's shop operated by Brian Milton.

C.O. Doc 7 is a conveyance dated 21st June 1963, between Roy Gage, Lloyds Bank and Edward Taylor Wray. And in this it can be seen that the shop is then separate as it described, *'All that dwellinghouse or cottage situate and adjoining a Butcher's shop in the High St, Shrivenham, which was in the occupation of Clarence Tovey and then Mrs Day.'*

Peter Day visited the Shrivenham Heritage Centre in August 2023 and remembers the time that he lived at the premises named above and what is now No 18 High Street. He was a keen photographer and kindly allowed us to copy photos that he had taken but also developed himself. The photos below are from the 1960s, courtesy of Peter Day. The man outside the Butcher's shop is Charlie Gerring and the other photo shows the front of No 18, part of the signboard for Brian Milton's shop and in between the shop window and the door of No 18, a metal post that displayed the points of the compass mentioned in the newspaper article from 1932. (See below).





SHRIVENHAM RELIC.

A Horse Shoe Made by the Romans.

THE VILLAGE SMITHY.

In a smithy's shop at Shrivenham there is a quaint old relic of Roman days: a link with the craft that has given so much colour to the romance of rural England.

The ring of the hammer on the anvil seems nowadays to strike a melancholy note, for the blacksmith has fallen upon lean times. Truth to tell, the survival of his craft is almost dependent upon the huntsman and the few local gentry who have not lost the traditional love for the saddle.

These were my reflections, writes a North Wilts Herald reporter, when business took me to Shrivenham the other day.

My man was not in, but as I retraced—or, to be more exact—retrudged my footsteps back towards the railway station, for Shrivenham's G.W.R. is a hearty step from the village, I could not help but admire those quaint little old-fashioned cottages that form the main street. There, with dainty clusters of Michaelmas daisies growing outside their fronts, was beauty of the old type.

Five Fox Heads.

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Five Fox Heads.

It was while I was absorbed in these beauties that I chanced to gaze upon a not-far-distant weathercock. It was unique in design—at any rate, as far as I knew. Mounted on each of the "N," "S," "E" and "W" pointers was the figure of a hound looking up at its master—a huntsman on horseback, which constituted the vane. I discovered that there was the local blacksmith's shop—one of those typically old places with tiny leaded window-panes, and, besides a few horse-shoes, there were attached immediately below the eaves of the thatch, five fox heads in a row. One had been preserved, and large green beads replaced its eyes, whilst the others were almost skulls.

The originality, perhaps it may have been the peculiarity, of the things appealed to me, and so I decided to look up the owner. He lived in the cottage adjoining.

He was Mr. Frederick Tucker, a big-built smith of the "old firm." He was the only man in the trade in the locality, I learned.

Mr. Tucker had just suffered a family bereavement—his aunt, Rose Taylor, with whom he had been brought up from childhood, was buried a week ago. She was 83 years old—one of the oldest inhabitants of the village. Her husband, Mr. Thomas Taylor (Mr. Tucker's uncle, of course) died four years ago. He had been smith at the same old place for 50 years, and his father, John Taylor, had managed the business before him.

All Sizes and Shapes.

Mr. Tucker said that he could well re-

his father, John Taylor, had managed the business before him.

All Sizes and Shapes.

Mr. Tucker said that he could well remember when he used to blow a forge in the shop no fewer than 43 years ago. As a lad he assisted his uncle.

"There were three men employed here in those days," he said, "and three forges were kept going."

But there was a great difference now, I learned. "I know of at least four smiths of this neighbourhood who have had to give up their work within the last year or so," added my friend, "and I am now the only local man at it. My welfare dwells on my gentlemen patrons and chiefly huntsmen. 'This seems to be the 'dairy age,'" he told me, "little work comes from the farmer nowadays."

"Fred" Tucker showed me round his shop—goodness knows how old it is. From a pile of horse shoes of all sizes and shapes he selected one which, he told me, was made by the Romans. It was a massive thing, was very broad and had two heavy bars welded across the underneath part. These, the smith supposed were to prevent the animals from slipping on the uneven roads of that time. They were cut out from sheet metal—a wonderful achievement in those times.

A badger's head was stuck on a post in the shop. This was another "souvenir" of Mr. Tucker's—he's a keen follower of the local hunts and often makes a "catch"; that's how he came by the fox heads.

He took over the business from his uncle 11 years ago, but there is not much doing these days. Only one forge is in order, and that was not burning when I was there. But "Fred" Tucker is a capable "general." His hefty hands moulded that elegant weathercock on the chimney, and painted it, too.

"Really, I must push off," I ventured, "can't stop for more. Sorry. Good-bye, Mr. Tucker."

And so I hurried away from this fascinating little dwelling, to the station, and back to the railway town.