

Premises 13 High Street - Shrivenham

Premises on the corner of High Street and Hazell's Lane

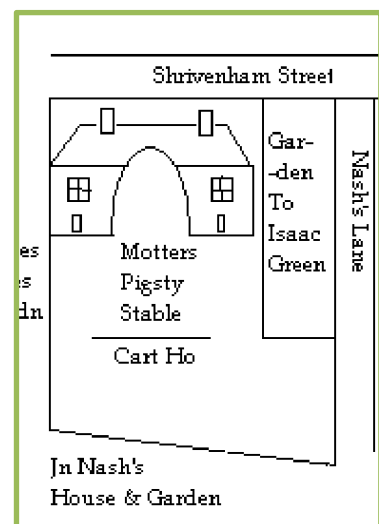
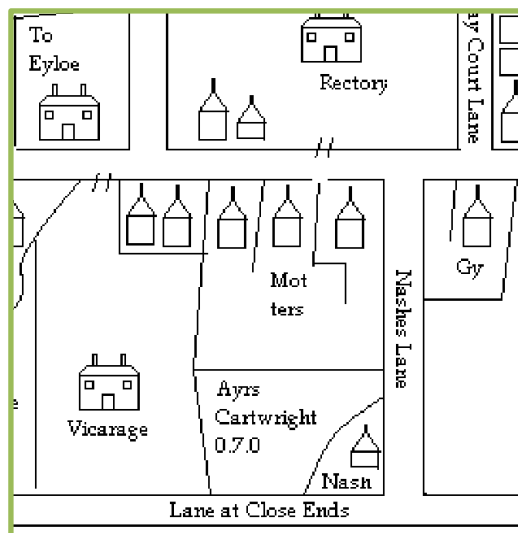
Known by many as the '*Thatched Shop*.'

By Neil B. Maw



An iconic building in Shrivenham High Street, generally known as the '*Thatched Shop*.' Photo circa 1955 courtesy of Paul Williams

The earliest documentary reference that we have for this building comes from the Quarto Survey book belonging to Sir Mark Stuart Pleydell of Coleshill. (BCA D/Ex 192/10). The book consists of a series of simple, line drawn maps dating from 1730 – 1753. The whole purpose of the maps is unclear other than to assume they are about rents and tythes, but below we can see that the 13 High Street site was occupied by Mr or Mrs Motter, with what is now Hazell's Lane, then called Nash's Lane, presumably because it led to Mr Nash's house. Another drawing (below right) gives a more detailed description of what appears to be an agricultural type of structure, and very likely built of wood.



Transcription copy sections of the Quarto Survey book



The next reference we have of this building comes from the Tithe Survey of 1844. In the clip shown below, it was listed as owned by the Shrivenham Poor and occupied by Joseph Hughes. What is meant by this is that it was owned by the Parish of Shrivenham who purchased it circa 1800 as a Parish and Schoolmaster's house. The property later became

part of the Barrington Estate but documentary evidence of how that came about is yet to be discovered.



Tithe Survey of 1844. No 197 Owner: Lord Barrington. Occ: Henry Fuce.
No 198 Owner: Shrivenham Poor. Occ: Joseph Hughes – House,
Schoolroom and Garden

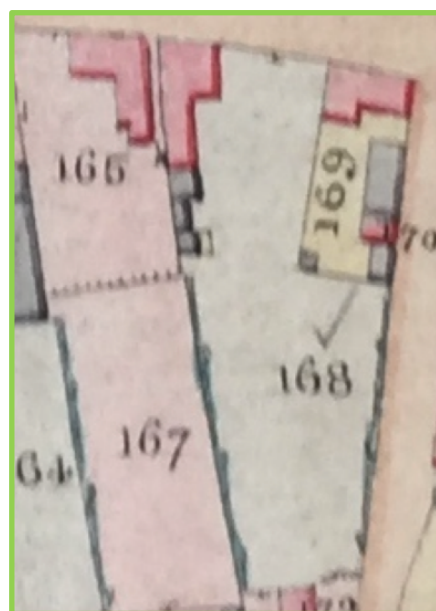
We also know from the Letters of George Merryweather, (SHS N1549 - published by SHS 2020) that there was a school for boys in Shrivenham as early as 1816. In letter No 27, dated 19th April 1816, Richard Killard, stated in answer to a question put to him, *“all the boys of the school know of it as well as me, it was the talk there.”* And in the same letter, George Merryweather stated that, *“the schoolmaster is on the point of marrying Mr Hedge’s niece.”* The Schoolhouse was built by the Rev. Edward Berens, and it was built behind the ‘Poor House’ which was 13 High Street that we know today. The school master was Joseph Hughes who was also the Parish Clerk and had been since 1812, a. He features regularly throughout the Churchwardens records of that period (SHS N359) and the letters of George Merryweather (1815 – 1818). A school for girls was erected in the churchyard, also by Rev. Edward Berens. (Still standing today).

In the census of 1851, Joseph Hughes is listed as a Relieving Officer, (of the poor) Postmaster and Parish Clerk and the positioning within the census confirmed that the property location was still 13 High Street. As the Postmaster at that time, he would have been the point of contact for the post delivery and collection from the post town of Faringdon. It would be a few more years before Shrivenham acquired a dedicated Post Office. (See SHS No: 2553 for a more detailed explanation). Listed with Joseph Hughes was his Housekeeper, Rachel Sly, a Teacher

called John Partridge who was only 12 years of age (normal practice then for youngsters to teach other youngsters), and Edward Lamburn who is described as a Schoolmaster and Clerk, aged 21. Joseph Hughes died age 63 and was buried in Shrivenham churchyard on 18th August 1854.

The Churchwardens records show that the new Parish Clerk was George Haynes and this is confirmed by the census of 1861, in which he is described as age 61, a Builder, Parish Clerk and Bailiff to the Court Leet of the Hundred of Shrivenham. But, by the positioning of the entry within the census, it seems unlikely that he and his family occupied 13 High Street. Much more likely is James Stanley who is listed as the Parish School Master aged 32, with Jane his wife and four children.

By 1863, the new National School was being built further up the high street where it still stands today. The Schoolhouse for Boys behind number 13 High Street had been built on land owned by the Barrington Estate and became the Forrester's Meeting Hall. The Barrington Estate Survey of 1866 showed that number 13 High Street had by then become a Butcher's Shop run by Joseph Hazell as well as a house, with the Forrester's Hall as a separate building.



The Barrington Estate Map of 1866. No 169
Owner: Lord Barrington. Occ: Joseph Hazell -
Hse, gdns & Butcher's Shop. No 170 Owner:
Lord Barrington. Occ: Forrester's Hall, Club Hse.

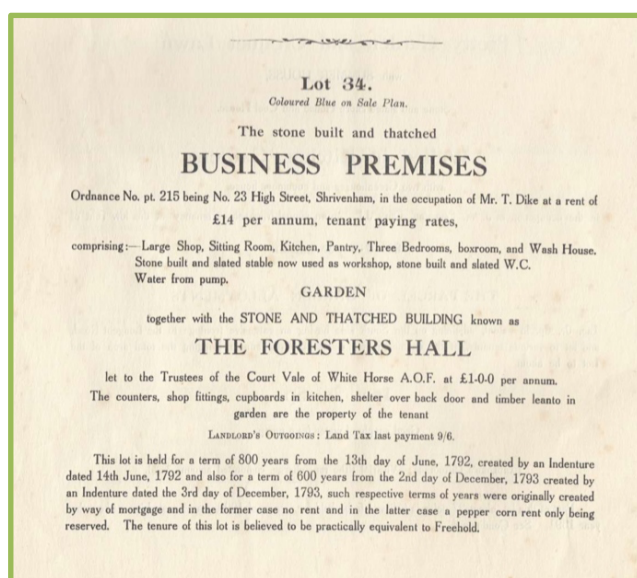
Joseph Hazell died and was buried in Shrivenham churchyard on 18th March 1869 age 50. His wife Ellen carried on the business of Butcher and the census of 1871 showed her listed with her four sons and a young servant girl. The positioning of the listing in the census, right next door to George Butler the Postmaster, confirmed that the premises is number 13 High Street. (Men's Institute was not built until 1904).

By the time of the next census in 1881, the Hazell's had vacated number 13 High Street and it was occupied by William and Alice Chivers. William was listed as being a Carpenter but there was still a shop there, probably run by his wife. The Kelly's Directory for 1887 listed him as a Builder. A local newspaper reported a court case from the Faringdon Petty Sessions whereby Mary Ann Sealey was charged with stealing a piece of pork from the shop of William Chivers at Shrivenham. (Berkshire Chronicle 28/10/1882). The parish records show that William Chivers died later in that decade and was buried in Shrivenham churchyard on 27th May 1888. Alice his wife continued on with the business and was listed as a Grocer in the census of 1891. The property seemed to have been made up of two units as they are shown separately on the census, with Alice having the shop, and son John Chivers occupying another part as a Carpenter, with his wife Hannah and four-month-old, Ethel. Alice was still running the shop according to the Kelly's Directory of 1895, but by the census of 1901, it was the start of a very long tenure of the Dike family.



The Thatched Shop circa 1950s with Wini or Madge Dike stood in the doorway. Photo SHS archive

In 1911, Thomas Dike was age 37 and his occupation was listed on the census as a Coach Builder, born in Ashbury. His wife was Sarah Ann, known as Annie, age 43, and they had children, William 11, Madalene 13 and Winifred 12. We do have a separate listing on the Dike family in the Heritage Catalogue N1023. We also have a separate listing for daughter Madalene, affectionately known as Madge Moon, for the celebrations of her 90th birthday in N922. It was a very large occasion and a huge number of people turned up. Thomas was a keen Cricketer and played with the Shrivenham team for many years and he also liked a game of Billiards. He was Sexton of the church and was a proficient and respected Undertaker in the village. It was Thomas Dike who first spotted the fire in the church in 1910 and raised the alarm. Without his timely intervention the outcome would have been likely as total destruction of the church. (SHS N932). In 2022 a clock that once adorned the wall of his office was discovered and donated by Mrs Colette Owens from Kent. (See SHS Listing N3564). Annie died and was buried on 12th January 1929. Thomas lived on much later and was buried on 21st February 1959, aged 85. His two daughters, Wini and Madge had been running the shop since the death of their mother, but at the moment we don't know exactly when the Dike's vacated number 13 High Street, the property that became known as the Thatched Shop and had been for over a century. But life in the UK generally was changing. After the great War of 1914-18, the Beckett Estate was broken up and eventually all sold off. The shop and the hall behind, used by the Forresters, went for auction in 1922. The picture below is a clip from the sale catalogue. (See SHS N1512 for complete catalogue).



Victor Simon and his brother was evacuated from London in August 1939, just before the outbreak of the World War II. He kindly wrote down his memories of his time in Shrivenham and explained that himself aged 10, and his brother Ken, aged 8, both from London, were taken in by Miss Dike. He would have been referring to one of Thomas & Annie's daughters, probably Madge. He described life in the village store and that Mr Dike (Thomas) was a Carpenter, Undertaker, Plumber, Church Warden, Bell Ringer and also sang in the church choir. Victor stated that, *'I am sure the main reason why we felt so settled and happy was the way we were treated by Miss Dike, Mr Dike, Bill Dike and Mr Moon.'* This was something that not all the evacuees could say. (Full narrative in SHS N656).

We are grateful to Sue Watkins for adding the tenure of Geoffrey and Eileen Stevens. Sue worked at the Thatched Shop in the late 1960s. Eileen Stevens ran an annual charity ball in aid of Cancer Research which was well supported by the villagers. Geoffrey Stevens also opened a Laundrette in the small row of shops by today's Co-op store.

After this the property had at least two periods when it became a restaurant, *Thatchers* and *Fennels*, going back to a shop and then became, *'The Treatment Rooms'* as it is at present.



Number 13 is a Grade II listed building and is described in the Dept of Environment listing as: *17th century of colourwashed rubble stone and brick to the attic with a thatched roof half hipped at the east end and gabled at the west with a W stone stack with brick cap. One storey and attic, two window range to the north with three light six pane casements to the eyebrow dormers and three light 20th century windows to the ground floor under wooden lintels. Glazed plank door set between the two ground floor windows.*

We have covered the general history of this iconic building over the last two centuries. If you have any further information, please get in touch with us:

info@shrivenhamheritagesociety.co.uk