

Bradshaw's Cottages 34 Long Acre



In the 16th century (and earlier, but we are not sure how much earlier) the plot of land within the (red) border on the map was owned by the Porter family. The majority (around 80%) of the parish was in the ownership of the Stapleton's, who had a land terrier drawn up in 1586 when they put the estate up for sale. This was bought by the Stanhopes who later became Earls of Chesterfield. Their Bingham estates eventually passed by marriage to the Earls of Carnarvon and in the 1920s to the Crown in lieu of death duties. The Porters owned most of the remainder of the parish.

BHTA's project to produce maps Bingham for 1586, 1776 and 1841 has revealed the evidence for ownerships and occupation for those dates.

In 1776 the whole plot was owned by H Sherbrooke, esq, the successor family to the Porters. By 1841 the plot had been broken up into individual freehold plots (Tealby House, Falcon House and Providence (later Long Acre) House to the south of the plot along with the cottages along Fisher Lane). The Chesterfield Estate seems to have purchased the Tealby House plot and rented it to Richard Doncaster, an eighty year old of independent means and probably father of John (freeholder of Providence House) and Henry who were builders. The Falcon House plot was owned by John Innocent and rented by Richard Hewitt, a schoolmaster. At some time before the indenture of 1896 (see below) the two plots came under the same ownership - the Bassitts.



The deed bundle contains a recent manuscript list of owners starting with "1890 - Polly Taylor", but her name does not appear in any of the original documents. The earliest date given in these is 1895, when the cottages appear to have been part of the Tealby House freehold. An indenture referenced in the abstract of title suggests the building which is now Bradshaw's cottages had been a barn and outbuilding, perhaps not long before this date. During the recent renovation works barn like features have been revealed, especially a diamond pattern of half brick apertures in the gable walls, which would have been for ventilation. The works also revealed that the original floor to the northern part of the building was a metre below ground level. A possible explanation is that this was a dairy - the low floor helping to cool the room. The southern gable wall shows clearly the original low gable profile of the (narrow brick) barn.

The shell of the building is composed of what

look like mid 19C bricks, but older narrow bricks were revealed during renovation. Falcon House (see below) has a modern plaque proclaiming a build date of 1779, the same date as the Wheatsheaf Inn 50 or 60 yards away. It is possible this group of buildings, including the old barn which was converted to Bradshaw's Cottages, around the junction with Market Street date from the same period. We do not know the connection with Bradshaw, but three Bradshaws are recorded in the 1776 inventory, John, George and Mr Bradshaw (maybe their father?). John and George were tenants of the Chesterfield estate, but Mr Bradshaw was a freeholder (a long strip behind the church on the east side of Church Lane), so maybe sometime later he was involved in the freehold of Tealby House and converted the barn into Bradshaw's Cottages. Maybe it was Bingham's first barn conversion! If so it would have been before 1841 as no Bradshaws are recorded in the Tithe apportionment or in the census of 1841. In 1705 John Bradshaw, Innkeeper of the Bluebell Inn (which behind the Crown in Station Street), bought what is now 19 Church Street, the documents for which reveal he held several cottages in Bingham - maybe this was one!

The abstract of title in the deeds bundle deals largely with the family history of the Woods, who purchased the cottages and land at the north end of the plot in 1896. At the time of this first recorded sale the two Bradshaw's Cottages were occupied by William Willoughby and Richard Skellington. We have not found either of these in the census returns. We have however found the purchaser, Mary Wood, and her family. Husband, John, was a builder and in 1891 they lived in East Street. The 1891 census identifies:

| Name | Christian name | Rel | Age | Address | Occupation |
|------|----------------|------|-----|---------|-------------------|
| Wood | John | Head | 59 | East St | Builder |
| Wood | Mary | Wife | 49 | East St | |
| Wood | John C. | Son | 20 | East St | Student |
| Wood | Samuel | Son | 16 | East St | Apprentice |
| Wood | William | Son | 14 | East St | Monitor in School |

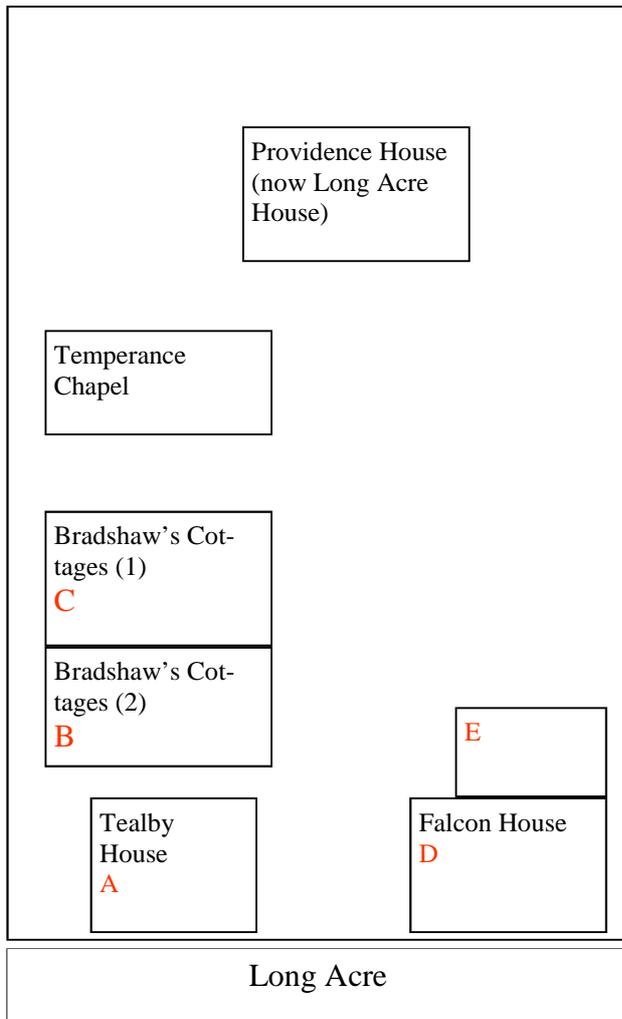
In 1901 the family were in Church Street. John C had married and was in a different house in Church Street to his parents who still had Samuel and William at home. John C and William were both teachers, Samuel had followed his father into the building firm.

The schedule of property conveyed in 1896 shows that Mary Wood purchased Tealby House and Falcon House together with two sets of cottages to the rear of each. This would accord with the Porter/Sherbrooke freeholds, as we know the properties on either side were held by the Chesterfield Estate. Sight of the deeds for Tealby and Falcon Houses would settle the point as they might go back as far as the sales out of the Sherbrooke estate. Sight of Tealby House deeds should also reveal when it and Bradshaw's cottages passed into separate ownership. We have not traced any of the other names in the censuses of 1891

The schedule reads as follows (the letters in brackets refer to the sketch below):

Schedule

All that freehold dwelling house known as Tealby House (A) and also those two cottages known as Bradshaw Cottages (B,C) together with yards, outbuildings and appurtenances thereto belonging situated at Long Ace Bingham containing an area of 437 sq yds which became vested in Mary Wood by virtue of two several indentures:



One dated 10 January 1895 and made between said John Wood (1st part) said Mary Wood, Anne Webster and Caroline Gray (2nd part) and said Mary Wood (3rd part)

And the other dated 23 April 1896 made between Joseph Bassitt and Hellen his wife (1st part) Mary Wood (2nd part) and John Wood (3rd part) under the description of All those two dwelling houses or tenements situated in Bingham, and fronting onto The Town Street or Turnpike Road leading from Nottingham to Grantham then formerly in occupation of Thomas Parr and Hugh Patrick then late in occupation of Widow Otter and Mr Holmes but then of Mrs Singleton and Mrs Sibson (A and D) and also all that tenement situated behind and near to those above described then formerly occupied by Benjamin Jackson then of Benjamin Horsepool but then of (?space) (E) and also all those two other tenements (B and C) near those last mentioned (beg then formerly a barn and outbuildings) then formerly in occupation of William Willoughby and Richard Skellington and the ground belonging thereto and the sites of the same buildings contained about 437 sq yards.

Mrs Singleton is probably Emily, a widow aged 53, recorded in the 1901 census as living in Long Acre with her sons William (13) and Bertie (11). She was a laundress. We have not found any other names mentioned in the indenture.

The earlier indenture puzzles us! It predates the actual sale of the properties to Mary Wood in 1846 and does not itself mention any property. It seems to be some sort of device to transfer (previous) assets from John Wood to his wife, but for what reason we can only guess at.

The remainder of the abstract of title (of John Walker Wood) recites the wills and deaths of various member of the Wood family up to 1943. Mary Wood willed **three** dwelling houses to her husband in 1905. Thus (probably) Falcon House and the rear tenement had probably already been sold. They were occupied by Mssrs Wright, Singleton and Castledine. The only name in the census is Wright, whose status as a County Court bailiff would probably put him in Tealby House:

| Name | Christian name | Rel | Age | Occupation |
|--------|----------------|----------|-----|----------------------|
| Wright | William E. | Head | 57 | Bailiff County Court |
| Wright | Mary A. O. | Wife | 51 | Dressmaker |
| Wright | George H. | Son | 20 | Student |
| Wright | Frank H. | Son | 17 | Grocer |
| Wright | Elsie | Daughter | 14 | |
| Wright | Russell C. | Grand- | 6 | |

After his death the properties were to pass to her son Samuel, who was to pay his brother William £50.00. The eldest son JC is not mentioned in connection with this bequest (there may of course have been others). In 1911 she revoked this will and in 1914 she died. John Wood was granted probate in 1915 and he died in 1928. Probate was granted to John Chettle Wood (Chettle was a well known family name in Bingham so perhaps his mother had been a Chettle) and Samuel Wood and recognising the interest of the third executor William. They presumably shared ownership of the properties. Samuel died in 1942 with Joseph Birkin (son-in-law perhaps (?)), a trades union official and John Walker Wood (son?), a bricklayer, were executors. They agreed with J C Wood, still a schoolmaster and now living in Cherry Street, that the property should be vested in John Walker Wood.

In 1947 John Walker Wood sold the property to Hilda Alice Smithson for £600. A letter from Bingham Rural District Council in response to legal searches, revealed that:

There is an in formal notice outstanding requiring the substitution of the existing unsanitary privy middens by water closets.

The property now consisted only of Bradshaw's cottages, Tealby House having presumably been sold off previously (only the deeds to Tealby House will tell us when). At the time the cottages were rented to Hilda Alice Smithson and to Mrs Salter. Hilda was a widow, and subsequently married Walter Henry Thornborough in 1956, and being widowed again, then married Reginald Marsden in 1959. In 1960 she sold the cottages to Miss Eleanor Mary Suffolk for £1200. It was presumably Miss Suffolk who had the cottages made into one. Miss Suffolk died in 2007. The cottage was sold and is (2008) currently being renovated.