

## Occupation History: Old Post Office site

### 1586

Our conjectural map of Bingham for 1586 is based on a written survey of the estate owned by Bryan Stapleton who lived in Yorkshire and owned about 90% of Bingham at the time. Long Acre was then called Husband Street, i.e. the street of the farmers, as most of the house and homestead plots were occupied by tenant farmers with various acreages of strips in the four open fields.

William Stapleton, maybe a brother of Bryan, was bailiff for the estate and was a tenant farmer with "a messuage or tenement and - bovates land with two barns and other buildings, two closes called *costes* or *crofts* both together". He farmed 50 acres divided into 139 strips in the open fields. This plot was described as a small close held by the bailiff of the estate, William Stapleton. His farmstead was on the opposite side of Long Acre, now The Paddock".

Thomas Atkinson, to the west, was a cottager, holding a "cottage next to the tenement occupied by Thomas Redman with its toft". He had just this plot on which to subsist.

Thomas Johnson, on the east, was a freeholder with "A cottage and toft next to "per cross" in Husband Street, the present house being in a corner by the cross and towards the market. He was described as a "a calcionarius - a spurrier or shoemaker. Military service due". He also had some freehold strips. This plot has therefore always been freehold and never owned by the successive estates of the Stanhopes, Earls of Chesterfield or Earls of Carnarvon. The "Per Cross" may have been "Poor Cross" and would have been at the cross roads of Husband Street, Market Street and Fisher Lane.

### 1694

We know from an abstract of title found with the deeds of 7 Church Street that letters of administration were granted on the 9 May 1694 to Sarah Needham following the death of her late husband John Needham of Bingham, who had been the sometime purchaser of the property. Needham was a considerably successful yeoman farmer.

### 1776

Another Estate Survey was commissioned in 1776, for the coming of age of the then Earl of Chesterfield. The majority of the site was now in the freehold possession of "Mrs Needham". The 16<sup>th</sup> century bailiff's plot had clearly been sold off and joined with Johnson's freehold. She owned the freehold of plot 277 described as a homestead. The survey gave no detailed information about freehold land so we can only assume there was a house here too. The associated house history report notes that the house is believed to have been the home of, and probably built by, yeoman farmer John Needham, whose inventory of 1694

has reference to rooms that include an Old kitchen and an Old parlour. Three key building phases were identified: 1644-1671, 1689 and 1749.

### **1801**

In April 1801 Matthew Needham (Sarah's son) sold the Bingham property to Ruth Timms, whose late husband, Richard Oliver, had been the tenant in 1795, and her son Joseph Oliver, a maltster. Richard Oliver had died in December 1781 aged only 35. The newspaper of the time described him as a maltster of great business. She subsequently married John Timms in March 1783, who was described as a wealthy grazier and maltster. His farm was no 8 Newgate Street. Ruth and her son (Joseph Dodesley Oliver) paid Needham £785, a tidy sum in those days! She died in 1818 at Shelford.

Joseph Dodesley Oliver is described in the 1822 directory as a tanner and wine and spirit merchant of Long Acre. Can one assume this was the beginning of the former use of the post office as the Vaults public house? He was also described in trades' directories from 1828 to 1835 as a bobbin net maker. A later conveyance quotes him as having erected a "*stable with the room over the same formerly used as a machine shop*"...

### **1807**

In April 1807 Oliver and his mother sold land measuring 6885 square yards for £860-12-6d to a consortium of George Baxter, Val Buxton, John Strong, Richard Doncaster and Henry Croke, who were described in a newspaper of the time as "The Building Club". Oliver retained the house and enough land for the yard now called Old Post Office Yard". The Building club developed the houses and shops that became the west side of Market Street together with Union and Needham Streets.

### **1841**

Plot 145 on the 1841 tithe map was described in the tithe apportionment as a house and buildings in the ownership and occupation of Joseph Oliver, a wine and spirit merchant. Plot 146 was as a garden piece (now "Old Post office Yard") similarly owned and occupied by Joseph Oliver. He remained in occupation until the census of 1851. Plot 160, 2 Market Street, was in the ownership and occupation of James Slack, who was a shoe maker.

Plot 144, west of the post office buildings, was a house leased from the Chesterfield Estate by Benjamin Watson, an agricultural labourer. He was 76 and his wife 69. Mrs Watson, a daughter and an unmarried son continued to live there until at least the 1861 census and a son and daughter until 1871.

### **1851and following**

In 1851 Henry Orton, a wine merchant, was in residence. In 1865 Samuel Hall, wine and spirit dealer from Wirksworth, purchased the property from Orton for

£1100. At some point after that it was bought by Alton and Company, brewers and spirit merchants of Derby. By 1891 it was occupied by Henry Johnson.

The 1851 conveyance described the property as:

"Messuage, in Bingham, with "the liquor warehouse, yards, gardens, shed and warehouse" adjoining and also "*stable with the room over the same formerly used as a machine shop erected and built by Joseph Doddesley Olliver, deceased, on part of the same premises.* All of which were formerly in occupation of Oliver, but now of Orton.

The trades' directories show that as well as being a wine and spirit merchant JD Oliver was a bobbin net maker from 1830 to 1835, which would explain his need for a machine shop.

### **1930+**

The first mention of the property being called the Vaults was in Wrights 1893 directory, which might indicate when it was purchased by Alton's. Directory entries after this mention innkeepers at the vaults as agents of Alton's; whether this meant they were tenants or not is not known.

A conveyance 1 September 1930 records the sale of the property by Alton and Company, 15 Wardwick, Derby to Joseph Walker of Bingham, butcher.

The post office moved from the Market Place to here in 1936 (Trades directory 1936 – Jonathan M Linley, who was also the Registrar for births, marriages and deaths) and the property was sold in 1957 by Walker's descendants John Marrison Linley of the Post Office, Bingham, postmaster.