

**BATHFORD'S
SHOPS & PUBS
~ A HISTORY IN
PHOTOGRAPHS ~**

- ❖ This is an augmented version of a talk given to the Bathford Society on the 30th October 2023 by Marilyn Wright and me, David Howells.
- ❖ I prepared the slides and Marilyn added her personal experiences where appropriate. For this version I have added her text and my commentary with or after the relevant slides.
- ❖ Most of the photographs are from the archives of the Bathford (Local History) Society. Some of the later colour ones were taken by me.
- ❖ I must credit Ken Tatem with the information on the Pubs, although I was unaware that he had provided this for Godfrey Laurence when he wrote the first edition of “Bathford, Past & Present”, which I used for my updated edition.
- ❖ In order to provide dates, I have used newspaper cuttings, the old Bathford Directories, a few Kelly Directories that I had copied in the past, and Janet Tatem’s news items as ‘community correspondent’ to the Bath Evening Chronicle. If anyone has any other information, please let me know.

THE PARISH HALL & SOME FRIENDS

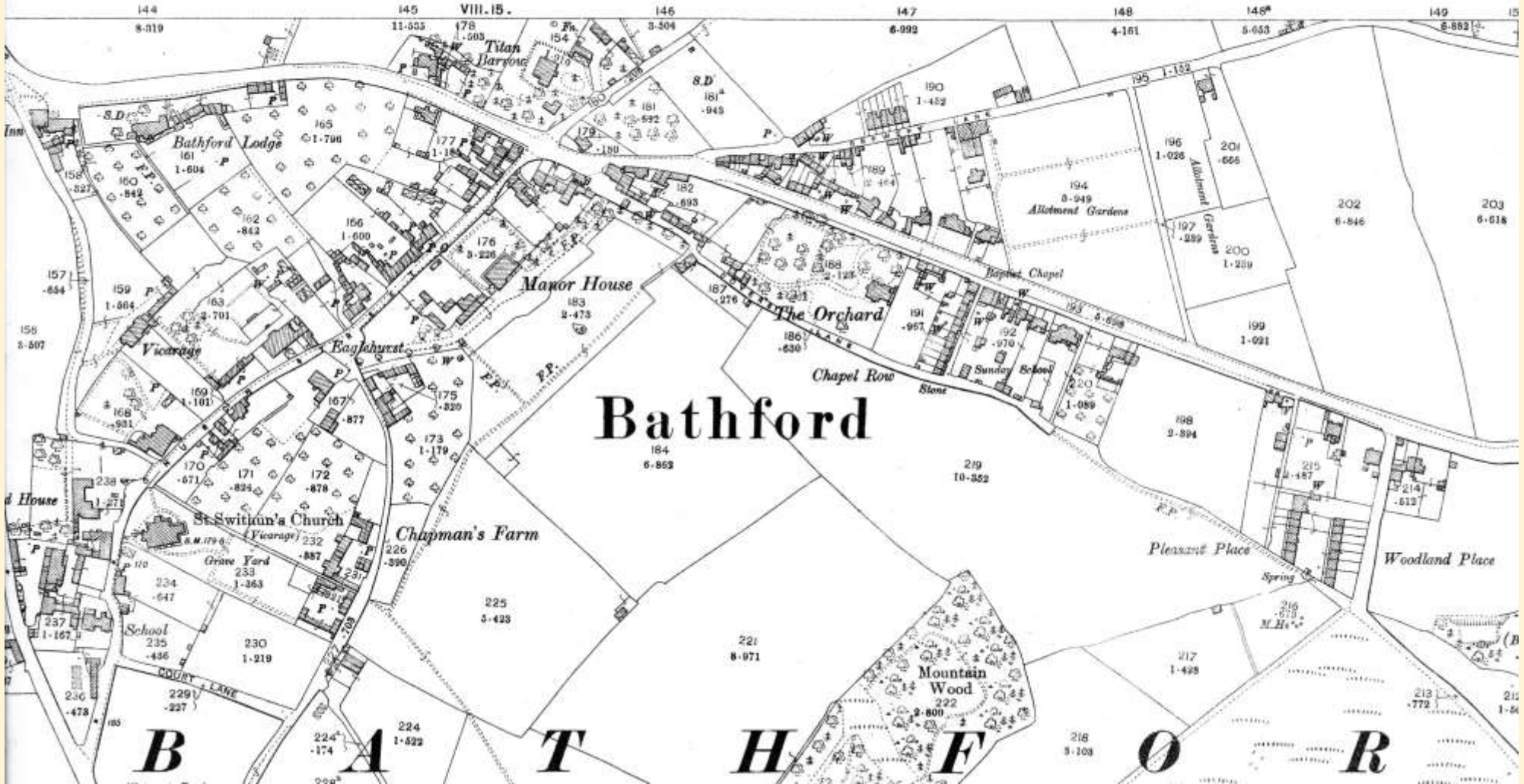


Marilyn

“I moved to Bathford from Portsmouth 50 years ago, so bear with me if you were born here, or have lived here longer than me! SO! Bathford ticked all our boxes, with three general stores including a post Office, a butcher, dairy, bakery, hairdresser, and pub, Bathford also had a school which had 90 pupils, the infants, including my two boys were taught in a wooden hut type structure, while there was no assembly hall or gym and computers were unbelievably, unknown. Lastly the Parish Room was perfect for me as it provided a mother and toddler group and a play group, not to mention a venue for me to start a Girl Guide company shortly after I moved here. After several years Jenny Prall became my Guiding assistant, if there is time, she may be able to tell you a bit about this!? So! back to the Parish Room which had no ceiling and was open to the roof, so it was very cold with the heating being one guarded heater by the kitchen, with a metal tube going up through the roof, while in certain weather condensation ran down the walls, something I had never experienced before. Then of course we had a regular bus, an amazing doctor’s surgery and lovely countryside surrounded us. Boxes ticked! Most things have changed some have improved, some have vanished.”

BATHFORD VILLAGE

SECOND EDITION 1904



I chose the 1904 Ordnance Survey map of Bathford to show where the shops were situated as some were in existence then. You will notice that it predated Mountain Wood and Dover's Park estates which were built in the 1940s and 1960s respectively.

For the Shops section, the slides are arranged by streets.

- High Street
- Church Street
- Bathford Hill

The next slides are of the High Street Shops.

'High Street' itself didn't exist before c. 1757. It was created by an Act of Parliament for a Turnpike Trust to extend the 1707 Bath Roads Toll road which ran from Bath to the start of Ashley Road, up to the start of Lower Kingsdown Road. Thirty years later, it was extended from the Lower Kingsdown Road to the top of Kingsdown.

HIGH STREET SHOPS

- MASLEN'S
- UPPER TOP SHOP
- LOWER TOP SHOP
- DEA Hair fashions





BATHFORD in around 1908. A.J. Maslen's general store opened in 1901. In 1909 it became Maslen's and Sons and traded as such for many years. On the left is the Smiths Arms.

MASLEN'S GENERAL STORES



Marilyn

Maslen

“Maslen’s was a general grocery shop on the corner of Ashley Road by the hairdresser. You walked straight from the pavement through an ordinary door to this tiny shop that was packed full of laden shelves.”

Maslen

The start date differs according to source. The newspaper cutting says it opened in 1901 but the Bathford Postal Directories say that Charles Maslen was a grocer in 1866 followed by James Maslen in 1878. In 1896 Arthur Maslen is recorded as a Grocer & Bootmaker until 1934 when his son Albert Maslen takes over until 1940.

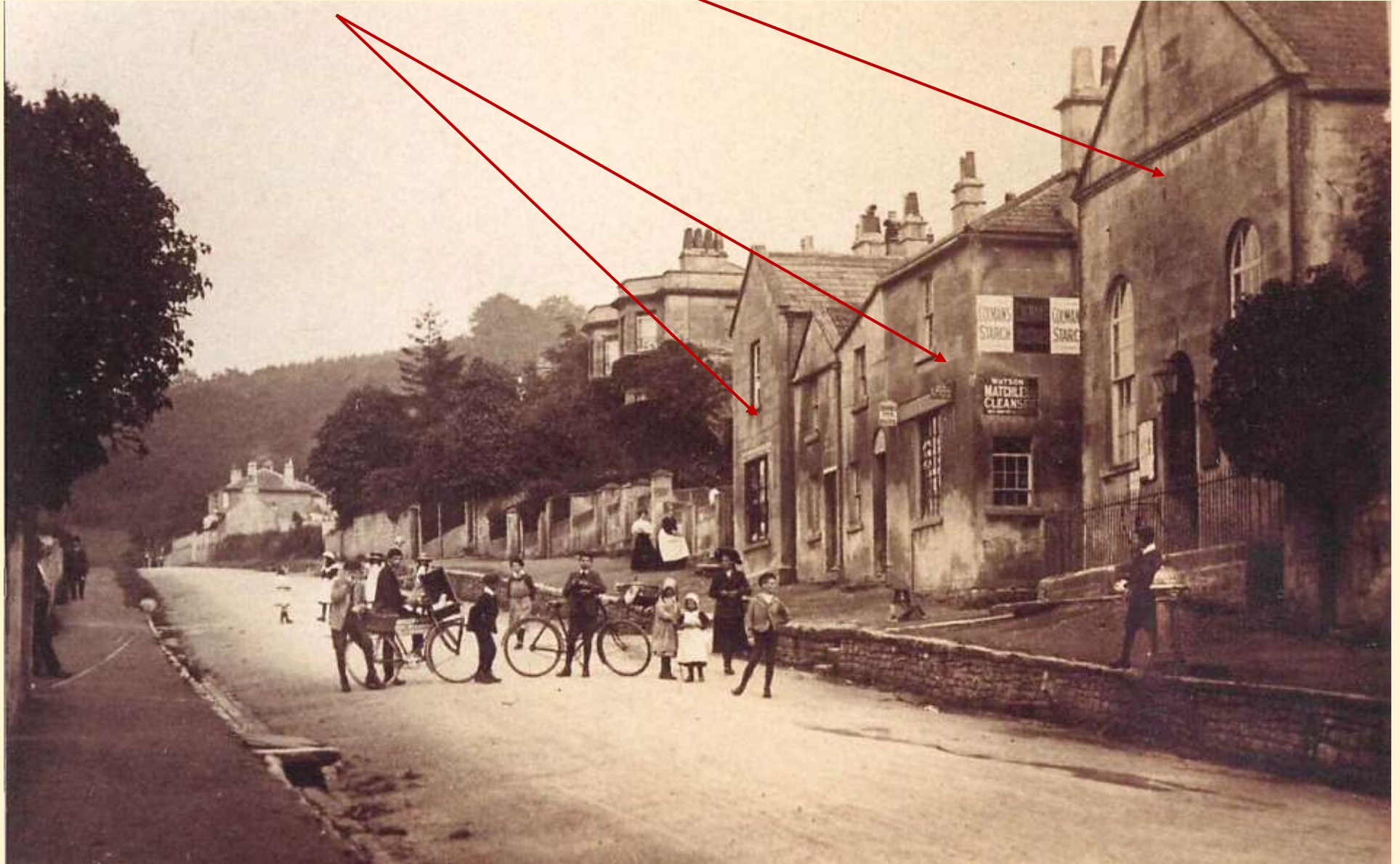
The Upper Top Shop – Run by Adelaide Maslen



Maslen

The Bathford Directories list Adelaide as running this shop from 1903 to 1920 when she moved to Leonard's Stores in Church Street until 1939 when the Directories ran out. The 1950 & 1955 Kelly's Directory lists George Dolman as a grocer with address 'Colerne View', High Street. By 1957 he was still at this address but no longer a grocer.

Both Top Shops & Baptist Chapel





UPPER STORES, HIGH STREET, BATHFORD c. 1908. This shop was owned by Albert Brooke, grocer and baker (1897–1912) and then by Mrs Brooke until 1918. The windows have now been enlarged with plate glass, which do little justice to the store.

Albert BROOKE's Shop c. 1910



Hector Ryland
BROOKE

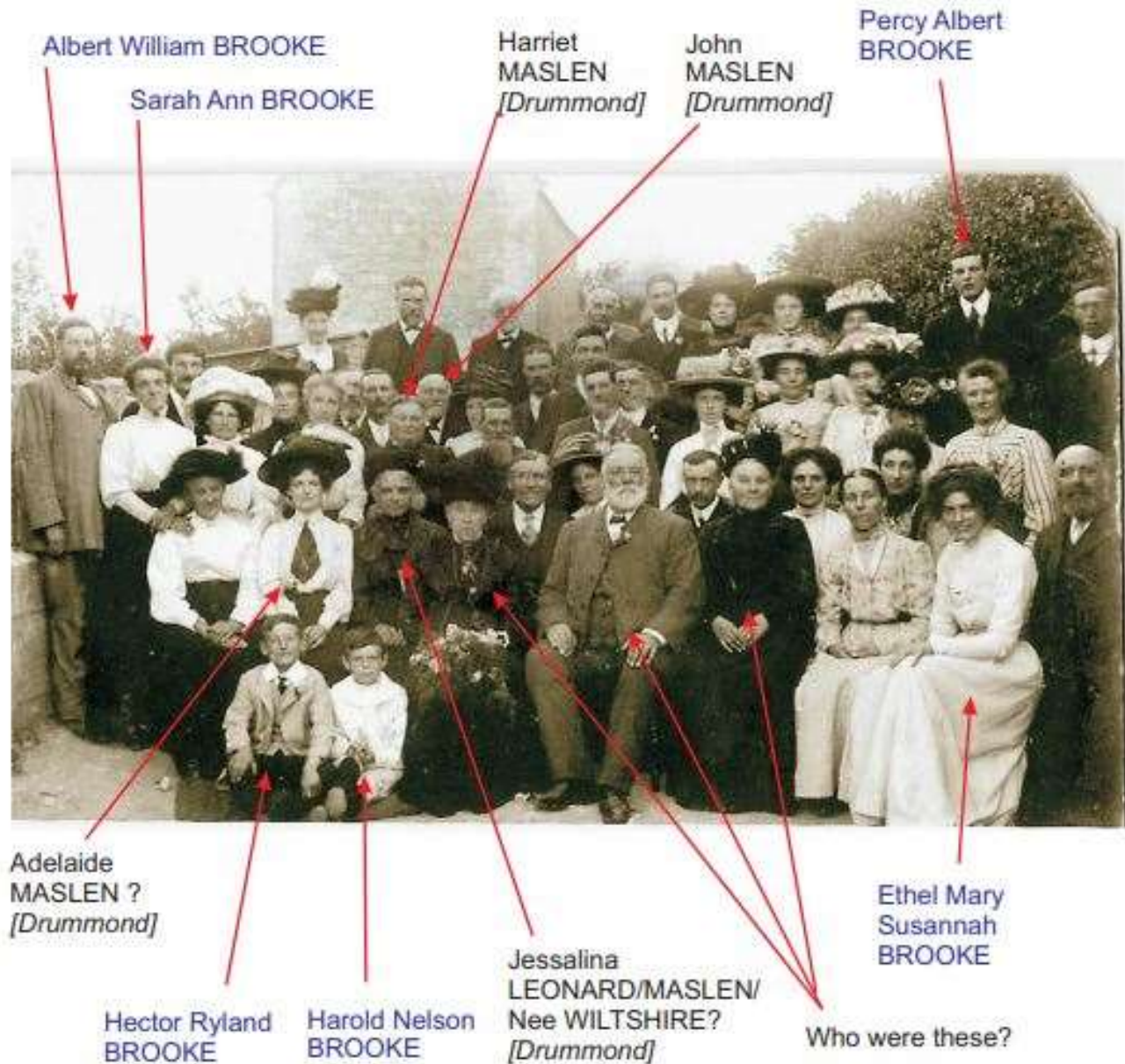
Harold Nelson
BROOKE

Ethel Mary
Susannah
BROOKE

A chance meeting in the Village shop in 2011 with a lady visiting Bathford to lay flowers on her family's grave provided the information on these pages.

Her maiden name was Brooke: it was her family that ran the Upper Stores.

Group photograph
of the Maslen &
Brooke families c.
1910



Photograph from
Mr. D. Drummond.



Upper Stores by Marilyn

“Another general store was on Bathford Hill opposite the allotments, this was called the Upper Stores and was laid out as a mini supermarket, the only shop to have room for this! I worked there for a £1 an hour! The upper Stores provided newspaper deliveries and was the only shop to sell fresh fruit and veg. Marion Dodd owned the shop, her husband ran the post office in Seend, so she had no help with the piles of paperwork and cash and carry purchases which she piled into her car. She also had three school age children; therefore, she had no time to continue to grow the salad stuff in the greenhouse in the shop garden, which I believe was a feature of the previous owner’s services”.

“As well as the green house in the back garden, there was, and still is, a single stable with a hay loft above. Marion’s daughter kept her horse there until it developed a cough from the dusty hay or straw, so the horse had to be found a field.

The shop contained a cellar which ran beneath 12 Chapel row, paper sacks of potatoes were stored in this cellar alongside crates of fizzy drinks bottles. One of my many jobs was to drag the heavy potato sacks out onto the shop floor, unwind the wire fixture at the top of the sack and fold down the two layers of thick brown paper sack to display the potatoes. Another job was to cut the large labs of cheese with a cheese wire. several customers requested 2 ounces, we also sold 2 eggs at a time which we wrapped in tissue paper from the bread delivery. I became quite good at judging 2 ounces of cheese, likewise 2 ounces of jelly babies which I measured out from glass jars on ancient scales.”

“The counter where the cheese was cut, alongside ham and bacon that were sliced using a fearsome slicer and for ‘just one slice please dear’ covered a well that had been filled in. The well must have been in a courtyard where Chapel Row residents shared it, the shop being a latter add on addition.”

It was in June 1995 that Mr Robert Inman announced that he was closing his shop. It later opened as Prime Arts Ltd. Around 2000 the business moved to Atworth, and this shop became The Clothes Horse until closing in 2011.

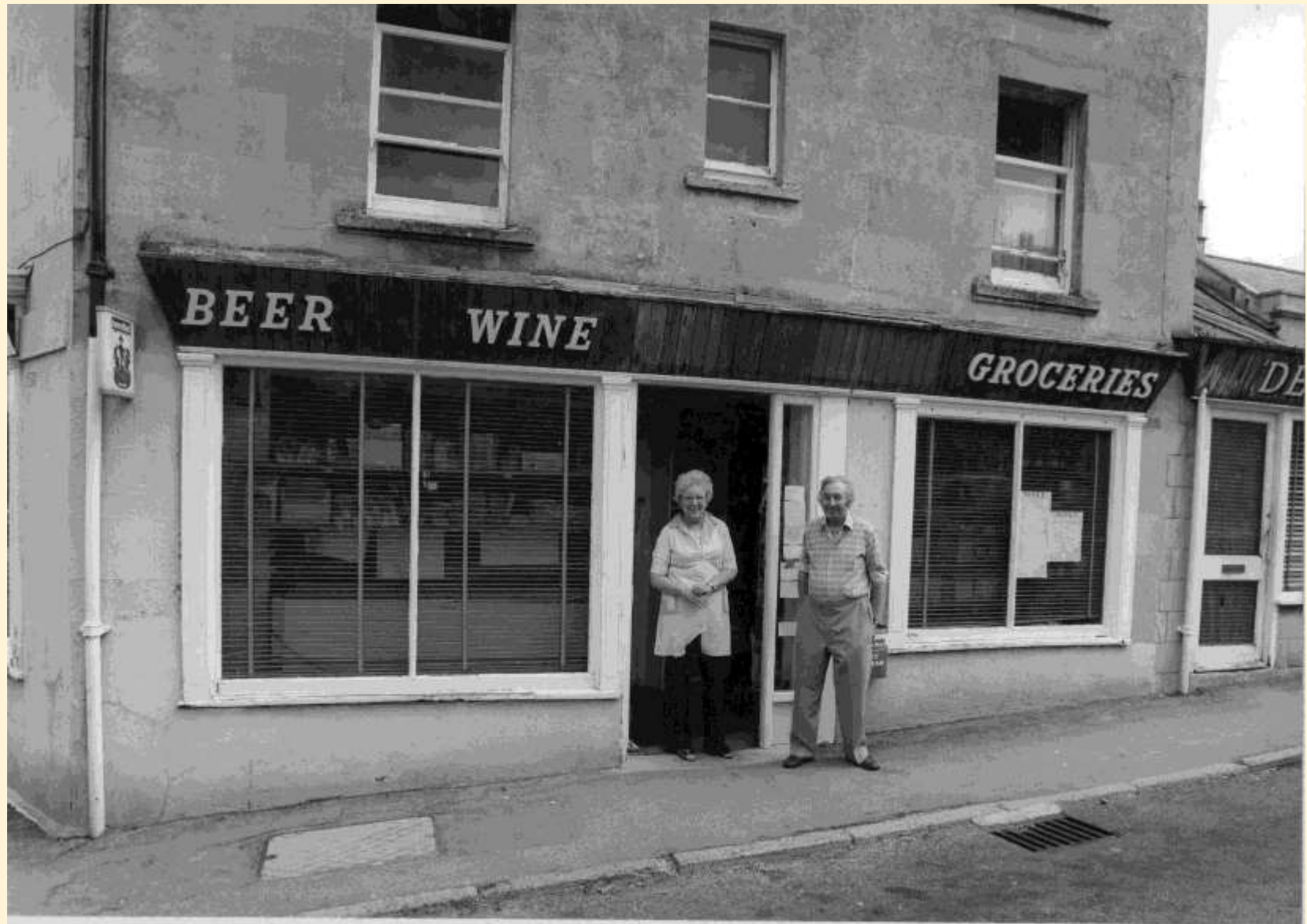


■ SHUTTING UP SHOP: Robert Inman outside The Upper Stores





Taken in November 2005 – it closed in 2011.



Maslen's former shop ~ 1970s?

Mr. & Mrs. Durrant?



DEA Hair Fashions. Not a shop in the sense of the others. Opposite the turning to Dovers Park. DEA was started in 1968 by Barry Wright, who retired after 37 years of hairdressing at the end of 2005, to be succeeded by Steve Marriot, who continues to look after ladies, and men's, hair to this day.

CHURCH STREET SHOPS

- POST OFFICE & GENERAL STORES
- BUTCHER
- LEONARD'S

Bathford Post Office.



Bathford Post Office.

When at No. 12 Church Street. After 1907

The story of the Post Office and General Stores

- 1846 The Post office started in No. 11 Church Street, run by John Scott, a florist & nurseryman
- 1872 It moved next door to No 12 Church St. run by George Pittman.
- Mrs Pittman became the Post mistress.
- 1907 Henry Mills Skrine paid for the Extension.
- 1960 Margaret Pittman (daughter) died. Post Office & Stores Moved to No. 2 Church St. [Leonard's]
- Run by Peter Boltwood until 1983 when Iqbal became the Post-Master.
- 1994, The Post Office moved to the New Inn. Iqbal & Masuma continued to run the Post Office and shop.
- 1994 No. 2 became 'Jacaranda', a florist and coffee shop until 1997.
- 2006 Beginning of the Co-operative Village Shop.
- 2008 Post Offices closed by Government. Iqbal retires.

Mr White – the Butcher



Marilyn

Butcher

“The first shop to vanish was the butcher in Church St where the building still stands next to the Parish Room. The butchers contained a cold room at the back, where meat hung on hooks, giving out a meaty smell for several yards down the street. It seemed that Mr White did not use modern refrigeration. This however was rectified when he retired.”



■ Up for sale: White's the butcher's — owned by one family for more than 90 years

Butcher

Photo from the Bath & West Evening Chronicle August 16th, 1989. “After 90 years in the White family, the butcher's shop is on the market. It closed as a shop in May 1989” The first recorded butcher was James Lydiard in 1854 followed by the Smith & Davis families until T. White in 1917.



Florrie White delivering meat.



Paul Wilmott, butcher, in 1988



Church Street, Bathford

Leonard's Store – early photograph



LEONARD'S STORE – EARLY PHOTOGRAPH

Mrs Leonard ran the store from 1888 to 1920 when Miss Adelina Maslen took over.



Marilyn

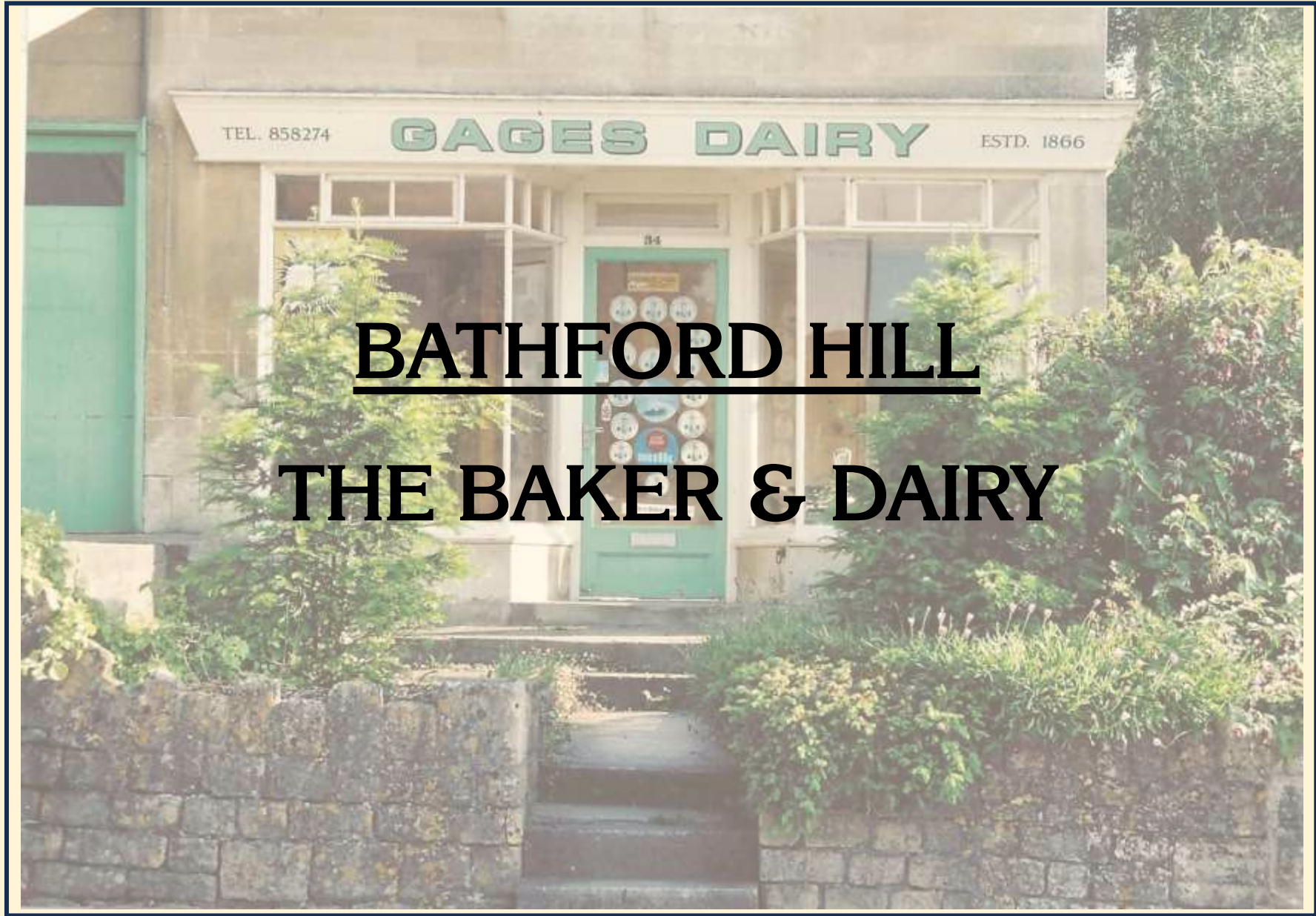
Church St. General Stores.

“So, on to the beginning of Church St. where the Post Office was within the general store, it was run by Mrs Brown, who displayed Christmas goodies up some narrow stairs in her living room!”



This photograph shows the shop when it became the Post Office and General Stores. Iqbal Suleman was Postmaster from 1983 to 1994 when the Post Office moved to The Inn.

From January 1994 this shop became a florist and coffee shop run by Mrs. Janet Chapple and her daughter Katie under the name of 'Jacaranda'. It was short-lived and became a private house in late 1997.



BATHFORD HILL

THE BAKER & DAIRY

From the Directories for Bathford the bakery families were:

- 1892 to 1901, The Humphries family on Bathford Hill.
- 1921 to 1938, Charles Thresher on Bathford Hill.
- The Thresher family continued their bakery business until it closed in 1995.

BAKERY





Marilyn

Baker & Dairy

“The bakery and dairy were both on Bathford hill, where the bakery sign can still be seen. Our milk and bread were delivered. During a bread or flour strike our bread was still delivered, while long queues formed down Bathford Hill as people came from miles around to buy their bread.”



■ END OF AN ERA: Thresher's Bakery

PICTURE: Brian Stevens

“Bakery Closes after 200 years”. It had been in operation since 1777. The last bakers were John Thresher and his son Julian. Another casualty of the growth of supermarkets.

From the Directories for Bathford the main dairy families were:

- 1860 to 1870, John King at Warleigh.
- 1896 to 1913, W. and then Jane Clifford.
- 1923 to 1926, William Gage from The Cottage, Church St.
- 1927 to 2004, Leonard Gage from Bathford Hill. Dairy closed due to competition from supermarkets.

MILK LADIES
GRACE & BELLA
THE EATON SISTERS
MANOR FARM

GAGE'S MILK DELIVERY



Delivered milk from their hand
cart ~ 1950s.





GAGE'S DAIRY

Established in 1866.
Closed 2004



The image shows the exterior of a stone building. At the top center, a white sign reads "Bathford Village Shop" in a serif font, with "A COMMUNITY CO-OPERATIVE" in a smaller font below it. To the left of the entrance, there are three framed plaques on the wall. The entrance has a small set of steps and a metal handrail. To the right of the entrance is a large window with a white frame. Further right, a red pillar-style postbox stands on the sidewalk. The building is made of light-colored stone blocks.

Bathford Village Shop
A COMMUNITY CO-OPERATIVE

THE VILLAGE SHOP

The final move of the Post Office and creation of the Bathford Co-operative shop

FROM PUB -



THE NEW INN, BATHFORD (V) c. 1915. This inn was first recorded in 1733. On closing in 1994 it was transformed into the village post office. The upper windows, blocked for many years, presumably as a result of the window tax, have lately been reopened. On the left, with the canopy, was Arthur Maslen's grocery store (1892–1916), also closed today.

- TO POST OFFICE ~ 1994



Marilyn

The Inn – Village shop.

The pub just up the hill, was called the New Inn, this is where our community shop now stands. The pub was like a time capsule with blue and white plastic tiles on the floor and a tiny bar where the present shop has the counter. On a rare visit, we saw regular pub customers lean over the bar and help themselves to spirits from the optics, no wonder it closed! -Marilyn.

IQBAL SULEMAN - POSTMASTER & MASUMA



REPAIRING HOLE LEFT BY THE POST BOX



The end of the Post Office and formation of the Community Shop

By 2006 Iqbal and Masuma Suleman were ready for retirement, and wanted to give up the shop, while temporarily keeping the post office. Anxious to preserve what was now the last remaining general store in the village, a co-operative, Bathford Enterprise for All – BEFA - was formed, with residents invited to become shareholders. The Suleman's then moved the post office, newspapers and magazines into the room overlooking Bathford Hill. The new co-operative shop continued in the main room, and, after suitable renovation and re-arrangement, opened for business in May 2006. Since then, it has been run successfully by a paid manager, and a staff of volunteers from in and around Bathford. In 2008 many small Post Offices were closed by government, including Bathford's. Iqbal & Masuma were able to retire and BEFA took over the whole shop.

CELEBRATING THE OPENING OF THE BATHFORD VILLAGE SHOP ~ MAY 2006





Town Crier at Official Opening ~ July 2006

It was opened by Mr. Don Foster, Bath's M.P. at the time



In 2007

SOME OF THE MANAGERS OVER THE YEARS



PAUL



KEVIN

SOME OF THE MANAGERS



JANE



LIZ, deputy manager throughout



CUSTOMERS?

July 2012



May 2016 ~ Tenth Anniversary Celebration

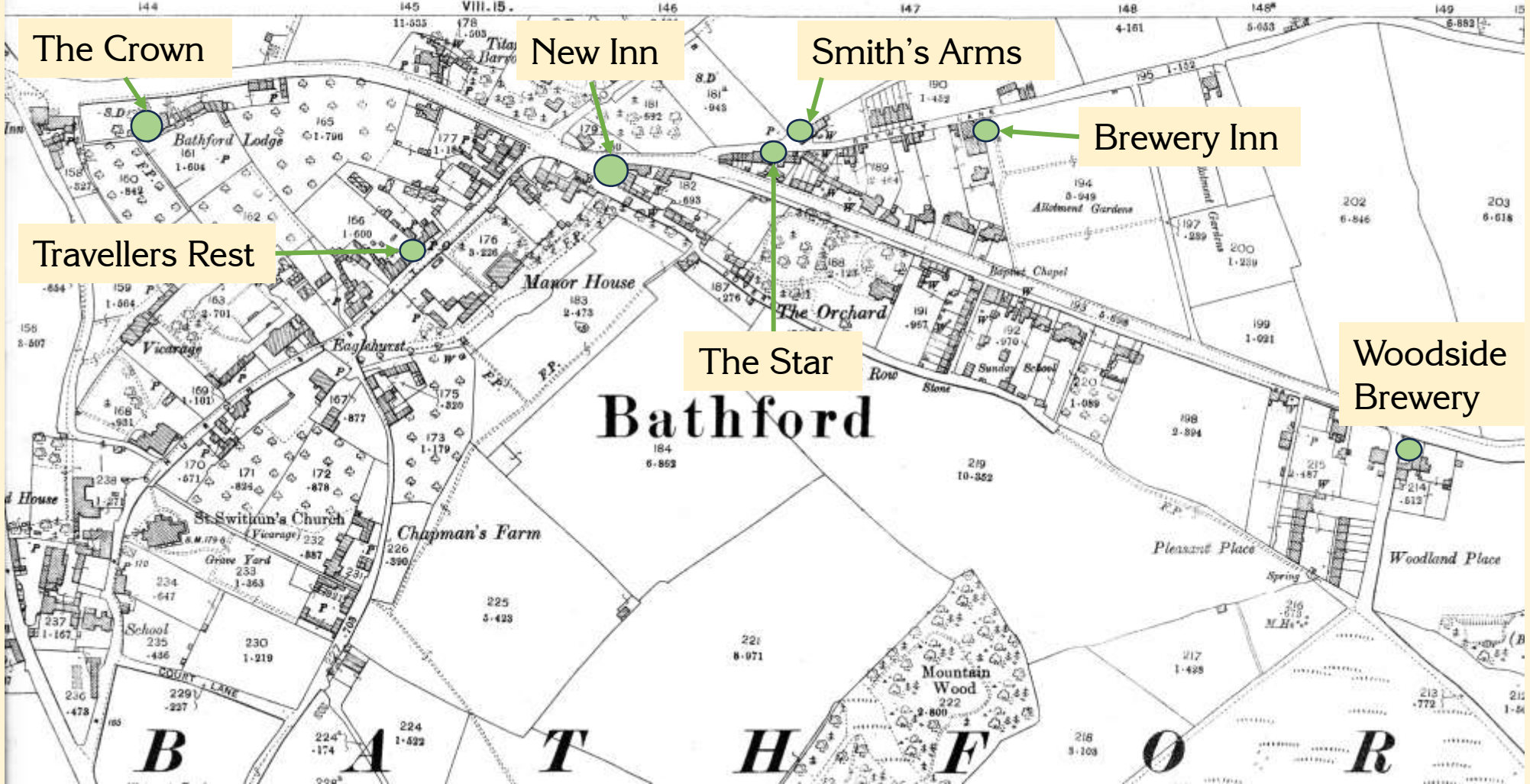
PUBS

- **The Crown Inn**
- **The New Inn**
- **The Smith's Arms**
- **The Star Inn**
- **The Travellers Rest**



LOCATION OF THE PUBS & BREWERIES

SECOND EDITION 1904



The Crown Inn



The Turnpike trustees held a committee meeting in 1757. Owned by Yeeles family until bought by the Lavington family in 1880 until 1932. Substantially rebuilt in 1904.



Note bare hillside

Eagle House, Church Street

Electric Tram with Overhead power lines

The Crown Inn

After the rebuild in 1904. It is now the only inn in Bathford.



EAGLE HOUSE, Church Street, now hidden by trees from the Crown.



Photographed before the 1950s – before *Myxomatosis* killed all the rabbits!

Trams, powered by overhead electric cables, ran from Bath to the Crown from January 1904 until 1939. From the second World War busses connected Bath to Bathford. They ran to the bottom of High Street. There is a photograph of a double-decker that drove into the wall of the Rugby playing field. Thankfully, no one was seriously hurt.





The New Inn, it was a pub before 1733. The name changed over the years including The Old Inn, The New Inn, and just The Inn. It closed in 1994 to become the Post Office & general stores.



The Smiths Arms. William Brooks was the blacksmith from c.1850 and in 1866 he began selling beer as well until closing c. 1936. The building is now 1 & 3 Ashley Road.



Mr and Mrs Simeon Hodder in the doorway of their public house, the Star, in Brewery Lane.

The Star Inn

The Star appears in deeds in 1813. Like The Inn it changed names over the years alternating between The Star and The Rising Sun. It returned to The Star in 1905 and continued until closing in 1957. It is now 4, Ashley Road.



A view in Ashley Road showing The Star on the left and part of the Smith's Arms on the right. The entrance to the playing field is opposite The Star, beside the Smith's Arms.



Traveller's Rest

Joseph Cannings, listed in the 1842 Bath Directory as a beer retailer, reputedly brewed mainly for his own consumption in the Traveller's Rest in Church Street, and it is believed that he brewed and sold his beer. By the 1851 census he had taken up the more famous Cannings profession as a carpenter.

There were two other places where beer was sold or brewed:

- Woodside Brewery: on the eastern corner of Prospect Place where it joins the High Street. In use from about 1820 to 1870. Known as The Quarryman's Arms for the last 5 years.
- The Brewery Inn: on the Ashley Road next to the Allotments, was formed as Bull's Brewery c.1850 until 1896 when brewing ceased, and it became The Brewery Inn until closing in 1908.

From 1876 the old road to London was called Brewery Lane until 1923 when it changed to Ashley Road.



In the Q&A session after the talk, Mr Ken Tatem mentioned that he had researched the pubs for Godfrey Laurence when he was writing 'Bathford, Past & Present' in the 1980s. Ken provided me with a file of the booklet.

From the booklet Ken wrote: "Two beer houses get a very small mention in sources. In the 1839 Tythe Map Schedule, 53 High Street is described as a beer house occupied by a John Dew and owned by one George Thatcher who lived next door at Glenavon. Unfortunately, that's the last we hear of it."

It is now number 55 High Street.

Population

Using the Bathford Directories, Scrapbook cuttings, and my photographs, I have constructed this table showing how long each shop or pub operated. It contains the best dates as known. The main source for historic data is the Bath Directories that run from 1854 to 1939. In some cases, the earliest date is the date of the earliest reference, the shop or pub was probably in existence before then.

The population of the parish remained about 900 from 1851 to the 1900s. In 1841 the population was higher due to the influx of navvies constructing the Great Western Railway. It steadily rose and is now 1,862 from the recent census. It is perhaps surprising that a small parish could sustain so many shops in the past whereas, with about double the population, only one shop remains. The answer lies in the pattern of employment, mobility (Cars), and Supermarkets. Up to the first world war, most people worked in the parish, Papermill, quarries, farming etc. but now most of the population commutes to work elsewhere.

SHOPS	Earliest Date	Closed	Years		PUBS	Earliest Date	Closed	Years
Maslens	1892	1940	48		Crown	1757	Open	266+
Top Shop Upper	1890	1957	67		New Inn	1733	1994	261
Top Shop Lower	1897	1995	98		Star	1813	1957	144
Prime Arts & Clothes Horse	1995	2011	16		Smith's Arms	1866	1938	72
Village shop	1994	Open	29		Brewery Inn	1839	1923	84
Post Office (old)	1846	1960	114		Woodside	1839	1872	33
Leonard's	1880	1994	114		Traveller's Rest	1842	1851	9
Dairy	1866	2004	138					
Butchers	1854	1960	106					
Bakery	1892	1995	103					

THE END

Feedback of new information, corrections, will be appreciated.

David A. Howells. – November 2023