SHOPS PART TWO

Continuing the survey of Brigstock's old shops, we begin again at Mr Tony Bell's shop in the High Street, once the Angel Inn.

Through the big doors in about 1920 Mrs Gray kept a grocer's shop and a teashop. She is remembered as a rather stately little lady who wore black silk and specially made bonnets.

Next door, No 28, was a dressmaking establishment where the Misses Bessie and Pem Mace made clothes in the latest fashion. Before this it had been kept by their father as a carpenter's shop.

No 26 High Street was where Mrs Bligh sold hats from Halls in Market Street, Kettering. The hats could be kept on approval for one week.

The house now occupied by Mrs Buckerfield, next door to the Three Cocks, used to be a hairdressers in the twenties when a haircut for a lady was 6d and hot curling tongs were used sometimes, I have been told, resulting in burnt ears. During WW2 the house was used as a doctor's surgery.

The present craft shop on the corner of Benefield Road was, at the end of the century, a grocer's and baker's shop run by Austin Richards. The bake house was just around the corner from the shop, on Benefield Road, and the ovens are still there. When in operation it baked buns, bread and Sunday dinners. Austin Richards was in charge of the bake house until about 1930 when Fred Brown took over and then Mr Robinson was the last baker on this site. The premises were then bought by Mr George Bowden who converted the bake house into a house, and the shop into a general store and newsagent. He left in about 1958 and it was then bought by Mr and Mrs Langley who remained there until 1978.

The next house along was kept by Mr Collier as a grocer's and haberdashery. He sold dress materials and bed ticking. His photograph hangs in the Chapel schoolroom. In 1918 the shop had become a hairdresser's and by 1964 was being used as a store for Mr Smith's garage. On May 4th 1972 it was gutted by fire but it has now been restored as a private house.

The house where Mr George Sturgess now lives had a tailor operating in the back in about 1900, while the front room housed a hairdressing establishment until 1910. Mr Jack Bailey's father and grandfather were both tailors here. During WW1 Mrs Ross kept a sweet shop here.

Set back from the High Street, Du Cros, now the home of Mr and Mrs Pickering, was once an undertaker's premises one relic of which remains the saw pit at the top of the garden.

From around the turn of the century until about 1920 Fred Johnson and his son Raymond were wheelwrights and blacksmiths there. At one time thirty or forty horses might be seen lined up along Stable Hill awaiting shoeing. The whole of

the present house was open as a workshop with the furnace and forge housed behind the old post office. Two petrol pumps with underground tanks were installed at the entrance to Mr and Mrs Pickering's house. The pumps were closed in about 1945 when Raymond went to America.

Fred Johnson's sister Annie had opened up the post office in what is Now Mrs Adam's shop. This building has an interesting history and a study is being made of it at the present time for future publication so I need say no more here.

No 1 Stable Hill was, in 1910, a baker's shop. Mr Jack Bailey's father had a tailoring business there and did hairdressing while his uncle, Mr Elliot, did picture framing, repaired clocks and sold paraffin, wicks and lam glasses.

At the bottom of Lyveden Road, In Mrs Bright's house, there was, in the early part of this century, a sweet and grocery shop run by a "Snuffy" Marlow who is remembered for the sale of 'halfpenny lucky bags' of sweets.

The cottage at the top of Stable Hill, next to the Green Dragon, was owned by a horse dealer until about 1964 when it became a private house.

Going back along the High Street, on the opposite side, the present Freezer shop used to be the Co-operative butcher's shop. Opened in about 1955 it closed as a butcher's in about 1977. The Co-op grocery store next door used to be a farmhouse and the whole site was, in fact, a farm owned by Mr W. Beeby. Before this the building is thought to have been a public house called the Black Horse. In the yard of the present Co-op Mr Tom Smith once start his business by repairing bicycles.

If we turn down into Latham Street Mr Jack Swan's house used to be a carpenter's shop. The cottage next door to the school was used by Mr Tom Smith as a garage around 1920, where he also sold batteries, flashlights etc.

On the corner of Latham Street and the High Street the home of Mr and Mrs R. Caswell was, around 1900, a tailor's shop.

The front room could be used for trying on and buying hats. In 1920 it became a fish and chip shop, and I think it was still one until the 1950s.

H.A. Bailey February 1980 Bygone Brigstock Issue 2